Course Syllabus

EMT 3601H: THEOLOGY, CULTURE, LITURGY AND PRAXIS
Emmanuel College
Toronto School of Theology
Summer 2017

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Office Hours: TBA

Course Number: EMT 3601H
Course Name: Theology, Culture, Liturgy and Praxis
Course Location: TBA
Class Times: Monday to Thursday, June 5-16, 2-5pm
Prerequisites:

Please note: This is course is cross listed in the Theology and Pastoral departments.

Course Description

This course examines the intimate connection between theology, culture and praxis. The course draws on the liberationist and praxical notion that doing theology comes out of what we “do,” how we express our faith in daily life. The work and life of the people of God are therefore a locus theologicus. We will explore various theological positions on the notion of culture, their influence and impact on the process of thinking theologically, and finally, the form of living out both the cultural and theology in praxis, especially in church practices. Students will therefore be encouraged to reflect specifically on various aspects of their ministries, in light of the themes of the course. Key themes include: the relation between theology and culture; the relation between church practices and culture/theology; ideology, culture and theology; and liberation theories and post/decolonial studies.

* This course meets the Diversity and Pluralism elective requirement for the MDiv, MPS, MSMus, and MTS degrees.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts / Articles
(Please note: Most readings will be available digitally and/or put on course reserve)

Bramadat, Paul, and David Seljak. “Charting the New Terrain: Christianity and Ethnicity in


Tillich, Paul. Theology of Culture. New York, Oxford University Press, 1959, Chapters 2, 4-7


ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDED READINGS


Geertz, Clifford. The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays. New York, Basic Books, 1973. Available as an electronic resource. Chapter 1, pp. 3-32 Chapter 4, 00. 87-


“Nairobi Statement on Worship and Culture” http://worship.calvin.edu/resources/resource-library/nairobi-statement-on-worship-and-culture-full-text
Course Website(s)

- Blackboard https://weblogin.utoronto.ca/

This course uses Blackboard for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT portal login page at http://portal.utoronto.ca and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to the portal using your UTORid and password, look for the My Courses module, where you’ll find the link to the website for all your Blackboard-based courses. (Your course registration with ROSI gives you access to the course website at Blackboard.) Note also the information at http://www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/information-students. Students who have trouble accessing Blackboard should ask [xxx] for further help.

Personal Website http://individual.utoronto.ca/jsmith

Course Learning Objectives

Basic Degree Level
Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

**In respect of general academic skills**
- Demonstrate crucial and constructive skills in reading, writing and research skills in oral in-class presentation and written assignments. Analyze application of course material in church setting.

**In respect of the understanding of the content of one or more theological disciplines**
- Recall, name, describe, analyze and evaluate some key theological and liturgical thinkers and features, especially in connection with the relationship between the sociopolitical context, theological task and the pastoral dimension, with special attention to the conditioning role of culture in the theology and praxis.

**In respect of personal and spiritual formation**
- Develop and employ inter-cultural and theo-practical competency in personal practices and spirituality in the engagement of theological, cultural and liturgical ideas from other cultural backgrounds.

**In respect of ministerial and public leadership**
- Practice and apply inter-cultural skills and sensibilities in the reading; learning from; critically interacting with; and reflecting upon questions of culture and theology. Through the final project, apply these skills and sensibilities in church settings, critically reflecting upon the benefits and challenges of the engagement.

Emmanuel College Learning Outcomes
Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes
Religious Faith and Heritage
- Identify and respect the diversity of theological, cultural and liturgical viewpoints and practices within the richly diverse Christian tradition. Understand the centrality of culture in the Bible; church practices, from the early church onwards; and in theology.

Culture and Context
- Identify and employ diverse methods of contextual and cultural analysis in theological reflection and church practices.
- Give evidence of critical self-awareness with regard to their own cultural tradition and social location and that of others in relation to faith perspectives and practices.

Spiritual / Vocational Formation
- Display capacity for self-reflexive and spiritual practices within the richly ethnoculturally diverse communities of faith.

Ministerial and Public Leadership
- Show ability to integrate theory and practice in conversation with multiple cultural contexts and theological traditions. Build awareness of cultural conditioning in approaches to church practices.

Evaluation

Requirements: The final grade for the course will be based on the evaluations below.

(1) Preparation, Participation and Reading 10%
All students are expected to participate in the discussions in class of the issues and themes that emerge from the required readings and lectures.

(2) In-Class Presentation 15%
Students must choose a date when you will present / introduce the class to the reading of the day. Each class, one person will take 10-15 minutes to initiate discussion both by broadly discussing the main themes that emerge from the required reading and providing a couple of leading questions to facilitate group discussion. Please feel free to go outside of the required reading for this assignment, but make sure you remain within the boundaries of the issues discussed.

(3) Book Review 20 %
Each student will write a book review, selected from the books listed, of 5-7 pages (double space, 12 pt. font New times Roman). It should aim at critically engaging the author’s central concerns, highlighting the main argument put forth by the author, as well as pointing to particular strengths and weaknesses in his/her argument. The book review should not aim at merely summarizing the content of the book but to engage its proposal critically for its implications to the task of theology and/or liturgy. Students are encouraged to draw from other course material and their own experience, especially considering the question: How does the
theme connect to the topics of theology, the cultural, and/or liturgy?

**Due Dates: TBA (Class 6)**

**4) Project Presentation 20%**
Students will be responsible to apply the themes of the course to an aspect of ministry in their community incorporating the discussed themes: faith, the cultural, theology and praxis. For example, projects could consist of a worship service; a pastoral case study; or an ethical/theological issue/case study, etc. As preparation for this project, students will present their ideas to the class in the second week. They should provide a brief description of the project, articulate how it integrates the themes of the course, and reflect critically on some of the potential benefits and pitfalls of the proposal. Students are required provide a one page handout. One of the goals of this presentation is to get feedback from class discussion. The presentation should be 10-15 minutes.

**5) Final Integrative Project 35%**
The final project involves the execution of the project presented in class. Students are expected to clearly articulate what the project was and how the project was executed. For instance, it could be a worship service; a pastoral case study; or an ethical/theological issue/case study, etc... The project is to be clearly described and analysed. The aim of the project is to integrate the themes of the course both in the student’s own context and in the analysis. We are interested in how Christian faith and theology is lived out in particular cultural contexts. The emphasis will vary and could include the following goals: to express a theological idea or ideas culturally; to develop an aspect of liturgy in a way that illustrates its theological content, with an awareness of the cultural context; to adapt an aspect of liturgy to reflect local cultural elements. This assignment is designed to integrate and apply the themes of the course in the student’s context. Students are expected to integrate readings from the course, think critically, and identify and reflect upon strengths and growth areas in their application, answering the questions: what worked? And, how might I do this differently another time? The intent is to engage in creative and praxicological thinking, applying our theological reflections with an awareness of diverse cultural contexts.

**Due Date: June 30, 2017**

For your analysis, keep in mind the following:

(a) Identify important theological themes and show how these relate to daily life the specific cultural context.
(b) Integrate key ideas that come from the assigned readings and the themes discussed in class.
(c) Think carefully about how to introduce new theological/cultural ideas keeping in mind the importance of being pastoral.
(d) Think how these new theological/cultural ideas are pedagogical. How can teaching happen in church practices in a manner which responds to the daily concerns of the community and at the same time challenges the community to grow.

The assignment should be 12-15 pages in length. (double spaced, Times New Roman 12).

**Grading System**

- A+ (90-100)
- A (85-89)
- A- (80-84)
- B+ (77-79)
- B (73-76)
- B- (70-72)
- Failure

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).

**Late work (BD).** Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. [The instructor should stipulate the penalty for late work.] This penalty is not applied to students with medical or compassionate difficulties; students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor. The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course. Students who for exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) are unable to complete work by this date may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An SDF must be requested from the registrar’s office in the student’s college of registration no later than the last day of classes in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

**Course grades.** Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm) or college grading policy.

**Policies**

**Accessibility.** Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services offices; information is available at http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.
**Plagiarism.** Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* (linked from [http://www.tst.edu/content/handbooks](http://www.tst.edu/content/handbooks)) and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* [http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871). A student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges [http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm](http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm).

**Other academic offences.** TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* [http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm).

**Back-up copies.** Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

**Obligation to check email.** At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up a utoronto email address which is entered in the ROSI system. Information is available at [www.utorid.utoronto.ca](http://www.utorid.utoronto.ca). The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. *Students should check utoronto email regularly* for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

**Email communication with the course instructor.** The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students should be sent from an utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses.

**Course Schedule & Content**
Class 1:
a. Introduction to the course: Clarifying the terms of the conversation.
b. Towards an understanding of culture


Class 2:
Cultural Dimensions in the Bible and the Early Church.


Class 3:
The Canadian Context


Class 4:
Responses to “culture”: From Assimilation to Inculturation

Read: Paul Tillich, *Theology of Culture*. New York, Oxford University Press, 1959, Chapters 2, 4-7

AND

OR:

**Class 5:**
*From “the cultural” to cultus: Ecumenical Responses to the theme of culture and worship*


**Reading Report Due**

**Class 6: Resituating Our Understanding of Theology and Culture**


**Class 7: Congregational Singing as a Locus Teologicus**

**Read:**


**Class 8:**
*Contemporary Cultural Theologies: Culture as the Locus of Theological Reflection*


Class 9:

**The Holy Spirit Enfleshed in Life and Liturgy**


Class 10: Conclusion and Class Presentations

**Suggested Books for Review**

For your book reviews, you can choose from the list below. Another book will be considered with previous approval.


