ME 730 New Church Extension

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Prospectus for the Course  
ME 730  
NEW CHURCH EXTENSION

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION  
An orientation to the theological, sociological, and practical dimensions of starting new churches in North America along with a brief look at case studies and opportunities for new church planting in other lands.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES  
With the much welcomed and long overdue renewal of interest in the new congregational development by many denominations, we intend to provide students with the best literature and insights available for successful leadership in this critical ministry of church planting. By the conclusion of the course, students will have confidence for launching a new congregation based on a strong theological rationale and an array of practical skills including: philosophy of ministry, demographic analysis, site selection, prioritizing of time and energy, management skills, evangelizing secular peoples, cross-cultural and urban sensitivity, strategic planning, worship design, discipling models, leadership styles, architectural planning, etc. In sum, students will be ready to begin a new church ministry starting with day one.

III. PROCEDURE AND COURSE REQUIREMENTS  
The course consists of weekly class sessions meeting Thursday evenings from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. in room SH 408 and possible travel to field sites. Classes will include lectures, videos, discussion, field observation and interviews, personal research, and guest resource leaders. The reading, both required and collateral, is considered part of the curriculum and a reading report must be turned in on a "Reading Report" sheet (attached) by Dec. 9th. One point will be lost for each 50 pages not completed. Also due on Dec. 9th will be the course project. A Critical Book Review following the guidelines provided is due on Thursday, November 11th. Any student absent for more than one class period will need to read 100 extra pages for each class missed and consult with the professor regarding other possible assignments.

A. READING REQUIREMENTS  (25% of Grade)  
The following texts are considered required reading:

2. Church Planting for a Greater Harvest, Peter Wagner, 1990 (150 pages).
3. The Purpose Driven Church, Rick Warren, 1995 (390 pages).

In addition to required reading, 400 pages of collateral reading must be read from the texts below, items on reserve, or other materials approved by the professor. Materials read previously cannot be counted as collateral for this course.

27. *George Hunter, Church for the Unchurched*, 1996.

OR Various denominational materials and other resources available through the library or your own initiative.

B. **THE BOOK REVIEW** (25% of Grade) DUE 11/11/99
   Students must select one of the required texts or one of the texts marked (*) above and write a 750 to 800 word critical book review following the enclosed guidelines for writing academic-critical book reviews. PLEASE read samples of such reviews in academic journals if you are unfamiliar with this assignment.

C. **CLASS PROJECT** (50% of Grade)
   Each student will be responsible for a class project and a written report (or a take home final examination) due the last day of class. The following projects are considered to be most helpful, but other projects may be accepted after consultation with the professor.

1. Choose a political area (a county, city, census tract, etc.) and study the census and/or current demographic reports. Compare this with earlier demographic studies or census for trends. Identify and interview at least one knowledgeable person who can interpret trends being noted and projected for the next decade. Then, do a "windshield survey" and identify at least one tract or other section of your area "ripe" for new church development. Write a simulated (or actual) proposal for such development to your judicatory office and make your case. Copy it to your professor.

2. Participate in a community survey seeking out the unchurched in a neighborhood or area. Evaluate their receptivity and identify basic human, social and spiritual needs.
Project the kinds of ministries and emphases that would best reach these people for Christ if a new church were to be started. Give a brief description of how you would plant a new church in this area, including a philosophy of ministry.

3. Work with and interview a local pastor and/or denominational official involved in new church development. Evaluate the experience and report on lessons learned, contributions made, recommendations, etc.

4. Interview three new church planting pastors and at least two lay persons in each church. Write up your interviews in the form of three case studies not to exceed four double spaced typed pages each. Include in each case study the basic historical, demographic and statistical information, problems faced, special awareness of God's presence, special gifts and emphases of the pastor, and other similar ingredients emphasized in our texts or in class.

5. Write or phone your own church extension board or agency requesting all available information on preparing you for a church planting ministry. Write up an evaluation of their program and materials including such matters as alternative models for new churches, cross-cultural and ethnic minority focus, mission opportunities, the relationship of your polity to successful new church development, etc. We would appreciate an extra copy of any material not currently on file from your denomination or agency.

6. Do a study of church planting in a particular mission field or your home country, using published reports and field data. Evaluate the effectiveness of the efforts and recommend adjustments and/or alternatives.

D. CLASS PRESENTATION (10% of Grade)
All Th.M., D.Miss., and Ph.D. students will be asked to lead the class in a 15 minute presentation on some aspect of the challenge before us. Select one of the areas listed below and draw on both your reading and your personal experience.

IV. PROPOSED SCHEDULE
Although we may vary slightly from the order listed due to the availability of our "outside guests" and field contacts, our intended course outline is below.

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<td>Biblical/Historical Rationale for Church Planting</td>
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<td>9/16</td>
<td>II</td>
<td>Church Planting Pastors: Gifts, Personalities, Style</td>
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<td>9/23</td>
<td>III</td>
<td>Philosophy of Ministry (POM)</td>
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<td>IV</td>
<td>Models and Strategies for New Churches</td>
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<td>VI</td>
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<td>10/21</td>
<td>VII</td>
<td>Contextual Research</td>
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<td>VIII</td>
<td>Understanding and Reaching the Unchurched</td>
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<td>IX</td>
<td>Advertising, Initial Contacts, and Evangelism</td>
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<td>Designing Worship</td>
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<td>XI</td>
<td>Leadership and Discipleship</td>
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