Teaching Assistant:

Course description
The course offers an introduction to Christianity as a worldwide movement in the context of a religiously plural world. We study factors that contributed to and sustain Christianity’s current shape, reach, and impact and examine key cultural, ethical, and theological challenges facing mission and ministry in a world church. The course fulfills the Basic Graduate Theological Studies requirement for United Methodist ordination.

Course Objectives
- Understand the scope, texture, and identity of global Christianity today as a polycentric, increasingly non-Western movement.
- Appreciate the complex impact of the Western missionary movement and of Western colonial expansion on Christianity’s current configuration.
- Examine key theological challenges raised by Christianity’s global reach, such as globalization and the integrity of Christian witness; culture, context, and Christian identity; and religious pluralism.
- Identify biblical and theological elements appropriate to mission and ministry in a world church today.

Required Texts (Additional free readings also on Moodle)


Course Structure
This course is taught entirely online and is asynchronous, meaning that you will be given assignments and will be free to log on at any time to complete those assignments by the given deadlines. Most weeks, this will entail logging into Moodle, watching a video lecture and reading texts. In addition, you will have assignments that require you to do work beyond the computer. These assignments will involve you integrating the lectures, readings, and other experiences.

For the final assignment, you will be assigned to a group. As such, while you can choose when you do the work, you will need to coordinate any group activities so that you can work together to accomplish the assignment.

Grade Structure
Visitation Logs 30% (15% each)
Faces of Jesus presentation 35%
Group Presentation 35%

Assignments
All assignments are due on the dates and at the times indicated. No late submissions will be accepted, except in the case of extenuating circumstances, and with prior written approval from the instructor.


ASSIGNMENT 1: EXPERIENCING THE GLOBAL CHURCH

Rationale: The intent of the exercise is to invite you into a critical reflection of how a national identity affects the ways local congregations operate together with a view to exploring implications for ministry in a global church today.

Task: Visit two churches that are a different nationality from yourself. You can do this in groups or individually as your time allows. Write a log of what you experience in each visit. If allowed by the congregation, you are encouraged to take videos, pictures, sound recordings, or other multimedia recordings as part of your visits.

Parameters: The logs should be a minimum of 1,000 words. While they are not formal academic papers that require a thesis statement or additional research, the logs are meant to be thoughtful engagements with the experiences, not off-the-cuff musings. So, your logs should reflect critically with the experiences, including references to at least five assigned readings and three lectures. “Critical” does not mean being disrespectful, demeaning, or unkind but refers, rather, to our shared obligation to pursue the theological task in a spirit of mutual respect, openness, and honesty.
Process:
1. Identify two congregations to visit that are clearly influenced by their national identity and visit them. Ideally, these visits can happen during an event (whether a worship service, a dinner, a festival, or anything else). If you cannot do this, you can set an appointment to meet with a congregational leader who can help explain the church to you.
2. Write a log of what you experience during each visit. You may include the pictures, videos, etc. in the log or as separate files that you allude to in the log. Answer questions like:
   - What do you hear, see, taste, touch, and/or smell?
   - Where do you see clear evidence of the nationality influencing the life of the church?
   - What is different from what you are used to? What is the same?
   - What assumptions are made about what the people in the church already know (such as ideas they are familiar with or practices they know how to perform)?
   - What are the grounding theological concepts about who God is, how God operates in the world, and how humans are to respond?
   - Are there particular stories (ethnic or biblical) that the congregation finds important? Bear in mind that these could be expressed in conversation with the people, in the artwork, in the liturgy, in the music, or in many other ways.
3. Upload your logs and any multimedia supporting them to a Google folder that will be created for you within one week of your experience. See Moodle for the final deadline to have both logs completed and submitted.

ASSIGNMENT 2: FACES OF JESUS PRESENTATION

Rationale: The intent of this exercise is to examine the face of Jesus outside of your national context and explore its meaning and impact across cultural boundaries.

Task: Your task is to make a presentation on Google Slides that draws from Küster’s Many Faces of Jesus Christ (Jesus as ancestor; Jesus as black Messiah; Minjung theology; etc.), critically reflects on its key claims, and ponders implications of this image or movement for the meaning and experience of Jesus in other contexts.

Parameters: A Google Slide presentation that will be in the same Google folder where you uploaded your logs. You are encouraged to use appropriate multimedia in these slides (including from your visits), not just text. See process below for number of slides required.

Each slide should follow the 1/5/5 rule:
- Have no more than one image (video or picture) on it.
- Have no more than five lines of text
- Have no more than five words in each line of text
Additional verbiage necessary to explain your slide should be put in the “speaker notes” underneath the slide.

**Process:**
1. Select an image or movement from Küster’s *Many Faces of Jesus Christ* that you find helps synthesize what you experienced during your visitations.
2. Review the relevant material in Küster and read the relevant primary literature, as found under “Additional Required Reading” on Moodle.
3. Develop a presentation in which you:
   a. Describe the face of Jesus your group has chosen, including its primary aspects and why you chose it (minimum 3 slides)
   b. Answer the following questions, using information from the readings to support your answers (minimum 3 slides for each question):
      • What aspects or features of these experiences (and the associated face of Jesus) do you find most appealing or intriguing? Why?
      • What aspects or features do you find strange or perhaps offensive? Why?
      • What aspects or features do you find most challenging for your understanding and experience of Jesus? For your faith communities or churches? Why?
      • What aspects or features do you find most in agreement and/or in disagreement with the congregations you visited? Why?

**ASSIGNMENT 3: GROUP PRESENTATION**

**Rationale:** The intent of this exercise is to offer you an opportunity to practice the skills of constructing a theological argument that creatively interprets the meaning and significance of the central Christian convictions we have studied throughout the semester and synthesizes those convictions with your experience of the global church as you consider a particular life situation.

**Task:** Your task is to develop a group presentation in Google Slides in which you use Bevans and Schroeder’s model of “prophetic dialogue” (Part III, pp. 281-395) as a framework for constructing a mission-shaped vision for effective congregational ministry in an increasingly global North American context today. (Groups with students for whom the primary ministry context is not the United States are free to select a different ministry context, in consultation with the instructor.)

**Parameters:** Create a Google Slide presentation that will be in the same Google folder where you uploaded your logs and created your Faces of Jesus presentation. You are encouraged to use appropriate multimedia in these slides (including reusing multimedia that you used in your Faces of Jesus presentation), not just text. See process below for number of slides required.

Each slide should follow the 1/5/5 rule:
- Have no more than one image (video or picture) on it.
- Have no more than five lines of text
- Have no more than five words in each line of text
Additional verbiage necessary to explain your slide should be put in the “speaker notes” underneath the slide.

**Process:**
1. Reread the relevant section in *Constants in Context*: Part III, pp. 281-395. Note that the chapters are closely interrelated in the authors’ argument. That is, the chapter dealing explicitly with “prophetic dialogue” (ch. 12) cannot really be understood adequately without the groundwork laid in chapters 9-11.
2. Summarize the three models of mission in the late twentieth century (chs. 9, 10, 11) and identify if any of the congregations people in your group visited fit primarily in one of these models. It is fine if they do not, just state that. If they do, explain why. (2 slides for each model)
3. Summarize the six key elements of Bevans and Schroeder’s understanding of mission as “prophetic dialogue.” In one or two sentences, evaluate how the congregations each person in the group visited relates to each element. (2-3 slides for each element)
4. Using the Bevans/Schroeder model as a framework and drawing on the other required texts, additional required reading, lectures, and your visitation logs, construct a mission-shaped approach for effective congregational ministry in an increasingly global North American context. Do the following:
   - First, determine a specific issue you want to address with the framework of “prophetic dialogue.” To do this, choose one of the “Parts” in *Case Studies in Missions*, e.g. “Part 1: Idols and Ancestors.” Read the introduction and cases in that part. Briefly describe the primary difficulties that arise related to that issue. (2 slides)
   - Second, set up a scenario in a ministry setting in the United States (or other context as approved) in which this issue might occur. (1 slide)
   - Use the model of “prophetic dialogue” to construct a missional approach that can help a ministry in the United States (or other context as approved) respond faithfully and effectively to challenges related to this issue. You should develop this approach in a way that supports the common people in the ministry, not just the leaders. How can the ministry deploy “prophetic dialogue” in a way that the “average person” is equipped to better address this issue? Specifically, explain which of the six elements you would use in this approach and why. (2-3 slides per element)
   - If appropriate, draw from the congregations you visited to provide concrete examples of how this might be done using the wisdom from the church in another context. (1 slide per example)
   - **Note:** Feel free to select a ministry setting other than a congregation and a setting other than the United States, but discuss your choice with the instructor.

**Students for Whom English Is a Second Language:**
Students for whom English is a second language often seek outside proofreading assistance. In such cases, you can make use of the following process in completing and submitting your written assignments. (1) Submit the complete but unproofread essay on Moodle by the assignment due date. (2) Inform the instructor that the essay is being
proofread and when proofreading will be complete. (3) Email the proofread essay to the instructor, when received.

Note: (1) The unproofread essay as submitted is the complete essay. It may not be amended or edited for content. (2) The weekly reflection posts DO NOT fall under this language accommodation.

Class Policies
1. Respect. (a) Respect one another’s perspectives, viewpoints, and differences. Speak the truth, but do so in love; so, critique viewpoints and perspectives, not persons. (b) Respect the classroom as an environment for learning. Therefore, participate fully, thoughtfully, respectfully, and in a timely fashion in all activities as assigned.
2. Integrity. Do not cheat. Own your own ideas and honor the ideas of others. Plagiarism is an extremely serious breach of integrity and is addressed forthrightly by the seminary. Review the seminary’s policy on plagiarism carefully (Student Life and Academic Handbook, G-ETS Bulletin, etc.). It describes the various kinds of plagiarism and how to correct them. You are expected to familiarize yourself with this document. If you have any questions, please contact the instructor.

Disabilities Policies and Procedures
Garrett Evangelical Theological Seminary is committed to providing equal access to its programs of graduate professional education for all qualified students with learning, physical, medical, or psychological disabilities. The seminary aims to provide reasonable accommodation for qualified individuals with a disability (based on clinical documentation) to ensure their access to and participation in seminary programs. For details, see “Disabilities Policies and Procedures” in the 2008-2009 Student Handbook, p. 62. Please contact the Dean of Students for consultation.

Class Schedule with assigned readings and deadlines—see Moodle

Technology Notes

Given the lack of personal contact during the course, you will need to be certain you have sufficient technological ability to access and participate in this course. It is the student’s responsibility to have sufficient technology to access and participate in the course. The instructor will assume this, and is not obligated to take technological difficulties into account when assessing the student’s work.

Minimum technological requirements:

- Web Browser – You will need the latest version of the web browser you are using (Internet Explorer, Firefox, Safari, Google Chrome, etc.). Note that not all browsers work equally well with Moodle, so you may need to experiment with them if you have difficulty using all the functions on the site. (I use Firefox and have never had issues.)
• Operating System – In order to use the latest browser, you will need to have an operating system (Windows, Mac OS, etc.) that is up-to-date enough to handle it. Please be certain you have such an operating system.

• Internet Connection – You will need a high-speed internet connection that is sufficient to run streaming video with no difficulty. Usually cable and dsl connections can do this. Dial up cannot. If your home internet connection is not sufficient to provide this kind of connection, you will need to find access to a computer that does have this connection.

• Hardware – You will need sufficient computing power in terms of memory, speed, audio, and video for the different aspects of this course to work well. Make certain you can run the necessary software and fully participate online.

• Google Docs – You will need to use Google Docs at certain times during this course. If you are unfamiliar with Google docs, please watch this tutorial. Bear in mind that you will not be creating a new document, but editing or commenting on existing Google docs.

Instructor/TA Interaction

If there are both an instructor and a TA in this course, the primary work of the TA is to be a point of contact for students concerning the course and to review the lectures. In addition to this, the TA may participate on the discussion forums as needed.

Contact information for the TA will be provided on Moodle.

For all questions and concerns about the course, you should contact the TA first, not the instructor. If the instructor is necessary to resolve the issue, the TA will contact him.

Both the TA and the instructor will do their best to respond to emails within 24 hours of when they are sent. Be aware that if you send an email during the weekend, during Easter Break, or on major Christian holy days, you will need to wait until a regular school day for an answer.

The TA and instructor will both be online several hours a week (excluding weekends and holidays). The instructor will focus on the discussion forums and wikis for all groups. Unless a student contacts the instructor, it is unlikely you will engage in interaction with the instructor during this first portion of the course. During the collaborative part of the course, he will focus on the conceptualizing evangelism forum and wikis for all groups, though he will also be monitoring and grading all the discussion forums. Do not expect the instructor to provide feedback on all discussion forums. He will only interact when there is a group poses a question for him or when he feels specific guidance could be helpful for the group.

All grades are the final decision of the instructor. Given the restrictions of the online format, there will be little opportunity to appeal grades. Keep in mind that the syllabus lays out in detail what is required for good grades. Deviation from the syllabus will lead to a lower grade.
How I Grade

The following is a rubric that offers insight into how I grade all the assignments. Please notice that turning in work late or without following the directions provided in the syllabus leads to a failing grade.

It takes creative work to receive an “A.” Work that shows a good grasp of material, but that does not construct new pathways of learning and/or practices of ministry, is worth a “B.”

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<th>Excellent – 100%</th>
<th>Above Average – 85%</th>
<th>Average - 70%</th>
<th>Failing – 0%</th>
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<tr>
<td>Timeliness</td>
<td>The student turned in the assignment by the due date.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>The assignment was late. (This causes a failing grade for the entire assignment.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Followed Directions</td>
<td>The student followed all the directions provided by the instructor in the syllabus or online for the assignment (including word counts, content, format, etc.).</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>The student failed to follow the directions provided by the instructor in the syllabus or online. Depending on how severe the breach of directions is, this can lead to a failing grade for the entire assignment.</td>
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<td>Coherence</td>
<td>There is a logical flow throughout the assignment such that it is easily understandable and persuasive in the points it makes.</td>
<td>There is a logical flow throughout the assignment such that it is easily understandable. It may not be persuasive in its presentation, however.</td>
<td>There is an overall logic apparent in the assignment, though it requires some effort to grasp what the logic is.</td>
<td>There is no apparent logic to the assignment. It is obtuse and difficult to understand the points it makes.</td>
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<td>Content</td>
<td>The student clearly interacts with the course materials (readings and lectures), demonstrating both comprehension of the material and offering creative and constructive insight for further conversation on the topic at hand.</td>
<td>The student clearly interacts with all the course materials (readings and lectures) appropriate to the topic, demonstrating comprehension of the material.</td>
<td>The student clearly interacts with only some of the materials appertaining to the topic of the assignment, demonstrating comprehension of the material. Alternately, the student uses the appropriate materials, but does not represent them accurately.</td>
<td>The student’s assignment either does not refer to any course material or clearly misunderstands the material it does use.</td>
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<td>Responses (When a response to other students is required)</td>
<td>The student responds to others substantively by finding points to agree with, disagree with, or to nuance based on ideas raised in course materials. The response invites constructive conversation.</td>
<td>The student responds to others substantively by finding points to agree with, disagree with, or to nuance based on course materials.</td>
<td>The student responds to others, but shows little interaction with course materials in the response.</td>
<td>The student responds in a hostile way that seeks to end conversation, or the student’s response does not address the issues raised by the other student.</td>
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<td>Collegiality</td>
<td>The assignment is academic in tone (or is appropriate to the intended audience), inviting further constructive conversation on the topic, even in the case of disagreeing with authors, the instructor, or other students.</td>
<td>The assignment is academic in tone (or is appropriate to the intended audience), though can emphasize deconstructive interaction more than constructive.</td>
<td>The assignment is more conversational than academic in tone (or is not entirely appropriate to the intended audience) and/or is defensive about engaging in constructive self-reflection.</td>
<td>The assignment is entirely informal (or is inappropriate to the intended audience) and/or may be entirely negative by attacking others and resisting reflection on one’s own work invited by course material or peer feedback.</td>
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