

NORTH PARK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
MNST 5120 – GOSPEL COMMUNICATION IN CONTEXT

Fall Semester, 2017

Tuesday / Thursday, 9:30am – 10:45am

Instructor: Soong-Chan Rah

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CATALOG DESCRIPTION

Gracious and effective communication of the good news of the Christian gospel involves the complex interplay of many factors. Drawing from studies in communication, evangelism, and contemporary culture, participants in this course will engage in an exegesis of culture, an exploration of the mandate and means of evangelism, and the development of skills in listening and speaking. Three hours.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course, participants should be able to:

1. To acquire exegetical skills in biblically-based cultural interpretation for effective communication of the gospel message.
2. To formulate a personal biblical theology of Christian communication through the study of scripture, analysis of case studies, personal reflection, and group interaction.
3. To gain practical experience and develop abilities in receptor-oriented expressions of the gospel message.

We will work towards the Seminary Learning Outcomes of:

- Communicates the whole gospel of Jesus Christ in contextually appropriate and effective ways.
- Engage diversity and exhibit growth towards inter-cultural competence for ministry reflective of God's global redemptive work.

REQUIRED READING

Downing, Crystal. *Changing Signs of Truth*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012.

Rah, Soong-Chan. *Many Colors: Cultural Intelligence for a Changing Church*. Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2010.

Sanneh, Lamin. *Whose Religion is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans 2003.

(On Canvas):

- Smith, Donald K., "The Signals We Use" (p.144-165) in *Creating Understanding: A Handbook for Christian Communication Across Cultural Landscapes*. Zondervan, 1992

A minimum of 500 pages of additional reading new to the student, and that is helpful for the student's final presentation and paper, should include at least one (or more) of the following:

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

- Bevans, Stephen. *Models of Contextual Theology*. Orbis, 1992.
- Bosch, David. *Transforming Mission*. Orbis Books, 1991.
- Campbell, Heidi. *When Religion Meets New Media* (Routledge, 2010).
- Cannon, Mae. *Social Justice Handbook*, IVP Books, 2009.
- Chilcote, Paul and Lacey Warner, eds. *The Study of Evangelism*. Eerdmans, 2008.
- Choung, James. *True Story: A Christianity Worth Believing In*. IVP Books, 2008.
- Detweiler, Craig. *Idols: How Technology Shapes Our Spiritual and Social Lives*. Brazos, 2013.
- Donovan, Vincent. *Christianity Rediscovered*. Orbis, 2003.
- Drescher, Elizabeth. *Tweet If You [Heart] Jesus*. Morehouse Publishing, 2011.
- Gee, Alex and John Teter. *Jesus and the Hip Hop Prophets*. IVP Books, 2003.
- Heen, Sheila, Bruce Patton, and Douglas Stone. *Difficult Conversations*. Penguin Books, 2010.
- Hiebert, Paul. *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues*. Baker Books, 1994.
- Hodge, Daniel White. *The Soul of Hip Hop*. IVP Books, 2010.
- Hopler, Marcia and Thom Hopler. *Reaching the World Next Door*. IVP, 1993.
- Kraft, Charles. *Communication Theory for Christian Witness*, Rev. Ed. Orbis, 1991.
- Ladd, George Eldon. *The Gospel of the Kingdom*. Eerdmans, 1990.
- Lakoff, George and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*. University of Chicago Press, 2003.
- McKee, Robert. *Story*. Harper Publishers, 1997.
- Middleton, J. Richard and Brian J. Walsh, *Truth is Stranger Than it Used to Be*. IVP, 1995.
- Morgenthaler, Sally. *Worship Evangelism*. Zondervan, 1998.
- Olson, Ginny. *Teenage Girls*. Zondervan, 2006.
- Palau, Luis and Timothy Robnett. *Telling the Story*. Regal, 2006.
- Pippert, Rebecca Manley. *Out of the Salt Shaker and Into the World*, rev & exp. ed, IVP, 1999.
- Rah, Soong-Chan. *The Next Evangelicalism*. IVP Books, 2009.
- , *Return to Justice*. Brazos, 2016.
- Robert, Dana L. *Christian Mission*. Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.
- Ross, Cathy and Andrew Walls. *Mission in the Twenty-first Century*. Orbis, 2008.
- Sanneh, Lamin. *Translating the Message*. Orbis, 1989.
- Stark, Rodney. *The Rise of Christianity*. HarperCollins, 1997.
- Stone, Bryan. *Evangelism after Christendom*. Brazos, 2007.
- Teter, John. *Get the Word Out: How God Shapes and Sends His Witnesses*. IVP, 2003.
- Twiss, Richard. *One Church Many Tribes*. Ventura: Regal Books, 1979.
- Utley, Ebony A. *Rap and Religion*. Praeger, 2012.
- Wagner, Rachel. *Godwired : Religion, Ritual, and Virtual Reality*. Routledge, 2012.
- Warner, Lacey. *Saving Women*. Baylor, 2007.

Watkins, Ralph Basui. *Hip-Hop Redemption*. Baker Academic, 2011.
 Woodley, Randy. *Living in Color*. IVP Books, 2004.
 Wright, N.T. *Simply Christian*. HarperOne, 2006.

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to change)

<u>Date</u>	12/7 (R)	Students' Final
	12/11 (F)	Presentations
8/29 (T)		Students' Final
8/31 (R)	<u>Discussion Topics</u>	Presentations
9/5 (T)		Students' Final
9/7 (R)	Student introductions and course mechanics	Presentations
9/12 (T)	Defining Evangelism	Students' Final
9/14 (R)	<i>Missio Dei</i> / Semiotics	Presentations
9/19 (T)	Signal Systems	
9/21 (R)	Biblical Missional Communication (ONLINE)	
9/26 (T)	What is the Gospel?	<u>Assignments Due</u>
9/28 (R)	NO CLASS – Oral Exams to be scheduled	
10/3 (T)	Gospel and Culture	
10/5 (R)	Exegeting Culture (GUEST)	Rec: Rah
10/10 (T)	Lund Lecture	Rec: Bosch, Ch. 12
10/12 (R)	Cognitive Theory	Smith on Moodle
10/18-10/20	Student's Biblical Presentations	Downing DUE
10/24 (T)	Students' Biblical Presentations	Rec: Wright
10/26 (R)	Students' Biblical Presentations	
10/31 (T)	FALL BREAK	Rec: Bevans
11/2 (R)	Evangelism History (ONLINE)	
11/7 (T)	Post-modern Evangelism	
11/9 (R)	Communication through Story	Rec: Lakoff
11/14 (T)	Communication through Dialogue	
11/16 (R)	Multi-Cultural Communication	
11/21 (T)	Evangelism and Media (GUEST)	
11/23 (R)	Evangelism and the Church (GUEST)	
11/28 (T)	Evangelism Research (GUEST)	Sanneh DUE
11/30 (R)	Bounded Set vs. Centered Set	Rec: McLaren
12/5 (T)	Thanksgiving: NO CLASS	Rec: McKee

Rec: Heen, et. **Rah DUE**
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FINAL PAPER
(Reading Log)

Rec: Hodge

COURSE EXPECTATIONS AND ASSIGNMENTS

1. Attendance in all class sessions. Participation in class discussions, 5% of class grade.
2. Personal integration and reflection of the reading, lecture, and discussion material.
3. Lead a class devotional, approximately five minutes in length. Date to be determined.
4. Beyond the three required texts and the Smith article, students will read 500 additional pages. Included in these 500 pages should be a book from the recommended reading list or a book, journal article, or other sources towards completion of the final presentation and final paper (see #8 and #9 below). A signed reading log will be submitted with your final paper on December 16th, 5% of the grade.
5. Take an oral exam on “What is the Gospel”. The exam will run from 15-20 minutes. Time to be determined after September 14th, 10% of class grade.
6. Present in class an eight (8) minute communication of a missional communication from the Bible employing numerous signal systems, 10% of class grade. DUE: October 5th, 10th, 12th.
7. Write three 500 word interactive reflections, one for each of the three required texts. Reflection on Downing due Sep 12th, on Sanneh due Oct 24th, on Rah due Nov 16th, 30% of class grade.
8. Final Presentation: Present in class a ten (10) minute cultural communication of one particular term or concept of the gospel message using dance, media, music, ritual, symbol, or communication methods contemporary for a specific societal group of your choice. The project can also be a media project, which should be accessible to the class. A handout should include a brief exegesis of this cultural group and why the topic you have chosen is important to them. 20% of class grade. DUE: Nov. 28, 30, Dec. 5, 7.
9. Final paper: Write a fully researched and documented 2,500-word paper describing the exegetical process involved in your project, including your decision to focus on a particular societal group, your decision on the topic used in communication, and the methodology used in communication. Include in this paper your own theology of Christian communication and personal application lessons learned as well as other requirements listed on the handout. DUE: December 11th, 20% of class grade.

GRADING

The weight of the assignments will be the following:

3 written book reflections: 10% each (30% of total grade)

Oral exam: 10%

Biblical presentation: 10%

Final presentation: 20%

Final Paper: 20%

Attendance, devotional, participation and reading sheet: 10%

LATE assignments will be marked down 1/3 letter grade per day.

A FINAL GRADE for this course will be computed based upon the following assignments:

ASSIGNMENTS IA/B/C: READING REPORTS 10 max pts/report (30 total)

IA) for Downing (DUE: **September 12th**)

IB) for Sanneh (DUE: **October 24th**)

IC) for Rah (DUE: **November 16th**)

See APPENDIX I for format and grading rubric

ASSIGNMENT II: ORAL EXAM 10 maximum points

15- 20 minute oral exam on “The Gospel”

to be scheduled following the week of September 14th

ASSIGNMENT III: Biblical Message Presentation 10 maximum points

DUE on October 5 / October 10 / October 12

See APPENDIX II for format and grading rubric

ASSIGNMENT IV: Final Presentation 20 maximum points

DUE on November 28 / 30 / December 5 / 7

See APPENDIX III for format and grading rubric

ASSIGNMENT V: FINAL Project Paper 20 maximum points

DUE on December 11th

See APPENDIX IV for format and grading rubric

MISC ASSIGNMENTS: 10 maximum points

Sign Attendance Sheet / Class Participation

Reading Report (See APPENDIX V) due with your final paper on **December 16th**

Grading:

At the completion of this course, you will receive a letter grade reflecting your performance in this course. Letter grades (from A – F) will be awarded according to the existing policies of North Park Theological Seminary. The final course grade will be computed according to the total number of points earned for all assignments as shown below (cf. catalog):

<u>Total Points Earned:</u>	<u>Final Grade:</u>
95-100	A
93-94	A-
91-92	B+

88-90	B
86-87	B-
84-85	C+
80-83	C
78-79	C-
76-77	D+
72-75	D
70-71	D-
69 and below	F

Disabilities Accommodations:

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the program's office (773-244-5619). Please do so as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. For further information please review the following website: <http://www.northpark.edu/ada>

Academic Honesty:

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion. Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another’s work as one’s own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another’s answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one’s answers or work.
4. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.

For further information on this subject you may refer to the Academic Dishonesty section of the University’s online catalog.

NOTES

1. The instructors reserve the right to modify the course syllabus to best accommodate the particular needs of the class.
2. Please be informed that the instructors may not check email after 9:00 pm Monday through Thursday or after 5:00 pm on Friday until Monday morning.
3. If the student is familiar with all the texts listed in the recommended reading list, the student may suggest another that is new to the student and of personal interest with prior approval from the instructors.

4. If your final project involves a group that uses a language other than English the student is encouraged to describe the use of relevant concepts, symbols and media used in that culture's language but must provide verbal translation for the benefit of the class.
5. Consider how you can best integrate the "Statement of Inclusive Language" from the North Park Theological Seminary Catalog into all your communication presentations during the course.
6. If a student has a diagnosed learning disability, please inform the instructor as soon as possible so that appropriate accommodations can be made to benefit instruction.

Updated July 15, 2017