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CS 637 Rural Community and Moral Concerns

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Course Description:
Though the U.S. population has “urbanized” over the past century, substantial portions remain in rural areas. Many seminary graduates will take positions in such settings upon graduation. To properly serve, students should gain knowledge about the economic and social structure of rural communities. CS637 introduces students to appropriate secular literature and resources and provides Christian models for responding to various moral problems and conflicts. Particular ethical focus for the course are the cultural interpretations of n/Nature, land, work, stewardship, and Christian service.

The course is to be offered in conjunction with AMERC.

Objectives for specific course:

**Students will be:**
- Able to explain basic the Christian tradition of social care & action [tested in course discussions].
- Able to provide a theological underpinning for a moral position (for or against) Christian social/political action [evaluated in course discussions].
- Familiar, at an introductory level, with approaches to social analysis for social action (both quantitative & qualitative) [evaluated in integrative paper assignments].
- Familiar with several practical models for addressing social problems as a Christian social worker and as a local church leader, specifically within rural communities [evaluated in course discussions and exam].
- Familiar with the language of and organizations involved in social care & action [evaluated with exam].
- Familiar with introductory literature on the social and economic structure of rural America [assured through maintenance of reading record].
- Able to analyze current significant moral problems in rural America (e.g., employment, vertical economic integration of agriculture, use of genetically-modified organisms in farming) [analytical ability evaluated with integrative paper assignments and exam].
- Familiar with various forms of rural employment [evaluated through participation in discussions during course].
- Able to access Church and secular organizations in order to respond to the needs of individuals and groups in rural America (special consideration is given to the actual techniques used for such responses) [evaluated in integrated paper assignments].
- Able to recognize barriers that exclude persons from full participation in society and how church leaders can assist some such persons into the care and guidance of the community of faith under the Lordship of Christ [evaluated through participation in discussions during course].

Shared Learning Objectives for Understanding the World

**Students will be able:**
- To demonstrate a basic awareness of the cultural dimensions of effective ministry.
- To utilize selected tools from anthropological, socio-economic and political analysis for interpreting and addressing issues.
- To describe examples of cross-cultural ministry and service.
- To explain how individual Christians and Christian communities can respond to the needs, contexts, and insights of various cultural groups and marginalized communities in the world and in the church.
Required Texts:

Caudill, Harry M., *Night Comes to the Cumberlands* Ashland, KY: Jesse Stuart Foundation, 2001 (re-publication)


Kline, David,  *Great Possessions: An Amish Farmer’s Journal*  

Pappas, Anthony G. *Inside the Small Church* Alban Institute, 2002  


*International students may substitute certain readings with permission of instructor*

*Each book should be entirely read.*

Suggested Texts:


Websites:

General:

USDA Introduction to Rural America  

Appalachian Geographic Information Systems  
[http://www.uky.edu/RGS/AppalCenter/gis/index.html]

University of Kentucky: Appalachian Center  
[http://www.uky.edu/RGS/AppalCenter/]


Bibliography on role of women in Appalachia  
[http://www.uky.edu/RGS/AppalCenter/wombib.htm]

Ethnicity (Gary Gorham: North Dakota State University)  
[http://www.ndsu.nodak.edu/rsse/html/ethnicgp.html]

Governance:

Appalachian Regional Commission  [http://www.arc.gov/index.do?nodeId=1]

Columbus Dispatch article on corruption  
Non-agricultural economics (e.g. extraction [coal, gravel], timber, chemical):

Tennessee Tech Appalachia Page [http://www2.tntech.edu/sociology/app/] … look at economic section

Ohio Valley Environmental Coalition [http://www.ohvec.org/]

Kentucky Coal Council [http://www.coaleducation.org/default.htm] … from this site goes into pictorial on Modern Mining Techniques

Mennonite overview of Appalachia [http://www.mcc.org/greatlakes/appalachia/resources/Friends.htm]

Agriculture:

Mary K. Muth, Dominic Mancini, and Catherine Viator “US Food Manufacturer Assessment of and Responses to Bioengineered Foods” AgBioForum 5:3 [http://www.agbioforum.org/v5n3/v5n3a03-muth.htm]


Community Farm Alliance [http://www.communityfarmalliance.com/]

Rural Ministry

Religion in Appalachia, Appalachian State University: [http://www.les.appstate.edu/courses/appalachia/religion/]

Center for Rural Church Ministry [http://www.seorf.ohiou.edu/~xx042/r_ctr/crlc_art.html]

Evaluation:

35% Each Response Paper (2 total for 70%)
30% Final Examination
Debit: For inadequate class participation and/or late or incomplete reading

Grade Range: Work for CS637 will be evaluated at a graduate/professional school level.

A (93-100) = Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives.
A- (90-92) =
B+ (87-89) =
B (83-86) = Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives
B- (80-82) =
C+ (77-79) =
C (73-76) = Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives
C- (70-72) =
D+ (67-69) =
D (63-66) = Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives
D- (60-62) =
F (> 60) = Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives

Response Papers:

#1 Write a theology of Christian care/concern. Include the basis for and limits to social service and political action by churches. Include reference to caring for non-human entities (animals, the “land,” etc.) 7-8 pages. Students should have researched subject and composed at least a solid draft prior to class. **DUE AUGUST 28, 2003 IN CLASS**

#2 Using tobacco, whiskey production, thoroughbred rearing, and/or the use of genetically-modified crops, discuss how the farmer, the worker, and the owner can or cannot be immoral by virtue of the product being produced. 7-8 pages. **DUE SEPTEMBER 8, 2003 at 9 am** (non-Asbury students may send the paper electronically; use Word compatible format)
OR

Research a real example of cross-cultural interaction from a rural perspective. This could be rural/urban or rural/suburban cooperation on a social problem, a discussion of class differences, or ethnic differences. What are the strengths and weaknesses of responses to the moral concern in this example (be specific)? How would you improve the situation? 7-8 pages. DUE SEPTEMBER 8, 2003 at 9 am (non-Asbury students may send the paper electronically; use Word compatible format)

Final Examination: The final will be an objective question, oral examination. No notes or books are permitted. The exam is not to be discussed during or after taking the final.

Participation: Students are required to complete all assigned readings. Since the course is an intensive, full attendance is required. Each student will have a brief oral examination over the basic material.

Written Work: All written work must be typed with 12-point type, one-inch margins on all four sides, and true double spacing. Follow page limit requirements. There will be a penalty for late papers commensurate with the degree of lateness and the adequacy of the excuse.

All written work must use inclusive language when reference is made to human beings (male and female). This provides for both greater inclusion and greater precision. For more information on this topic see ‘Suggestions for Using Inclusive Language’.

READ THE REQUIRED BOOKS PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS

August 18  MONDAY
8:45        Meet in Wilmore, Kentucky outside Beeson Manor, Asbury Theological Seminary
9:00        Leave for Ohio
Pre-Colonial agriculture & society Serpent Mound (Adena or Fort Ancient
Indigenous Americans), Peebles, Ohio
Meal at Amish home & discussion on rural America

HELPFUL SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS (NOT REQUIRED):
Davidson, Osha Gray, "Roots of the Farm Crisis" Broken Heartland 13 - 46
Berry, Wendell, “A Practical Harmony” What Are People For?
Jung, et al. “Seeing Rural America in Context”
Rural Ministry: The Shape of the Renewal to Come
Rural Ministry: The Shape of the Renewal to Come

August 19  TUESDAY
Morning     Visit to Amish farm in Holmes County (David Kline) to discuss on-going non-industrial models of farming
Lunch       Berlin
Afternoon   Free time in Berlin
Supper      Cookout
Evening     Forum with local pastors and community residents (5) about rural ministry (7pm)

August 20  WEDNESDAY
Morning     Visit Wooster Experimental Station, Ohio State University
            (David McCartney 10 am- Thorn Hall Annex – (330) 263-3969 )
Lunch       Amish restaurant (Mt. Hope, Ohio)
Afternoon   Agricultural auction in Mennonite/Amish region (Mt. Hope, Ohio)
            Behalt Mennonite museum (4:30; private tour at 5pm)
            Supper on your own in Berlin
Evening     View videos on GMOs & farm economy (7 pm)
HELPFUL SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS (NOT REQUIRED):
Berry, Wendell, The Unsettling of America: Culture & Agriculture pp.51-79
Leopold, Aldo, “What is a Weed?” For the Health of the Land

August 21  THURSDAY
8:00 Leave Holmes County
“Good Works” in Athens, Ohio

SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS:
Augsburger, David W. "Mediation: The Necessity of A Go-Between"
Conflict Mediation Across Cultures 187 – 228
Kauffman, J. Timothy, "Structures, Injustice and Insensitivity:
Who is the Neighbor, Anyway?"
in Van Engen & Tiersma (ed) God So Loved the City 27 – 52

August 22  FRIDAY
5:00 Dirt track for automobile race (races end about 9 pm)

August 23  SATURDAY  NO ORGANIZED SESSIONS

August 24  SUNDAY
10:30 Worship at Mt. Zion Church with oral history activities & potluck at Thobaben’s Farm, Wilmore, Kentucky
(may visit another rural church with approval; must attend afternoon activities)

August 25  MONDAY
10:00 Open pit mine or gravel pit - Lexington Quarry - Catnip Hill
Visit to Harrodsburg
Visit to tobacco farm
Conversation with B. Poage & discussion in Wilmore (should conclude by 5pm)

HELPFUL SUPPLEMENTAL READINGS (NOT REQUIRED)
Farley, Gary E. "Poverty: The Urban-Rural Linkage" in Meyers, Scott (ed)
Envisioning the New City: A Reader on Urban Ministry 109 – 124
Rural Ministry: The Shape of the Renewal to Come
Mann, David "Pastor, Priest, Organizer: Leadership in Community Ministries" in Meyers, Scott (ed) Envisioning the New City: A Reader on Urban Ministry
Dudley, Carl S. Next Steps in Community Ministry 11-20, 33-54
Perkins, John "What is Christian Community Development?"
Restoring At-Risk Communities 17-26
See also printout of CCDA WebPage
Alexander, John F. "Making People Aware" in Ellison (ed.)
The Urban Mission  83 - 91
Dewey, Roger "A Comprehensive Model for Evangelical Involvement"
in Ellison (ed.) The Urban Mission 215 - 228
Solari-Twadell, Phyllis Ann, "Models of Parish Nursing: A Challenge in Design"
in Parish Nursing: The Developing Practice (ed. Solari-Twadle, Djupe & McDermott) 57 – 76
August 26  TUESDAY
  10:00  Visit to Ashford Stud thoroughbred farm
        Visit to Woodford Reserve whiskey production facility;

August 27  WEDNESDAY
        Student exams (scheduled through day)

August 28  THURSDAY
  10:00  Closing theoretical discussion
        Afternoon  The “popular” culture of rural America: the case of Kentucky (guest lecture:
                    Loyal Jones, emeritus Berea College)
        Evening  “Open stage night” at the J.D. Crowe Bluegrass Festival, Wilmore Kentucky.

Some Points About Travel
During the field trips, housing will be provided by host families except in Wilmore. Though there will be no charge, a token of appreciation in the form of a gift will be offered. Students may participate in the gift-giving, though as part of the group not as individuals. Students from institutions besides ATS will be housed at Beeson Manor.

Students should bring their own toiletries.

Students will be responsible for their own meals, except when provided by host families or at potlucks. Costs for meals in rural Ohio and Kentucky are significantly less (about $5 for a breakfast or lunch prior to tip) than in many urban areas, though one dinner scheduled at an Amish restaurant may cost $10 - $12.

All participants must have some form of health insurance. Information about that insurance must be provided to the professor prior to the first day of class, preferably at the time of registration for non-Asbury students.

Students from other institutions must act in a manner compatible with the ATS Ethos Statement while traveling with the class. This means no alcohol may be consumed, and no one may "sleep" with a person who is not his/her spouse. If one disagrees with these expectations, adherence is still expected. It may be understood as respect for another sub-culture rather than agreement. Or, it can be interpreted as a good introduction to what is demanded of most rural pastors in America.