

MS 720CO: CROSS-CULTURAL COMMUNICATION

Spring 2011

Elective: 3 Hours

Columbia, Saturdays 2/4, 2/25, 3/24, 4/21, 9 AM-5 PM each day

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Office Hours: Available by phone or email

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course considers basic principles of communication and pays particular attention to the roles of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as communicators. Students examine the impact of a given culture's norms, values, and practices on the communication of the gospel within that culture. *Elective. Three hours.*

COURSE PURPOSE:

The purpose of this course is to enable students both to understand and to evaluate the impact of culture upon communication. Students will be better equipped to communicate the gospel both within a given culture and across cultural boundaries.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to educate persons for service in the Christian Church. As a part of that mission, one goal is that graduates be prepared to **communicate the Bible's message so as to make clear that its meaning is relevant** for today's audience in all cultures. In order to begin fulfilling that goal, this course introduces students to aspects of both culture and communication, as well as to the way those elements interact in the spread of the gospel.

It is the teacher's intention that by the end of the term, students will:

1. **Appreciate** the way the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit communicate, as well as the examples of Christian witnesses across the centuries as communicators.
2. Be able to **recognize** the various models of communication theory.
3. Be able to **identify** key components of any given society's culture.
4. **Improve** their ability to share the gospel in a variety of cultural settings.
5. Gain experience in **evaluating, preparing, and presenting** a strategy for effective communication across cultural boundaries.

COURSE METHOD:

The purpose and objectives of this course will be achieved through three learning components. The first is the **Content Component**, the student's own mastery of theoretical, Biblical, historical, and practical material essential to understanding culture and communication. This will be accomplished through class lectures and textbook reading (requirements 1, 2, 3, and 5 below). This component addresses objectives 1, 2, and 3 above.

The second component is the **Evaluative Component**, the student's evaluation of the successes or failures of various cross-cultural communication styles and their importance for the student's own ministry. This will be accomplished through the students' own interaction with the material of the course in the process of completing the assigned reflective papers (requirements 1, 2, and 3 below). This component addresses objectives 1, 2, and 3 above.

The third is the **Integrative Component**. Each student will complete and present research as described below (requirement 4). These case studies and presentations will give the student the opportunity to interact with and to prepare a relevant presentation of the gospel for that culture. This component addresses the general purpose of the course to enable the students to develop skills for utilizing cross-cultural communication, and addresses objectives 1, 3, 4, and 5 above.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

Students are expected to secure their own copies of all required textbooks. As a convenience, the seminary has a bookstore portal of the website at <http://www.erskineseminary.org/bookstore.html>. There you will find links to familiar vendors (CBD and Amazon) and can check availability of texts, compare prices, and place orders. The ETS SBA will receive a modest percentage of the profits from students' and professors' purchases through this portal. The Erskine Campus Bookstore will carry a limited number of copies of every required text and orders for books can be placed through the Campus Bookstore.

Elmer, Duane. *Cross-Cultural Servanthood: Serving the World in Christlike Humility*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity, 2006. (ISBN 0830833781)

Johnstone, Patrick and Jason Mandryk. *Operation World: 21st Century Edition*. Waynesboro: Paternoster, 2001. (ISBN 1850783578)

Livermore, David A. *Cultural Intelligence: Improving Your CQ to Engage Our Multicultural World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009. (ISBN 0801035899)

Muehlhoff, Tim. *Authentic Communication: Christian Speech Engaging Culture*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2010. (ISBN 083082815X)

COURSE EXPECTATIONS and SEMINARY POLICIES:

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Requirement One (15 points): Each student will read Muehlhoff's text prior to the second class meeting. Each student will submit prior to this meeting a 3-5 page reflective paper analyzing the text's contribution to specific aspects of the student's Christian life and ministry. The paper should include no more than one page of summary of the book's content. This assignment addresses objectives 1 and 2.

Requirement Two (15 points): Each student will read Livermore's text prior to the third class meeting. Each student will submit prior to this meeting a 3-5 page reflective paper analyzing the text's contribution to specific aspects of the student's Christian life. The paper should include no more than one page of summary of the book's content. This assignment addresses objectives 3 and 4.

Requirement Three (15 points): Each student will read Elmer's text prior to the fourth class meeting. Each student will submit prior to this meeting a 3-5 page reflective paper analyzing the text's contribution to specific aspects of the student's Christian life and ministry. The paper should include no more than one page of summary of the book's content. This assignment addresses objectives 3 and 4.

At the end of the semester each student will submit a statement indicating the percentage of textbook reading completed on time.

Requirement Four (10 points each for a total of 40 points): During each class, students will work together as teams to prepare and present strategies for effectively communicating the Gospel in a multi-cultural setting based on case studies presented by the professor. This assignment addresses objectives 1, 3, 4, and 5.

Requirement Five (15 points): Each student must utilize Operation World by regularly reading and praying for the countries covered for each day of the semester beginning with the first day of class and ending with the last day of class. Students will sign a statement at the conclusion of the semester indicating completion of the assignment. This assignment addresses objectives 3, 4, and 5.

OVERALL GRADING SCALE:

100-95	A	85-84	C+	71-70	D-
94-93	A-	83-80	C		
92-91	B+	79-78	C-	69-0	F
90-88	B	77-76	D+		
87-86	B-	75-72	D		

SEMINARY POLICIES: Click this link and read carefully as part of this syllabus contract:

http://seminary.erskine.edu/content_policies/SeminaryPoliciesforETSSstudents.pdf

COURSE OUTLINE—LECTURE SCHEDULE and ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES:

Class 1 – February 4

Introduction, Theories of Communication

Class 2 – February 25

Understanding Worldviews

Read Muehlhoff and write reflective paper prior to this class.

Class 3 – March 24

Understanding Cultures

Read Livermore and write reflective paper prior to this class.

Class 4 – April 24

Changing Cultures

Read Elmer and write reflective paper prior to this class.