

**86130 Cultural Anthropology and Christian Witness**  
**Spring 2008**  
**Wednesday 11:30 PM – 1:20 PM**

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Norton 271

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**I. Seminar Description**

A study of the discipline of cultural anthropology from its widest descriptions to its narrowest applications in “Practical Missiology.” The central purpose of the course will be to come to understand anthropology in its fullest dimensions in order to make the most effective use of its lessons in fulfilling the Great Commission.

**II. Objectives**

1. To develop in the student a greater capacity for effective intercultural interaction, communication, and relationships by coming to understand the principles and challenges involved.
2. To acquaint the student with ethnographic research tools and worldview investigation interviews.
3. To acquaint the student with diverse aspects of culture that can be barriers or benefits to the intercultural worker living in them.
4. To understand the cultural requirements for leaders so as to recognize and differentiate between various cultural patterns.
5. To acquaint the students with the preferred learning and teaching styles in other cultures.
6. To introduce the educational challenges in a multicultural setting.
7. To understand the dynamics and challenges of education among preliterate, “primary oral learners.”

**III. Seminar Requirements.** The requirements for this course consist of pre-seminar preparation, in-class participation and a post-seminar paper.

**IMPORTANT:** In order to ensure full class participation, any student with a disabling condition requiring special accommodations (e.g., tape recorder, special adaptive equipment, special note-taking or test-taking needs, etc.) is strongly encouraged to contact the professor at the beginning of the course.

**A. Pre-Seminar Preparation:** The following requirements must be completed BEFORE this seminar begins.

**1. Required textbooks.**

- a. Each student will read the textbooks in their entirety and prepare a one-page overview of each book, which will consist of a one-paragraph annotation of the book and a brief explanation of the book’s value for missions. The completion of the reading and the one-page overview are due on the day that the reading is scheduled to be discussed in class.
- b. Each student will prepare a *formal book review* on the required Hiebert textbook. The review is **due April 2, 2008**.

**Required textbooks:**

Hiebert, Paul G . 1994. *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House.

International Orality Network. *Making Disciples of Oral Learners*. Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 2005. (Full book form)

Lewis, Richard. *The Cultural Imperative: Global trends in the 21<sup>st</sup> century*. Intercultural Press.

McKinney, Carol V. 2000. *Globe-Trotting in Sandals: A field guide to cultural research*. Dallas: SIL International.

Nida, Eugene A. *Customs and Cultures*. Pasadena: William Carey Library, 2003. ISBN: 0878087230

2. **Topical Paper.** Many aspects of Cultural Anthropology are essential to the proper understanding of Missiology and strategies for the extension of the kingdom. From the list below, each student will choose one topic and prepare an eight to ten page paper that:
- describes the issue,
  - explains the significance of that issue for missions,
  - reports how various missionaries and missions agencies have utilized it in their missions strategies, and
  - describes the current trends of missiological thought and practice related to the issue.
- You will present your paper to the class according to the schedule. Your presentation should be 35-40 minutes long (you may use PowerPoint). Distribute a copy of your paper to each of the students and the professor the week before your scheduled presentation. You must “clear” your choice of topic with the professor to avoid duplication in the class. After the topic presentation, all students will participate in a discussion of the topic.

**TOPICS FOR PAPER:**

- |  |                                 |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Worldviews                          | 9. Non-verbal communication     |
| 2. Ethnographic research               | 10. Family systems              |
| 3. Implications of Orality issues      | 11. Animism                     |
| 4. Perspectives on Death/Funeral rites | 12. Shamanism                   |
| 5. Illness and Healing                 | 13. Intercultural Communication |
| 6. Linguistic relativism/Determinism   | 14. Ethnomusicology             |
| 7. Cultural Relativism                 | 15. Globalization               |
| 8. Contextualization                   | 16. Ethnohermeneutics           |

**B. In-class/campus work.** Due to the intense nature of Ph.D. seminars and the amount of material covered each week, attendance at each class is essential. Absence from more than one week will require additional work.

CLASS PARTICIPATION. Because each student has insight to offer from his/her ministry context and experience, students are expected to participate fully in seminar discussions. The professor reserves the right to ask questions of each student in order to facilitate discussion.

**C. Post-seminar paper.** Each student will compose an ethnography/people profile/cultural portrait of an approved people group (20-25 pages in length, double spaced). You are expected to draw from your readings and research for the seminar while demonstrating your own understanding of the process of researching a people group in order to paint a detailed cultural portrait to someone who is unfamiliar with the target culture. You will need to include elements *such as* (*this list is not exhaustive nor inclusive*) location, worldview, language, religious background, government, family system, culture dimension, food, income, leadership styles, learning styles, history, experience with Christianity, etc. and, based upon your findings, project recommended strategies for ministering among them. You will need to provide a minimum of fifteen sources and no more than seven of them may be Internet websites (excluding electronic journals). Additional discussion and direction for the paper will be given during the seminar.

**IV. Grading.** The student's final grade for the course will be determined according to the following:

Book overviews	5%
Book Review	15%
Topical paper	30%
Class participation/discussion	10%
Ethnography for missions	<u>40%</u>
	100%

NOTE: According to seminary policy, a student must receive a final grade of B- or above in order to receive credit for this seminar.

V. **Course Schedule**

DATE	TEXTBOOK	TOPIC	TOPIC PRESENTER
Jan 31	<i>Customs and Cultures</i>		
Feb 7	<i>Customs and Cultures</i>		
Feb 14	<i>Making Disciples of Oral Learners</i>		
Feb 21	<i>The Cultural Imperative</i>		
Feb 28	<i>Anthropological Insights for Missionaries</i>		
Mar 7	<i>Anthropological Insights for Missionaries</i>		
Mar 14	<i>Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues</i>		
Mar 21	<i>Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues</i>		
Mar 28	<i>Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues</i>		
Apr 4	<b>Reading Days</b>		
Apr 11	<i>Globe-Trotting in Sandals: A field guide to cultural research</i>		
Apr 18	<i>Globe-Trotting in Sandals: A field guide to cultural research</i>		
Apr 25	<i>Globe-Trotting in Sandals: A field guide to cultural research</i>		
May 2			

Disclaimer: This syllabus is intended to reflect accurately the course description, course objectives, general content, grading criteria, course requirements, attendance requirements, and other information necessary for students to appraise the course. However, the instructor reserves the right to modify any portion of this syllabus as may appear necessary.

**Guidelines for Class Presentations**

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Some general observations:

1. The catalog description of the Ph.D. degree, along with the rigorous admission requirements, reflects the high level of academic and classroom production that is expected of students involved in this program of study.
2. As graduates holding the Ph.D., you will be expected to provide leadership and direction in missions. People will be looking to you for answers, resources, ideas and responses. Your present course of study is designed to instill in you these types of leadership capabilities. When you are presenting in class, it is not the faculty's or your fellow students' responsibility to lead the class. It is yours!
3. As you move through the Ph.D. program, you do so alongside cohorts. Your academic work is not done merely for the professor's approval and a high grade. You are providing soundly researched and well presented materials to benefit your fellow students. From this perspective, you are dependent upon one another for genuine learning. In other words, you are not merely completing an assignment, you are teaching. You must have as your goal the presentation and explanation of concepts, resources, trends, issues, etc. that will enhance the educational experience of all persons involved in the seminar. You must raise pertinent issues. You must be able to respond to questions from the seminar participants and be able to refer them to additional resources. In short, when your fellow students leave the seminar, they should be able to say to themselves, "I have learned something today."

Specific guidelines for leading the discussion of textbook material:

1. At the beginning of the class, you will distribute your one page overview of the material. You will **not read** from prepared material in your presentation, though you may refer to the overview or other notes or use a PowerPoint presentation.
2. Because everyone will have already read the book, in about 20-25 minutes, you should:
  - Provide a brief oral summary of the material.
  - Set the book in the context of historical and contemporary missiological/anthropological studies. (The author is indebted to whom? The present work is related to what other writings, and in what manner? Are the author's findings part of a trend(s) in missions? What new or distinctive contribution(s) does the author provide in the book? Etc.
  - Did you generally agree with the author's approach? Would you recommend this book to someone else? Etc.

NOTE: These goals might appear a bit ambitious for a short presentation. However, you must learn to provide this information clearly and succinctly. Then, you may follow up on any of these issues in the ensuing class discussion.

3. During your presentation, you are responsible for moving the conversation and discussion along. You must be sufficiently familiar with the immediate work, related resources, and the general field of the topic so that, in the case of a lull or pause, you are able to encourage the conversation to move forward or to move the dialogue to another matter.