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MB 830 Anthropology for American Church Ministry

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MB 830 Anthropology for American Church Ministry

Darrell Whiteman, Instructor

Dates/ Time: 19-21 and 27-28 August, 1998 9:00-12:00 & 1:00-4:00

Colloquiums: 9-12 A.M. & 1-4 P.M., 18 September; 29 & 30 October

Course Schedule:

DATE	TOPIC
8/19	Introduction to Missiological Anthropology The Concept of Culture
8/20	Understanding Social Organization
8/21	American Values and Worldview
9/27	Insights from Urban Anthropology
9/28	The Challenge of Ethnicity

Course Requirements:

The course will have several components designed to introduce students to the opportunities and challenges of ministering in the United States. Although the primary discipline we are using is cultural anthropology, there will be others as well represented especially in your reading. The components of the course are (1) Reading, (2) Lecture/ Discussions by both the instructor and students, (3) Research, and (4) Colloquiums. Let's look at these in more detail.

1. READING:

There is a lot of reading in this course, but for a doctoral level seminar this is normal. Since no one has yet written a book on the topic of *Pastoral Anthropology for American Ministry* we will have to create our own "text" by reading from several sources:

1. John Naisbitt (1982) *Megatrends*
2. Eugene Nida (1954 or 1997) *Customs and Cultures*
3. David Burnett (1990) *Clash of Worlds*
4. William Dyrness (1989) *How Does America Hear the Gospel?*
5. Edward Stewart & Milton Bennet (1991) *American Cultural Patterns*
6. Robert Bellah, et al (1985) *Habits of the Heart*
7. Lesslie Newbigin (1989) *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*
8. Loren Mead (1991) *The Once and Future Church*

Read the books in the order I have listed. This way you will establish a foundation for subsequent reading. Although all the books are important, I have saved the two most significant ones to read after the class sessions in August. Interaction papers on each of the first six books must be done before our class begins August 20. Do a thorough, creative, and insightful interaction with each book since half of your grade for the course will be over your interactions with the books we read. Your short interaction paper over each book should be approximately 3-5 pages (take what length you need since this is your record of your reading) and cover the following:

- Write a brief summary of the book, indicating that you have read and understood it.
- Note the new insights that have come to you from interacting with this book. This may be many or only a few depending on the book.
- Apply these insights to your life and ministry.
- Record any areas of difficulty, disagreement, etc. that you would like to have discussed by the entire class.

In addition, we will be breaking out into small groups or teams to report to the class the insights and applications from the books you have read. We will organize the groups and order of presentation the first day of class.

2. LECTURES AND CLASS DISCUSSION:

The second part of the course will involve class lectures and discussions. The reason I am having you complete most of the reading before the class begins is so that you can throw your ideas from your reading into our discussion in the course of our lectures. Because of time constraints we will cover only a limited number of topics in the lectures, but I trust they will serve as a starting point for good discussion. Some of you have had classes with me in the past and you know how important is classroom discussion in the life of our course, so I am counting on quality contributions from each of you.

3. RESEARCH:

The research component for this course will be to write an "Ethnography of a Congregation." For the past four classes of Beeson Pastors this assignment turned out to be one of the highlights of the course, if not their whole year's experience. This assignment will give you an opportunity to select a congregation that is **very different** from what you are used to, visit the congregation, observe worship, interview the pastor and leadership in the church. We hope you will develop such good rapport with the congregation that you'll be invited home to someone's house for dinner where you can learn their perspective of the life of the church. You will be asked to function as anthropologists and participant observers, **not as pastors**. The goal will be to give as thorough as possible a cultural description of the congregation. This can be done in teams of two people each. Your final paper must be done in time to make a presentation to the class during the MB 830 Colloquiums we will have October 9 & 10.

4. COLLOQUIUMS

Colloquiums following this intensive course will be the fourth part of the class. The colloquium on September 15 we will use to discuss some seminal articles that will draw on the foundational insights we picked up during the course. You will write an interaction paper on each article, but these will only need to be a page or so. A sample of an interaction form is attached to this syllabus. We will also discuss Newbigin and Mead on that day.

We will reserve October 9-10 for you to make your presentation to the class on your “Ethnography of a Congregation.” I encourage you to make these presentations fun, creative, interesting, engaging, and drawing on all the technologies we have around here to help your colleagues understand the congregation you have studied.

Course Evaluation:

I expect everyone to do well in this course and meet the requirements with distinction. As in many doctoral level courses there will be no final exam since you will be earning your grade as you work through the various assignments in the course. In computing the final grade, the following areas will be considered:

-Interaction papers from your reading	50%
-Ethnography of a Congregation	40%
-Class presentation on a selected book	10%

In addition, you will be asked to nominate a grade for yourself that you believe reflects what you have learned in the course and the quality of your work.

Office Hours:

My office is on the third floor of the McPheeters Center. After our marathon course is over Friday, I will than be having regular office hours on Thursdays 2:00 – 3:00 P.M., and at other times by appointment. Just give me a call (85802215), e-mail (Darrell_Whiteman@ATS.Wilmore.KY.US) or drop by and we'll set a time.

Thanks!

Name _____ Date _____

Title of Article _____

Author _____ Evaluation 1-10 [1=low] _____

Briefly summarize the essence of the article:

What new insights have you gained from reading this article?
(Do as many as fit you)

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

What ideas in the article did you find especially applicable to your life and ministry? How do they apply? (Do as many as fit you. The need not correspond with the above new insights.)

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.

Are there some critical issues you would like to discuss in class?