MW 728 Understanding Religion for Mission

Terry C. Muck
I. COURSE DESCRIPTION
A study of the distinctive characteristics of religion through systematic investigation of its basic structures. Provides tools to understand religion as it occurs across all faiths, and introduces the Christian faith as representing a unique religious structure. Relates the skills of the scholarly study of religion to topics and issues of study germane to missiology and mission work.

II. COURSE GOALS
A. Students will articulate the basic scholarly methodologies used to study religion;
B. Students will develop tools of analysis enabling them to research the history, beliefs, and practices of religious traditions;
C. Through a study of the emerging field of the theology of religion, students will conceptualize and write their own approach to a theology of religion;
D. Students will create missiological models that incorporate both scholarly and theological approaches to people of non-Christian religions.

III. TEXTBOOKS

IV. ASSIGNMENTS
1. Read assigned texts.
2. Write a five page discussion paper on each reading assignment
3. Discuss each reading in class
4. A final examination
5. One major paper articulating your theology of religions
6. Write a one week religious diary
V. CLASS SCHEDULE

February 9      Religion: Theology? Science? Experience?
February 16    Religion as Biology
February 23    Religion as Psychology
March 2        Religion as Social Psychology
March 9        Religion as Sociology
March 16       Religion as Philosophy
March 23       Religion as History
March 30       Phenomenology of Religion
April 6        SPRING READING WEEK
April 13       Comparative Religion
April 20       Theology of Religion(s)
April 27       Comparative Theology
May 4