MI 770 Christian Mission and Global Culture

Howard A. Snyder

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MI770. Christian Mission & Global Culture

[Syllabus available on the Seminary Network as: MI770/00]

DESCRIPTION
An examination of trends and currents which are shaping emerging global culture and an exploration of the challenges and opportunities these provide for authentic Christian witness. Developments in science, technology, economics, philosophy, religion, and popular culture are examined for their worldview implications, and the positive and negative aspects of postmodernity are assessed.

PURPOSES
1. To survey current cultural trends of global significance.
2. To discern and understand current and emerging worldviews.
3. To rethink Christian mission, including worldview, in the light of these currents.
4. To discern opportunities and challenges for authentic Christian witness today.

METHODOLOGY
Readings, lectures, and videos, plus focused research by students on selected topics, will constitute the principal methodology of the course.

STRUCTURE OF COURSE
We will follow the schedule indicated below. The assigned readings will provide the basic structure for the course. Class sessions will combine lecture, discussion of readings, student presentations, and videos. The course outline follows, for the most part, the structure of the book, EarthCurrents.

TEXTBOOKS


RECOMMENDED [ON RESERVE in the Library]


Adeney, Miriam. God’s Foreign Policy: Practical Ways to Help the World’s Poor. Grand Rapids, MI:
COURSE EXPECTATIONS

1. Participate in all class sessions, making informed contributions based on your reading and other research.

2. Complete all the assigned readings as per the schedule.

3. Watch for at least two hours per week: PBS’ “Newshour,” CNN’s “The World,” or other quality news program (not ABC, NBC, CBS, CNBC, or “Headline News”), or listen to at least two hours of NPR’s “All Things Considered” each week. Be especially alert for items that have global significance, or that indicate important socio-cultural developments, and be prepared to report these to the class.

4. Read and review in class one of the books listed in the course bibliography that are marked with an asterisk (*), and turn in a 5-page written review of the book. The written review will be due on the date of the class presentation. Your choice should be made by the second week of class (Sept. 12).

5. Research Project: Each student will complete a major research project which will be presented in summary form in class (approx. 20 minutes). Choose a topic that especially interests you and that will make a contribution to your missiological preparation. Parameters:
   a. Decide on a topic in consultation with the professor and/or the class.
   b. Any topic is acceptable so long as it 1) relates to a significant global cultural trend and 2) focuses on a specific issue in Christian mission (whether evangelism, church planting, discipleship, compassion or justice ministries, urban mission, leadership training, etc.).
   c. Turn in a 1 or 2-page project proposal on Sept. 19. The proposal should state briefly the rationale for the project, the proposed methodology, and the major resources you expect to use.

   The research project should be submitted to the professor in the form of a research paper (with references and bibliography). Research papers are due Dec. 5, but may be submitted earlier. This paper should be in the range of 20-25 pages, approximately.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

See the current seminary Catalog, p. 21. Attendance will be taken at each class. More than three unexcused absences will result in lowering the grade by one letter. Three unexcused tardies are considered to be equivalent to one unexcused absence.

EVALUATION

There will be no final exam. Grading will be based on the major course components, as follows:

- Class participation, including input from readings: 40%
- Book review, including oral presentation: 20%
- Research project: 40% 100%
SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNED READING

SEPT. 5 - INTRODUCTION / OVERVIEW

SEPT. 12 - GLOBALIZATION AND GLOBAL TRENDS
Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 10-45
Friedman, ix-72
Recommended: Korten, 1-50
Spencer, 9-20

SEPT. 19 - THE GLOBAL ECONOMY
Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 46-63
Friedman, 73-100
Rifkin, 3-95
Recommended: Korten, 53-101
Postman, xi-39
Spencer, 21-36

SEPT. 26 - GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT
Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 64-87
Friedman, 101-42
Rifkin, 96-167
Recommended: Korten, 103-58, 261-76
Postman, 40-55
Spencer, 37-62

OCT. 3 - GLOBAL SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY
Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 88-115
Friedman, 145-93
Rifkin, 168-217
Recommended: Korten, 159-206
Postman, 56-143
Spencer, 63-88

OCT. 10 - GLOBAL CULTURE
Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 116-50
Friedman, 194-275
Rifkin, 218-34
Recommended: Korten, 207-37
Postman, 144-63
Spencer, 89-103

OCT. 17 - GLOBAL WORLDVIEWS
Readings: Snyder, *EarthCurrents*, 152-85
Friedman, 276-324
Rifkin, 235-66
Berger, 1-18
Recommended: Korten, 239-57
Postman, 164-99
Spencer, 104-26
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<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>OCT. 24</td>
<td>GLOBAL WORLDVIEWS</td>
<td>Snyder, <em>EarthCurrents</em>, 186-212</td>
<td>Snyder, “The Enigma of Kerala” (Hand-out)</td>
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<td>Friedman, 327-405</td>
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<td>McKibben, <em>The Enigma of Kerala</em></td>
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<td>Sine, 11-68</td>
<td>Pipher, <em>The Shelter of Each Other</em>, 1-32, 223-71</td>
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<td>NOV. 7</td>
<td>GLOBAL MISSION: ISSUES</td>
<td>Snyder, <em>EarthCurrents</em>, 247-76</td>
<td>Korten, 293-305</td>
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<td>Friedman, 406-33</td>
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<td>Snyder, <em>Coherence</em>, 1-22</td>
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<td>NOV. 28</td>
<td>GLOBAL MISSION: STRATEGIES</td>
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<td>Friedman, 434-75</td>
<td>Adeney, <em>God’s Foreign Policy</em>, 59-100</td>
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<td>McKaughn &amp; O’Brien, <em>Choosing a Future for U.S. Missions</em></td>
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<td>Spencer, 207-30</td>
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<td>DEC. 5</td>
<td>GLOBAL MISSION: PRIORITIES</td>
<td>Sine, 193-240</td>
<td>Adeney, <em>God’s Foreign Policy</em>, 101-40</td>
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<td>Spencer, 231-50</td>
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Select Bibliography - MI770

(See also the bibliographies and reference notes in the assigned textbooks.)


* Ronsvalle, John, and Sylvia Ronsvalle. *The Hidden Billions: The Potential of the Church in the U.S.A.* Champaign, IL: C-4 Resources, 1984. 185 pp. Based on extensive research, the founders of empty tomb, inc., in Urbana, IL, here show the potential of the U.S. church to be in creative partnership with churches elsewhere in the world and the financial resources that could be released for this purpose.


