

**THEO 540X GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY IN AN INTERFAITH WORLD**

Fall 2022

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**MODALITY:** Online—Asynchronous

**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 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**

Green, Gene L., Stephen T. Pardue, and K.K. Yeo, eds. *Jesus without Borders: Christology In the Majority World*. Majority World Theology Series. Langham Global Library, 2015. ISBN: 978-1783689170. List price (Amazon): \$24.99.

Kim, Sebastian and Kirsteen Kim. *Christianity as a World Religion: An Introduction*. Second Edition. Bloomsbury Academic, 2016. ISBN: 978-1472569349. List price (Amazon): \$29.95

Bevans, Stephen B. and Roger P. Schroeder. *Prophetic Dialogue: Reflections On Christian Mission Today*. Orbis Books, 2011. ISBN: 978-1570759116. List price (Amazon): \$37.00

**There are numerous additional readings that will required each week of the course (essays, articles). These will be uploaded and available for free on Moodle.**

## GRADING

### Grade Scale

<b>A</b>	<b>94-100</b>
<b>A-</b>	<b>90-93</b>
<b>B+</b>	<b>87-89</b>
<b>B</b>	<b>84-86</b>
<b>B-</b>	<b>80-83</b>
<b>C+</b>	<b>77-79</b>
<b>C</b>	<b>74-76</b>
<b>C-</b>	<b>70-73</b>
<b>D</b>	<b>60-69</b>

### Grade Structure

Annotated PDF Reflections	10%
Discussion forum	10%
Intercultural faith experience reflection	20%
Interpretations of Jesus reflection	15%
Final essay	45%

## 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.

**Note:** All assignments are expected to conform to Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers*, 7<sup>th</sup> edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.

### Assignment 1: Annotated PDF Reflections

**Rationale:** The intent of the exercise is to invite you into a critical reflection on the selected article for the week and to engage your classmates' reflections.

**Task:** Using the "pin" tool, highlight an item in the article that you find meaningful and write a brief explanation as to why that is. You should make at least three pin-drop comments and respond to at least one comment made by each of your group members. Note that you will not receive credit for this assignment unless you provide both your three pin-drops and respond to your group members.

For those unfamiliar with this tool, a brief tutorial video is available in Moodle to show how to do this assignment.

## **Assignment 2: Intercultural Faith Experience Reflection**

**Rationale:** The intent of this exercise is to invite you to experience and then reflect on an expression of Christian faith different from your own culture, ethnicity, and/or nationality.

**Task:** Your task is to visit a congregation different from your own culture/ethnicity/nationality and prepare a reflection on the experience. You can visit in groups or individually (*although each student must write their own reflection to submit*). If allowed by the congregation, you are encouraged to take videos, pictures, sound recordings, or other multimedia recordings as part of your visit.

**Parameters:** A PowerPoint presentation consisting of six slides: a title slide with your name on it and one slide to answer each of the five questions listed below (see “Process”). The slides should follow the 1/5/5 rule. Each slide should include at least one image (picture or video—ideally taken during your visit if allowed) and should not include more than five lines of text with five words on each line. In addition, use the speaker notes section under the slide to provide further explanation of your slide, including any appropriate references to course materials or fuller descriptions and reflections than the slides allow.

### **Process:**

1. Identify a congregation and visit it. Ideally, the visit happens 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. Also, while in-person visitation is ideal, attending an event virtually is possible. Please contact the instructors if you do not foresee being able to visit in-person.
2. Develop a Power Point presentation in which you reflect on the visit, using the following questions:
  - Introduce the congregation and explain how it is uniquely formed culture, ethnicity, and/or nationality it represents.
  - What aspect of the Christian experience did I find most intriguing or appealing? Why?
  - What aspect of the experience did I find most challenging? Why?
  - What might people from this congregation find challenging or strange about how my ministry site worships? Why?
  - What did the experience show me about the place of culture in Christian faith?
3. Upload your PowerPoint to the appropriate assignment tab on Moodle.

## **Assignment 3: Discussion Forum on Doing Theology Interculturally**

**Rationale:** The intent of this exercise to invite you to reflect on doing ministry in an intercultural context today, drawing on what you have learned about doing theology in the course thus far.

**Task:** Drawing on what you have learned during the first five weeks of the course, explain in 350-400 words what it means to do theology interculturally and how doing theology this way could inform your ministry setting. You must cite at least the Kim/Kim, Bevans and Schroeder, as well as the Küster texts assigned for Week 5. Beyond this, you are welcome to cite any additional course materials (including readings and lectures). In addition to your initial post, you must also respond to each of your group members’ posts.

#### **Assignment 4: Interpretations of Jesus Reflection**

**NOTE:** While there are four options to choose from, you are required to complete only **ONE** essay. So, write your essay on Asian OR African OR Latin American OR North American interpretations of Jesus. **DO NOT DO MORE THAN ONE ESSAY.**

**Aim:** The intent of this exercise is to examine an interpretation of Jesus in a particular context and explore its meaning and impact across cultural boundaries.

**Task:** Your task is to select an interpretation of Jesus (ex., Jesus as ancestor; Minjung theology; etc.) from the assigned reading (*Jesus without Borders*; selections in Additional Required Readings folder), critically reflect on its key claims, and ponder implications of this interpretation for the meaning and experience of Jesus in your own context.

**Parameters:** An essay of 1,600-1,700 words in length (5-5 ½ pages), submitted in Microsoft Word format, double-spaced, Times New Roman font, 12pt type

#### **Process:**

1. Select an interpretation of Jesus from Africa, Asia, Latin America, or North America from the course material that you find intriguing or challenging.
2. Read the relevant chapter in Kim/Kim (ex., ch. 2: “Asian Christianities”).
3. Now read the appropriate chapters in *Jesus without Borders*, as well as the relevant selections in the “Additional Required Reading” folder on Moodle.
4. Summarize the main features of the interpretation in two pages. Then critically reflect on the implications of this interpretation for the meaning and experience of Jesus in your own context in the remainder of the essay.
5. Upload your essay to the appropriate assignment tab on Moodle.

#### **Assignment 5: Final Essay**

**Rationale:** The intent of this exercise is to offer you an opportunity to practice the skills of constructing a theological argument using the model of prophetic dialogue for a particular ministry setting today. **NOTE:** “*Ministry setting*” can take different forms—for example, a congregation, a campus ministry, a house church, a social justice initiative. Also, choose a ministry setting in a place most relevant to you—for example, Korea, Burundi, the United States.

**Task:** Your task is to write an essay in which you think about how Bevans and Schroeder’s model of “prophetic dialogue” can help you examine faulty views and practices of mission in your ministry setting and construct a new missional vision that can renew mission practices.

**Parameters:** The essay should be 2,600-2,900 words (8-9 pages, double-spaced) in length and be submitted in Microsoft Word format, double-spaced, Times New Roman font, 12pt type.

#### **Process:**

1. Reread the appropriate chapters in *Prophetic Dialogue*.
2. Summarize the key features of Bevans and Schroeder’s understanding of mission as “prophetic dialogue.”

3. Using the Bevans/Schroeder model, and drawing on the other sources we've studied (course texts, additional required reading, lectures, online discussion), describe how the model of prophetic dialogue can help you rethink *mission* in your ministry setting. ***Be creative!***  
Ask yourself:
  - How can the model of prophetic dialogue help me identify and challenge faulty theological views of mission in my ministry context?
  - How can the model help me construct a new missional vision for my ministry context?
  - How might one or more of the six components of the model (ex., "witness and proclamation"; "justice, peace, and the integrity of creation"; "reconciliation") help us renew or build new missional *practices* in my ministry context? (Ex., the component of "peace, justice, and the integrity of creation" might change the way we practice our public witness; the component of "interreligious dialogue" might deepen our collaboration with our Muslim neighbors down the street, or perhaps help us *begin* a relationship.)
4. Upload your essay to the appropriate assignment tab on Moodle.
5. Using the same assignment link on Moodle, read your group mates' papers and assess them using the assessment form. This must be completed by the assessment due date.

***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.*

## ACADEMIC POLICIES

All students are required to abide by the academic policies detailed in the Academic Handbook for the current academic year. The following policies are of particular importance to the successful completion of one's coursework:

### Writing

- **Academic integrity and plagiarism:** (See 22-23 Handbook, 12, 78-83) All professors are required to respond to all suspected incidents of academic dishonesty, especially plagiarism. Repeated incidents of plagiarism or academic dishonesty may result in dismissal from the school.
- **Writing and citations:** The Turabian Manual for Writers and the Chicago Manual of Style footnote/bibliography format provide the standard formats for all introductory courses. Basic information on these formats is available online here. In advanced courses

an instructor may require another style guide appropriate to the discipline (such as APA). (22-23 Handbook, 84)

- **Writing Support:** The Writing Center at Garrett-Evangelical offers programs to support all students' theological research and writing. See <https://www.garrett.edu/student-life/student-services> "Writing Center" for more detailed information.

### **Attendance and Class Participation**

- **Inclusivity/Diversity:** The basic commitments of the seminary to mutual love and searching for the truth in Christ lead to a principle that in the classroom and in course assignments, persons are always to be respected and ideas are to be freely discussed....All participants in the teaching-learning process have an obligation to honor and respect varying perspectives on relevant issues. (See 22-23 Handbook, 9)
- **Attendance and lateness policies:** Attendance is required. Students who miss more than 20% of the class sessions (e.g., more than 2 classes in the weekly schedule, a proportionate amount for other class formats) should not expect to pass the class. (22-23 Handbook, 19)
- Some faculty may limit on the usage of electronic devices such as cell phones during class. At the least, all cell phones should be silenced during the whole of a class session.

### **Academic Accommodations**

- Student accommodations for documented conditions should be developed and requested before the beginning of the semester. See the Accessibility, Special Needs, and Disabilities policy and process set out in the Academic Handbook (22-23 Handbook, 12). Such accommodations are developed in consultation with the Registrar.
- **Extensions:** For Masters students, extensions, if granted, are normally for four weeks following the last day of class in spring and fall semesters or the final due date for coursework for January and summer terms. Extensions may not exceed three months following the end of the term. (22-23 Handbook, 20)

## CLASS SCHEDULE

**In addition to the assignment due each week, there are weekly lectures and required readings posted on Moodle. For specific due dates, please see the course Moodle site.**

Week	Theme for the Week	Assignment
1	Global Christianity: What Is It?	PDF Annotation  Visit Congregation for Intercultural Faith Experience
2	“Go...Make Disciples”: Biblical and Historical Developments in Mission	PDF Annotation  Visit Congregation for Intercultural Faith Experience
3	“Go...Make Disciples”: The Modern Missionary Movement	PDF Annotation  Visit Congregation for Intercultural Faith Experience
4	“Go...Make Disciples”: Shifts in Theology of Mission	PDF Annotation  Intercultural Faith Experience Assignment Due
5	Doing Theology in a Global Church: Intercultural Theology	Discussion Forum on Doing Theology Interculturally
6	African Christianity: Historical and Theological Developments	PDF Annotation – one required article for all students, other articles based on which Interpretation of Jesus Paper you choose.
7	Asian Christianity: Historical and Theological Developments	PDF Annotation – one required article for all students, other articles based on which Interpretation of Jesus Paper you choose.  African Interpretation of Jesus Paper due (If you chose to write this paper)
8	Latin American Christianity: Historical and Theological Developments	PDF Annotation – one required article for all students, other articles based on which Interpretation of Jesus Paper you choose.  Asian Interpretation of Jesus Paper due (If you chose to write this paper)

9	North American Christianity: Historical and Theological Developments	PDF Annotation – one required article for all students, other articles based on which Interpretation of Jesus Paper you choose.  Latin American Interpretation of Jesus Paper due (If you chose to write this paper)
10	Rethinking Mission in a Global Church: Different Approaches to Mission	PDF Annotation  North American Interpretation of Jesus Paper due (If you chose to write this paper)
11	Rethinking Mission in a Global Church: Prophetic Dialogue	PDF Annotation
12	Rethinking Mission in a Global Church: Prophetic Dialogue in Action	N/A
13	Global Christianity: Looking Back, Looking Forward	Final Essay Due

## GRADING RUBRIC

There are distinct rubrics used to grade different assignments throughout the course. The following provides a general overview of how the instructors' grade.

Score Levels	Content	Conventions	Organization
<b>A- to A+</b> <b>90-100%</b>	Is well thought out and supports the thesis of the paper  Reflects application of creative and critical thinking  Has clear goal that is related to the topic  Is pulled from a variety of sources  Is accurate	No spelling, grammatical, or punctuation errors  High-level use of vocabulary and word choice	Information is clearly focused in an organized and thoughtful manner.  Information is constructed in a logical pattern to support the thesis statement.
<b>B- to B+</b> <b>80-89%</b>	Is well thought out and supports the thesis  Has application of critical thinking that is apparent  Has clear goal that is related to the topic	Few spelling, grammatical, or punctuation errors  Good use of vocabulary and word choice	Information follows discernable pattern of organization  Information supports the thesis statement of the paper.

	<p>Is pulled from several sources</p> <p>Is accurate</p>		
<p><b>C- to C+</b> <b>70-79%</b></p>	<p>Supports the thesis</p> <p>Has application of critical thinking that is apparent</p> <p>Has indistinct goal</p> <p>Is pulled from a limited number of sources</p> <p>Has some factual errors or inconsistencies</p>	<p>Significant spelling, grammatical, or punctuation errors</p> <p>Low-level use of vocabulary and word choice</p>	<p>Project has a focus but might stray from it at times.</p> <p>Information appears to have a pattern, but the pattern is not consistently carried out in the paper.</p> <p>Information loosely supports the thesis statement.</p>
<p><b>D- to D+</b> <b>60-69%</b></p>	<p>Provides inconsistent information for the thesis</p> <p>Has no apparent application of critical thinking</p> <p>Has no clear goal</p> <p>Is pulled from few sources</p> <p>Has significant factual errors, misconceptions, or misinterpretations</p>	<p>Numerous spelling, grammatical, or punctuation errors</p> <p>Poor use of vocabulary and word choice</p>	<p>Content is unfocused and haphazard.</p> <p>Information does not support the solution to the thesis statement.</p> <p>Information has no apparent pattern.</p>