



Course Syllabus Wycliffe College Toronto School of Theology

This description is intended to assist in the course approval process and to assist students in determining whether this course will help them achieve their educational objectives and the learning goals of their program. It is not a learning contract. The details of the description are subject to change before the course begins. The course syllabus will be available to the class at the beginning of the course.

Course Identification

Course Number: WYP1610HS
Course Format: In person with remote option
Course Name: The Church, The Faith, and Our World
Campus: St. George
Class Time: Winter Term

Instructor Information

Instructor: Peter Robinson
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Office Hours: by appointment

Teaching Assistant:

Course Prerequisites or Requisites

None.

Course Description

To introduce students to theological praxis in the context of exploring the church, the faith and our place in the world. Particular attention is given to understanding and analyzing how groups of people seek to live out their Christian faith in particular contexts.

Course Methodology

Lectures, readings, congregational overview, congregational analysis, book review, paper. Students are expected to be a part of a local community in which they are able to do an in-depth analysis of the master story.

Course Outcomes

COURSE OUTCOMES	COURSE ELEMENT	PROGRAM OUTCOMES
By the end of this course, students	This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe's statements of outcomes (MTS, MDiv)

• will articulate and assess a theological foundation for ministry and mission in relation to God (Father, Son and Spirit);	Book review	MTS: 1.3, 1.6, 2.3 MDiv: 1.3, 1.6, 2.2
• will question and evaluate particular understandings of the Church as the body of Christ, with reference to the challenges and promise within a local North American context;	Site observation report, in-depth analysis of local church/community	MTS: 1.6, 2.3 MDiv: 1.6, 2.2
• will analyze, interpret and evaluate a local church context;	In-depth analysis of a local church/community, participation	MTS: 1.6, 2.3 MDiv: 1.6, 2.2, 2.4
• will discern and articulate the dynamic relationship between church and culture;	Book review, site observation, in-depth analysis, final paper	MTS: 1.6, 2.2, 2.3 MDiv: 1.6, 2.2
• will appraise a unique model of leadership and assess the theological foundations and the understanding of mission.	Final paper	MTS: 1.6, 2.3, 3.3 MDiv: 1.6, 2.3

Course Resources

Required Course Texts

- Course readings will be available on Quercus through U of T libraries.
- Book review - Newbigin, Lesslie. *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission*. Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995). Copies are available at the University of Toronto bookstore.

Course Website(s)

- **Quercus:** <https://q.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the U of T Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701> .

Class Schedule

Week 1 (January 10) Introduction to the course: What is the gospel?

Reading

- Scot McKnight, "The Gospel," in *The Oxford Handbook of Evangelical Theology*, ed. Gerald R. McDermott (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 195-208

Week 2 (January 17) Analyzing the shaping and formation of local Christian communities

Readings:

- Nancy Ammerman, “Culture and Identity in a Congregation,” chapter 3 in *Studying Congregations: A New Handbook*, pp. 78–102.

Week 3 (January 24) The Gospel in particular time and space.

Readings:

- Hunsberger, George, ‘Called and Sent to Represent the Reign of God’ in *The Missional Church*, ed. Darrell Guder, Eerdmans, 1998. pp 77- 109
- Lesslie Newbigin, The Good Shepherd, Chapter 23 The Gospel and our Culture and Chapter 24 The Particularity and Universality of the Gospel pp. 116-126

Week 4 (January 31) The Missio Dei: Whose Mission is it?

Readings:

- Chris Wright – ‘Mission as Matrix’ in *Out of Egypt: Biblical Theology and Biblical Interpretation*, Bartholomew, Healy, Moeller, Parry (Zondervan and Paternoster, 2004): pp 102–43.
- Laing, Mark, ‘Missio Dei: Some implications for the Church’ in *Missiology: An International Review*, k 1 . XXXVII, no. I , January 2009

Week 5 (February 7) God shaped Mission

Readings: Vinay Samuel and Chris Sugden, ‘God’s intention for the World’ in *Mission as Transformation*, (Regnum 1999) pp.166–207.

Week 6 (February 14) Jesus came in the Flesh: Some Implications of the Incarnation for Mission.

Readings: Guder, Darrell, *Incarnation and the church’s evangelistic mission*.

Week 7 (February 21) Reading Week.

Week 8 (February 28) What in the World? Thinking about Culture Today

Readings:

- D.A. Carson, *Christ and Culture Revisited*. Chapter 1
- Chapter 1 of *Mission- Shaped Church*;

Week 9 (March 7) Church and Culture

Readings:

- Christopher Kaiser, ‘Wearing Different Hats: Christian Living in a Fragmented World’ in *Confident Witness; Changing World* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999):pp. 16–25;
- John Perkins, *With Justice for All*, (Regal Books, Ventura California, 1982): chapters 2–4, pp. 26–49.
- “Mega Church Draws”, *Globe and Mail*
- “Our New Postracial Myth”, Ibram X. Kendi *The Atlantic*, June 22, 2021
<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2021/06/our-new-postracial-myth/619261/>

Week 10 (March 14) The Church in our World

Readings:

- Andy Crouch, “Why we can’t change the World” (chapter 12) in *Culture Making* (Grand Rapids, MI: IVP, 2008): pp.187–201.
- William Willimon & Stanley Hauerwas, Ch 3 *Church and World in Where Resident Aliens Live*.

Week 11 (March 21) Moving into the Neighbourhood.

Readings:

- Lamin Sanneh, “Christian Missions and the Western Guilt Complex”. *The Christian Century*, April 8, 1987, pp. 331-334.
- John Perkins, *With Justice for All* (Regal Books, Ventura California, 1982): chapters 7, 9, 14, pp. 66–75, 86–95, 138–143;
- Vinay Samuel, ‘Mission as Transformation’ in *Mission as Transformation* (Oxford: Regnum, 1999): pp. 227–35.

Week 12 (March 28) Formation and discipleship in Mission.

Readings: Richard Osmer, ‘Formation in the Missional Church: Building Deep Connections between Ministries of Upbuilding and Sending’, Chapter 2 in *Cultivating Sent Communities*, pp 29-55

Week 13 (April 4) Conclusion.

Evaluation

Requirements

1. Site observation report. (3-4 pages) (15%) Visit three distinct congregations/mission initiatives and write up a concise ‘1st reactions’ overview on one of the sites. ***Due the 3rd week of class.** Students are strongly encouraged to begin or even complete this assignment before the beginning of the course. **See Site Visit Guidelines available on Quercus.**

2. Book review and forum (25%) – In the first week you will be assigned to a study group forum where you will engage in a discussion of Lesslie Newbigin’s *The Open Secret: An Introduction to the Theology of Mission*. Rev. ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995). After carefully reading the book you will discuss a set of questions (below) with your study group on the forum. To receive full marks in the forum you will need to engage in the forum discussion each week. 20% of the grade for this assignment will be based on your interaction on the forum. For full marks for the discussion board portion of the grade you will post every week, you will engage with fellow student’s comments, and your postings will align with the guidelines below. If you do not post on the discussion board you will lose 20% of your grade for this assignment.

Forum: Questions for group discussion on the forum. You do not need to answer these specific questions they are simply here to facilitate discussion.

1. Newbigin wrote this book after his return to the UK. In the context of post-Christendom, which he experienced in his return, he is arguing for a renewed understanding of mission. What do you find challenging/interesting in his approach?
2. How would you assess the way in which Newbigin frames his understanding of mission and in particular how he relates that to an understanding of God as Trinity?
3. Newbigin identifies the doctrine of election as central to the way we should think about mission. Did you find his argument convincing or helpful and if so why?
- A. How has this book challenged or changed the way you think about mission and ministry?

*** Online etiquette:

- Keep your messages concise and clearly written (150-250 words).

- Be respectful of other's ideas, opinions and beliefs. It is fine to disagree or represent an alternative understanding but please do so in a gracious manner. The instructor reserves the right to delete posts which do not demonstrate respectful engagement.
- Avoid posting simple two or three word statements such as "I agree" or "good point".

Book Review: Individually you will write a 1500 word book review which will be ***due the 5th week of class.**

Questions for your book review:

- (1) Begin by writing a succinct summary of the author's key thesis. If you had to describe in one or two sentences what this book is about, how would you express that in your own words? This introductory paragraph should serve as a 'road map' for the reader as to what your review will cover.
- (2) Follow this with a description of the most important key ideas the author presents and discusses in support of his central thesis especially with regard to Christian mission. What are the essential ideas presented? Comment on the basis and history of Christian mission in relation both to God's activity in the world and to the diverse social and cultural realities of human life.
- (3) Next you need to reflect critically and engage with the author's key ideas. *What* is your assessment (agreement or disagreement) with what you have read, and more importantly, *why* did you come to this assessment? Be sure to defend your assessment.
- (4) Finally, reflect critically on how the ideas you've engaged with have impacted you, both personally and corporately. How has what you've read changed, enriched, stretched you in your understanding of mission? How will it impact your ministry in the Church and the World?

Since you will only be referencing one source you do not need footnotes for the book review. You can just cite in parentheses. So, for example, "quote from the book," (16). Note the order of quotation marks, comma, parentheses and period.

3. Students are to prepare and present an in-depth analysis of a local Christian Community/Church.(25%) Guidelines will be provided at the beginning of the course. **Presentations will begin on Week 8 during the seminar portion of the class. Written reports are due on Week 8. (written reports should be approximately 8 pages). Please note that the presentations are to be a maximum of 15-20 minutes in order to allow time for questions.**

4. Final Paper 3000- 3500 words. (25%) Write a paper on one of the following missional leaders: Dorothy Day, John Perkins. You will describe their theology of mission, their formation for ministry, their character and their leadership. Some of the questions you may want to address include: How did their theology shape their praxis? What is their understanding of mission or the *Missio Dei*? What significant events or people helped form/shape them for ministry? What was/is their theology and practice of leadership and mission?
Due exam week.

5. Readings, attendance and class participation (10%). Lectures and class time are integral to the course. Students are expected to come to class having completed the assigned readings. **Missing 2 or more class meetings without prior authorization and medical documentation will be cause for a failing grade in the course as per 11.4.3 in the Basic Degree handbook.**

Grading System

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalents	Grade Point	Grasp of Subject Matter
A+	90–100%	4.0	Profound & Creative
A	85–89%	4.0	Outstanding
A-	80–84%	3.7	Excellent
B+	77–79%	3.3	Very Good
B	73–76%	3.0	Good
B-	70–72%	2.7	Satisfactory
FZ	0–69%	0	Failure

Grades without numerical equivalent:

CR	Designates credit; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
NCR	Designates failure; has no numerical equivalent, but has a grade point value of 0 and is included in the GPA calculation
SDF	Standing deferred (a temporary extension)
INC	Permanent incomplete; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
WDR	Withdrawal without academic penalty
AEG	May be given to a final year student who, because of illness, has completed at least 60% of the course, but not the whole course, and who would not otherwise be able to convocate; has no numerical equivalent and no grade point value

Policy on Assignment and Course Extensions

Assignment Extension (BD). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. Under exceptional circumstances a student may request a short extension to be determined with the instructor. Instructors are not obliged to approve a request for an extension or accept papers that are late where no extension has been requested. If the instructor chooses to accept an assignment, where an extension has **not** been requested and approved before the due date, then **for that assignment one percentage point per late day will be deducted.** The final deadline for the submission of assignments is the date set by the instructor in the syllabus, the examination day scheduled for the course, or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner. If the student fails to submit the assignment by the agreed deadline a mark of zero will be calculated for the assignment.

Policy on Course Extension (BD) Students with documented medical difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) who are unable to submit their work by the end of the term must talk with their instructor and request a course extension. The deadline for obtaining a course extension is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. The course extension, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline, with an absolute deadline of the last day of the examination week within the twelfth month following the end of the course. (The course extension must also

be approved by the Basic Degree Director and confirmed by the Registrar.) Under extraordinary situations a student may request an extension on the initial extension. To do this, students must complete a second course extension form, include sufficient documentation (e.g. a doctor's letter) and receive the approval of both the instructor and the BD director.

An approved course extension will appear on the student's record as an SDF. If the student completes coursework before the new deadline approved by the professor and the student's college, the grade SDF will be changed to a letter and number grade. If the student does not complete the work by the deadline set by the professor and no further extension is granted, the professor will assign a zero for the unsubmitted work and submit a final grade (numerical or letter, including FZ) or, if the student successfully petitions for one, a permanent incomplete (INC). For late papers (with or without a course extension) students will receive a grade but minimal comments.

The link for the course extension form is at

<https://www.wycliffecollege.ca/sites/default/files/SDF%20form%20%28fillable%29.pdf>

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>) or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>), a student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges (http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm).

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

Writing Style. The writing standard for the Toronto School of Theology is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 7th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007).

Course Evaluations. At the end of the course students are expected to complete a course evaluation. The evaluation is done online and instructions will be contained in an e-mail message that will be sent out by the Wycliffe College registrar.

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. Students should check utoronto email regularly for messages about the course. Forwarding your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. All email communications from students in conjoint programs should be sent from a utoronto email address. Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

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