Developing Christ-minded leaders who make a difference in the world

MI 432 Integral Mission

Winter Semester, 2013

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COURSE WEIGHT: 3 credit hours

SCHEDULE: Thursdays, 1:30 – 4:30 PM

“IT’S NOT THE CHURCH OF GOD THAT HAS A MISSION IN THE WORLD, BUT THE GOD OF MISSION WHO HAS A CHURCH IN THE WORLD”
– Rowan Williams, Archbishop of Canterbury

DESCRIPTION:
A holistic study of God’s mission in the world and how God’s mission is being expressed in a variety of global contexts.

OBJECTIVES:
Through this course the participants should develop a deepening understanding of the biblical perspective of the mission of God. Towards this end the participants should:

1) gain an understanding of the biblical scope of the Reign of God;

2) be engaged in discussion concerning some of the issues of mission theology and practice, especially as these are expressed in the local church;

3) establish a personal, biblical perspective on the missional church and integral mission.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

[Available as a Kindle electronic download at Amazon.com]

A compendium of eight articles accessible on our course web site.

Taylor Seminary Guide for Research and Writing (available on our course web site.)
REQUIREMENTS OF THE COURSE:

1. **Reading and Book Report**
   By following the schedule in the course outline, students will read through the required texts as well as eight assigned articles.

   In addition to the assigned reading, students will select and read one of the books from the list on pages 9-10 of this syllabus. Students will submit a 3–4 page book review of the selected book, following the template included on page 12 of this syllabus. **Due February 21**

2. **Reading Responses**
   Students will submit written responses to pre-determined questions based on the assigned readings. **These are due at class time each week.**

3. **Attendance and Participation**
   A major part of the learning for this course is structured to take place in classroom lectures and small group interaction. Students who are on time for class and are thoughtfully engaged in talking about the assigned readings will receive full marks in this section.

4. **Congregational Analysis**
   In a 5-8 page paper describe the congregation that you are engaged in as a leader, participant, member, or adherent. The description should give a very brief history, its tradition, its form(s) of worship, its means of leadership choice/appointment, its population by number and demographics and its mission statement and key focus. Respond to the following questions:
   1. Does the congregation have a well developed understanding of the community it is seeking to reach?
   2. Does the congregation have a sense of being “on a mission with God” to reach this community?
   3. Does the congregation’s sense of mission reflect the broad concerns of the kingdom of God?
   4. What suggestions would you make (if any) for re-focusing and kindling a more biblical sense of congregational mission? **Due March 14**

5. **Integrative Essay**
   Write an 8 – 12 page paper supporting or refuting the statement, “A biblical understanding of the Missio Dei requires the church to embrace a broad definition of Christian mission.” Your essay should demonstrate a significant grasp of relevant biblical material, the two texts, assigned articles, elective book review and lectures. All references to these materials should be duly footnoted. This is an opportunity for the student to articulate a philosophy of ministry and mission as well as to reflect upon and integrate what has been learned in the course. This essay should follow the Taylor Seminary Guide for Research and Writing. **Due April 11.** Students will prepare a 10 minute summary to share with classmates on the last class, **April 18.**

Grading for this assignment will be calculated with the following criteria in mind:

1. **Clear organization and formulation of ideas** 7
2. **Integration with course materials** 15
3. **Spelling, grammar and sentence construction** 4
4. **Format/Taylor Guide** 4
EVALUATION:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Workload</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading/ Responses</td>
<td>Various</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>42 hrs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Book Review</td>
<td>February 21</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>8 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attendance and Participation</td>
<td>Regular</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Congregational Analysis</td>
<td>March 14</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>20 hrs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Integrative Essay</td>
<td>April 11</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>20 hrs</td>
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TOTAL = 90 hrs

EXTENSIONS:

Extensions for course work will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. These must be negotiated with the instructor prior to the deadlines.

OUTLINE/SCHEDULE OF THE COURSE:

January
24  - Intro to Course. What is Integral Mission?
31  - Integral Mission: Biblical Foundations
   Read: Ott and Strauss, Introduction, Cha. 1
          Kirk, Introduction, Chapters 1-2

February
7   - Integral Mission: Mission in the Way of Jesus
   Read: Ott and Strauss, Cha. 2-3
          Kirk, Chapter 3
   Article: Santos Yao, The Table Fellowship of Jesus with the Marginalized: A Radical Inclusiveness

14  - Integral Mission: The Kingdom
   Read: Ott and Strauss, Cha. 4-6
          Kirk, Chapter 4
   Article: Jack Deere, Prayer Meetings Can be Dangerous

21  - Integral Mission: Motivation for Missions and Missional Churches
   Read: Ott and Strauss, Cha. 7, 8
   Article: Brad Brisco, Transitioning from Traditional to Missional Churches
   http://missionalchurchnetwork.com/transitioning-from-traditional-to-missional/
   Book Review due

28  - Integral Mission: Liberation and Social Justice
   Read: Ott and Strauss, Cha. 9, 10
          Kirk, Chapters 6 and 8
March
7 - Integral Mission: Contextualization
Read: Ott and Strauss, Cha. 11
       Kirk, Chapter 5

14 - Integral Mission: Mission and the Encounter with Other Religions
Read: Ott and Strauss, Cha. 12
       Kirk, Chapter 7
Article: Norman Thomas, *The Gospel Among the World Religions*

21 - Integral Mission as Care for Creation
Read: Kirk, Chapter 9
       Brian McClaren, *Consider the Turtles of the Field*

Congregational Analysis due

28 – No Class – Spring Break

April
4 - Integral Mission as Healing
Read: Kirk, Chapter 10

11 - Integral Mission and Post-Christendom
Read: Ott and Strauss, Cha. 13
       Kirk, Chapter 11
Article: Kenneth R. Ross, *Old Church and New Evangelism: A Scottish Perspective on Christian Mission in Today’s Europe*

Integrative Essay Due

18 - Challenges in Global Mission Today
Read: Kirk, Postscript
Sharing of Integration Papers
READING RESPONSE QUESTIONS

January 31
Ott and Strauss, Intro and Chapter 1
1. In the first two pages of the introduction the authors raise a number of critical questions concerning mission today. Select one that is of greatest interest to you and explain why you chose it.
2. Consider the four definitions of mission in sidebar 1.1. Which do you think most accurately reflects a biblical understanding of mission, and why?
3. Ott and Strauss agree with the majority of OT scholars that Israel did not have a specific mandate to “go” to the nations, but to be a holy presence, drawing the nations to worship the true God. If you were to develop a counter-argument, what biblical evidence would you offer to support the notion that Israel was commissioned to take its faith to the nations?

Kirk, Chapters 1, 2
1. Dialogue with the six tasks of theology, giving special attention to the challenge of doing theology in the Canadian context. What is one specific challenge each aspect of the task faces in our social/cultural context? (Non-Canadians are encouraged to interact with their own cultural contexts).
2. Reflect on your seminary experience so far. What are some instances in which the missional dimension has been integrated with other subjects? Where could this have been done more intentionally?

February 7
Ott and Strauss, Ch. 2, 3
1. Why do the authors suggest that “centrifugal mission” may not be an appropriate descriptor of mission to the nations in the New Testament?
2. The authors emphasize that mission, in the New Testament, is primarily an activity of the Spirit of God. Select one quote regarding the role of the Holy Spirit in mission and briefly write what you like about it.
3. Explain, in your own words, the theological shift that occurred in our understanding of mission as a result of the 1952 International Missionary Conference at Willingen, Germany. Why is it described as a “Copernican revolution in mission”?
4. After reading the Case Study Mission is Immoral, place yourself in Charlotte’s shoes and respond to two of the stereotypes of missionaries presented by Amber’s friends.

Kirk, Chapter 3
Develop a summary paragraph of the ministry and mission of Jesus that can serve as a paradigm for mission today.

“Table Fellowship of Jesus”
Offer a brief reflection on how Yao’s article has challenged you. Then, answer the question: Do you think Yao overstated his thesis in the article? Defend your answer.

February 14
Ott and Strauss, Cha. 4-6 (Select and answer 7 of these questions)
1. Reflect on the section Doxology as the Purpose of Mission. What are some trends in church and mission today that might be critiqued or corrected by this theological perspective?
2. “The Church in its mission today must break out of its own small horizon and discover the implications of God’s kingdom horizon. It is then that the reality of the Kingdom of God can become the
very dynamic of mission” (Ken Gnanakan, p.89). Outline three things that would change in your local
church or denomination if what Gnanakan describes were to happen.
3. “Some evangelicals so emphasize the fallenness of this world and Christ’s return as the only hope
that they reject all efforts to work toward the kingdom in history. On the other hand, ecumenical
groups in particular have tended to work as if there was “no hope apart from this world, and that
human effort could usher in near utopia” (p.92). Which of these two extremes have you encountered
most frequently? How have you sought to resolve the tension between hope and action?
4. In what ways do globalization and the widespread use of the English language negatively affect an
incarnational approach to mission?
5. Chapter four concludes with a summative definition of mission. Which concepts in this definition are
least understood in the Christian community you are most familiar with?
6. The authors suggest that Christians today may be guilty of unexamined cultural superiority and lack
of appreciation for other cultures. How have you seen this demonstrated?
7. How do you respond to the Report I from Nairobi, Confessing Christ Today, when it describes the
content of the Gospel? Are there elements of this statement that you are uncomfortable with? If so,
why?
8. How do you interact with the popular phrase in theology of mission concerning “God’s preferential
option for the poor”? Is this priority evidenced in your local congregation or denominational mission
efforts?
9. Explain the statement by Bosch, “One’s theology of mission is always closely dependent on one’s
theology of salvation.” Where does your church tradition stand in its understanding of soteriology on a
spectrum between personal/individual and cosmic?

Kirk, Chapter 4
1. Select one definition of evangelism that most appeals to you. Why do you prefer it over the others?
2. How do you think “evangelism” is most commonly understood in your local congregation? In what
respects is this understanding deficient or incomplete?

“Prayer Meetings Can be Dangerous”
Why do you think we so easily become lulled into a sense that “everything is alright “ in our local church
ministries and so seldom ask the kind of tough questions Jack dares to ask his elders in this story? What
do you think is the biggest thing that needs to change in your local congregation in order to be more
effective for the sake of the kingdom?

February 21
Ott and Strauss Cha. 7-8
1. The authors present “condescending pity” as an inappropriate motivation for mission. How would
you distinguish between “condescending pity” and “compassion”?
2. Peruse a hymnal and examine the section on “missions” or “service and missions.” What are some of
the common motivational themes you encounter in them?
3. How do you respond to J. Hudson Taylor’s sermon when he says that “all of us are commanded to go,
unless we have a special call to stay at home”?
4. Do you agree with the author’s statement that the church today has lost the sense of urgency about
mission and Christ’s return? If so, what do you think are two or three major reasons for this
development?
5. The authors open this chapter seeking to make a strong case for the missionary identity of the
church. This is because many churches do not prioritize this as a self-identity. What are some of the
main “competitors” around which churches have formed their primary identity?
6. How do you respond to the author’s five cautions concerning the “missional church” movement? Which of the five do you think are the most serious?

“Transitioning from Traditional to Missional”
Brisco offers 9 steps or marks of transition. Briefly analyze the congregation you are most familiar with in light of his prescription for transition.

February 28
Ott and Strauss, cha. 9 - 10
1. How do you respond to the observation that, when we advocate that “every Christian is a missionary,” the importance and urgency of cross-cultural mission to the nations is diminished?
2. Carefully read M. David Sills’ description of a “missionary call.” Reflect in a few sentences on the ways you have wrestled with the missionary mandate as you have sought to find your ministry vocation.
3. Do you think the term “missionary” is still meaningful? Can it be rehabilitated or should we find a new expression?
4. In the West we find a wide range of attitudes toward spiritual power; on one side are perspectives shaped by modernity, rationalism and scientific naturalism. On the other side are almost animistic perspectives (believing that spiritual power operates through animals and objects). How has your perspective changed during the past 5 – 10 years?
5. Choose one significant quote from the section on “prayer and mission” and write it here. Why did you select this quote?
6. How much do you agree or disagree with the author’s assessment of the SLSW strategy for mission? Why do you think the SLSW has become so popular in North America?

Kirk, Chapters 6 and 8
1. Reflect on the four theological affirmations that inform the church’s role in seeking justice for the poor. Which of these has (have) been most emphasized and which have been most neglected or even distorted in your circles of Christianity? What are some of the cultural or ideological barriers that keep Christians in N. America from embracing these theological affirmations?
2. Reflect on poverty in Canada (or the nation you are most familiar with). Offer a diagnosis of the major causes/sources of poverty.
3. As you reflect on your church context, what are some theological commitments and ideological assumptions that keep peacemaking from being embraced as an integral part of the church’s mission?
4. Describe some models of mission you are familiar with in which peacemaking and overcoming violence are a significant focus of ministry.

March 7
Ott and Strauss, Cha. 11
1. If possible, give an example of an experience of reading a portion of the Bible and gaining new insight into the text because you were in a different cultural context.
2. Reflect on the cultural context you are most familiar with. How deeply has the gospel been contextualized in your context? Which felt needs remain unaddressed? In what ways is syncretism (blending with cultural elements that are not compatible with the Gospel) taking place in your expression of Christianity?

Kirk, Chapter 5
1. Describe a situation in which you think the Church has been successful in making the Gospel relevant to a culture (or subculture).
March 14  
Ott and Strauss, Cha. 12  
1. How has this chapter challenged your thinking about other religions? How would you articulate where you stand toward non-Christian religions?  
2. Do you think the authors’ proposed new nomenclature for positions of theology of religions is an improvement over the Classic and Knitter models? Defend your answer.  
3. How is the shift of Christianity’s centre to the non-western world affecting the church’s approach to interfaith dialogue?  

Kirk, Chapter 7  
1. Describe your perspective on other religions: Where is your starting line for evaluating or understanding them? Is your approach more on the positive/optimistic side or do you tend to view other religions as false human constructs?  
2. Of the three views of salvation for people in other faiths, which do you prefer? What are some of the problems with the position you have chosen?  

“The Gospel Among the World Religions”  
1. According to Thomas, what two strands of the Gordian Knot are restricting effective witness today to persons of other faiths?  
2. Summarize Almadoss’s contention (quoted in Thomas) that it is the uniqueness of Christ and not the uniqueness of Christianity that must be our foundation for interfaith dialogue.  

March 21  
Kirk, Chapter 9  
In this chapter Kirk offers some original and thought-provoking ideas linking the care for the environment with justice issues, relief of the poor and the rejection of materialism. Choose one quote (one or two sentences) you find significant. Unpack its meaning and re-phase it by giving it particular application to a context or current problem you are familiar with.  

“Consider the Turtles of the Field”  
Brian McLaren raises a prophetic voice against defective evangelical theologies that have led to neglect of the environment. Which of these deficiencies have you seen most frequently in your context? Do you think he is on track?  

“The Greening of Mission”  
Effa illustrates a fairly broad consensus among denominational families regarding the theological and moral imperatives underlying creation care. Reflect on where your congregation and denomination are at concerning this issue. Does it receive appropriate attention in the teaching and literature of your church and denomination? If not, why do you think this is so?  

April 4  
Kirk, Chapter 10  
Briefly analyze a global partnership that your congregation is involved in (you may have to interview a staff person about this). How are issues of power and control as well as genuine reciprocity managed? Offer a critique based on Kirk’s chapter.
“Faith, Healing and Mission”
The assigned article on “Faith, Healing and Mission” illustrates the value of international and ecumenical gatherings to discuss issues of faith and practice. Highlight one insight you gleaned from the article and suggest one or two other topics that would benefit from this kind of international and interdenominational discussion.

April 11
Ott and Strauss, Cha. 13
1. Why do some theologians prefer to speak of “conditionalism” rather than “annihilationism”? How is conditionalism explained?
2. Do you think the authors convey the urgency of mission in a compelling manner in this concluding chapter? Why or why not?

“Old Church and New Evangelism: A Scottish Perspective on Christian Mission in Today’s Europe”
Summarize the main idea of Kenneth Ross’s proposal of how the church in Europe should re-engage with its surrounding culture. What do you think the church in Canada should take from this “Scottish Perspective”?

List of Choices for Elective Reading
[An examination of the *Missio Dei* over against cultural Evangelical Christianity in the USA (especially its political allegiances), by a prominent American advocate of the “new monasticism”].

[Denis writes as a Roman Catholic and is Australia’s foremost theologian addressing the ecological implications of faith and mission].

[A Cameroonian Roman Catholic priest seeks to forge an authentic expression of Christian theology that is culturally African and also speaks to the problems of poverty and oppression].

[A theology of mission from the perspective of the contributions the experience of marginalization can make to the church of the dominant culture].

[A compendium of essays by an ecumenical team of missiologists who participate in the Gospel and our Culture Network. It offers a perspective of North American as a mission field].

[A development of a theological framework for the emerging understanding of the missional church].
[A compendium of essays that helped set in motion the Gospel and our Culture Network, seeking to apply the writings of Lesslie Newbigin to the missionary situation in North America].

[A Hispanic women’s liberation theology written by a Cuban- American theologian].

[A radical Anabaptist reading of the Sermon on the Mount as it applies to contemporary culture].

[Nigerian Roman Catholic priest explores how God can be known and the core doctrines of Christian theology communicated in ways that make sense within an African frame of reference].

(Revised and expanded from the 1985 edition)
[Baptist theologian from Argentina – explores spiritual conflict, particularly the areas of consumerism and materialism].

[Baptist pastor and professor in the Calvinist tradition. Has a strong emphasis on worship, prayer and suffering].

[The most famous North American Baptist theologian, father of the social gospel movement of the early 20th century. Takes the classic systematic theology themes and asks larger questions with implications for society as a whole].

[Roman Catholic/inculturation perspective. An exploration of the possibilities of a theology that takes its point of departure from the cultures of Asia].
Book Review Template

Name ________________________  Box ____

Title of Book Read _____________________________________________________________

Author(s) _________________________________________________________________

Total Number of Pages Read _____

1. Statement of the Author’s controlling purpose in writing this book.

_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________
_____________________________________________________________________________________

2. Brief Survey of the Topics Covered

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3. Critical Assessment

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4. Application to Ministry

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This should be 3-4 pages in length