



Nazarene Theological Seminary

1700 E Meyer Blvd • Kansas City, MO 64131 • 816/333-6254

MSS615 Theology of Mission Spring 2011

Essential Information

Please refer to the following resources for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Links to these resources are available at http://support.nts.edu/index.php/Essential_Information. Additional technical support information can be found at <http://support.nts.edu>.

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose and Master of Divinity Objectives
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS textbook information
- Online technical requirements and Moodle support information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- *A Handbook for Inclusive Language*

Instructor Information

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Catalog Description

The development of a theology of mission in light of the *missio Dei* in the present diverse world. Special attention will be given to grounding both the mission of the church and the work of missionaries in Scripture and a Wesleyan Holiness Theological perspective. Issues of worldviews, the dynamics of worldview change, syncretism, and contextualization will be examined in the light of theology and Scripture.

Course Narrative & Rationale

In contemporary society there is a growing need for mission praxis that is explicitly connected to a theological basis. For the missions practitioner who leaves their passport culture to minister in a new culture as well as the pastor of the local church who ministers in a changing culture, a ministry which is focused on theological and biblical understanding is essential.

Educational Assumptions

1. God's direction is essential for this class to be successful.
2. We will learn in the context of community. Appropriate ideas as well as doubts may be expressed and developed in a safe environment of mutual respect.

3. Students are valued not only as persons who have potential to learn, but also as persons who already have significant knowledge and experiences to contribute to the purposes of the course. Consequently, some of the course assignments will require cooperative efforts among students.
4. This is a graduate course. The quality of thinking, writing, speech, and class participation should reflect a graduate level quality. Higher levels of thought (e.g., analysis, synthesis, and evaluation), writing style, spelling, grammar, as well as faithful attendance, consideration of fellow students and their ideas, and timely submission of assignments is expected.

Course Outcomes

With the help of the Lord, at the end of this course students should:

1. Be able to articulate scriptural understanding of mission with an understanding of mission as central to the biblical narrative and which flows from the nature and action of the triune God. (Outcomes A,B,D,E)
2. Gain an understanding or a clearer understanding of current issues in the theology of mission. (Outcomes A,B,D,E)
3. Become familiar with authors and movements which have influenced current missiological thought. (Outcomes A,B,D,E)
4. Acquire a deeper appreciation for the privilege of participation in God's mission and the centrality of this participation to the purpose of the church. (Outcomes A,B,D,E)
5. Be able to articulate a theological understanding of mission which influences mission praxis for a missionary within the Wesleyan theological tradition. (Outcomes B,C,E)

Required Texts & Course Materials

- Bevens, Stephen B., and Roger P. Schroeder, Constants in Context: a Theology of Mission for Today. Maryknoll, NY USA: Orbis Books, 2004.
- Kirk, Andrew J. What is Mission? Theological Explorations; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000.
- Tennent, Timothy. *Invitation to World Missions: A Trinitarian Missiology for the Twenty-first Century* : Kregel Academic & Professional, 2010.
- Wright, Christopher J.H. The Mission of God's People: A Biblical Theology of the Church's Mission: Grand Rapids, Michigan. Zondervan, 2010.
- Newbigin, Lesslie, The Open Secret: an introduction to the Theology of Mission; Grand Rapids: Wm. B Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1995.
(note: If you have read The Open Secret for another class, you should contact the instructor for optional reading)

Articles:

- *Several required readings are posted in full text on Moodle. A variety of elective reading, and other resources related to this course are also available.*

Course Outline

See separate document "course map"

Course Assignments & Requirements

A. The text books listed above are to be read as noted below. The following assignment corresponds to this reading:

1. Write a 3-4 page Interaction paper of each required reading book. (*Course Outcomes:1-4*)
 - a. These papers must be printed and turned in on the day that they are due (see course map)
 - b. Each interaction paper should provide a thoughtful analysis of the book (3-4 pages). These are NOT book reports or simple summaries. Neither are they your random reflections after reading the books.
 - c. The papers are to carefully analyze the book and provide critical evaluation. Papers should include four parts:
 - A brief statement of the argument/thesis/main idea of the book (less than a half page).
 - An evaluation of the sources used for the study (half to one page) - ask the question, “What sources did the author draw from to write this book?” and “is this valid to support their argument or main thesis?”
 - Several paragraphs tracing the development of the main idea throughout the book (one to one and a half pages).
 - Provide your own evaluation of the book (did the book demonstrate the thesis? Did you like the book? Etc. - Half to one page).
 - d. Note that I have also posted a sample book review on the course documents which uses this format. Please note that this is an example from a book which may be completely distinct from the book you will review, but it should give an idea of the format which you will need to use. See due dates on the course calendar.
 - e. You will be asked to lead class discussion based on assigned readings. You will be graded on this participation as well.

B. Integrative paper (*course outcomes 1-5*)

1. Students must submit in writing via email (dwwesley@nts.edu) a topic for their integrative paper and obtain the professor’s approval in writing no later than **February 11th**. The topic may be selected from the list below (assigned on a first-come, first served basis). Please note that your selection should be a topic which you have not written about for prior or current classes. I would encourage you to read through the two conference websites (h) and explore other Possible topics include:

- (a) A biblical/theological assessment of the “frontier missions” (unreached peoples) approach to defining the task of mission.
- (b) The goal of missions and the great commission as church planting.
- (c) The missionary “call”: How biblical is it?
- (d) Diaspora Missiology
- (e) Implications of the rise of the non-Western Church.
- (f) Can the book of Acts be used as a “handbook for mission”? Hermeneutical guidelines.
- (g) The Uniqueness of Christ in a Theology of Mission.
- (h) Some other ideas can be found from information from the Edinburgh conference or the Lausanne Conference, both held in 2010. See Youtube clips of Dana Robert discussing some key themes at:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tnA-YGa_ZrE&feature=related (click on the link “see all 18 videos” for all of the interviews with Dana Robert)
Or for Lausanne papers go to: <http://www.lausanne.org/documents.html>

The paper is to be 20-30 pages in length and must follow carefully the style and format found in Turabian, Kate L.A Manual for Writers of Research papers, Theses, and Dissertations. Revised by Wayne C. Booth, et al. 7th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. (See NTS student handbook, page 15 for further information: <http://nts.edu/Websites/nts/Images/pdfs/handbooks/Student%20Handbook%20Final%202008-2009.pdf>) Be sure to read and understand the content and implications of the Plagiarism statement in the NTS Student Handbook as well. All assignments in this course are made with the expectation that the work you submit is your own work. Failure to adhere to these requirements will result in a failing grade for the course. The paper will be graded on the following basis:

- Accurate summary of the current debate or issue
- Use of relevant literature including journal articles
- Thorough analysis of the issues involved. This will include more than one side of the issues presented in a fair and balanced manner.
- Fair assessment and/or evaluation of the issue including theological and biblical argumentation.
- Statement and argumentation of the student's own position on the issue.

Give careful attention to the use of Internet sources. While the Internet provides easy access to a wealth of resources, as with all other resources, Internet resources must be carefully selected and properly cited and referenced.

The class presentation of this project will be 20 minutes in class. The student will present a concise summary of his/her integrative paper. The presentation will be followed by questions and discussion. Utilize visual aids (white board, power point or handouts) as part of the presentation. The paper should not be simply read. The presentation grade will be based on the didactic and coherent presentation of the issue and the response to questions.

C. Critique of a fellow student's integrative paper (*course outcome 5*)

Each student will be assigned to critique in writing on other student's paper. The critique will be presented in class following the presentation of the paper (lasting no more than five minutes). The written critique is due on the same day as the class presentation and should be 3-5 pages (double spaced, hard copy to the professor). The critique should address the paper's strengths and give suggestions for improvement (don't just summarize the paper). The reviewer should especially assess the argumentation and use of the literature. (Good reviews often check the author's sources.) A late critique will not be accepted, and the student will receive zero credit for the assignment.

D. Additional course reading (*course outcomes 1-4*)

Students are to read the required reading posted on Moodle. A reading log should be kept during the semester and a reading report submitted on the last day of class indicating the author, title, exact pages read, and total number of pages read. Students failing to complete the additional reading will receive a reduction of grade.

E. Class participation (*course outcomes 1-5*)

Students are expected to attend class and come well prepared to discuss readings and fellow student papers.

Method for Submitting Assignments

Please use the assignments section of Moodle unless otherwise directed.

Late Work

I do not accept late work except in cases of severe illness requiring extended hospitalization, a note from the dean, or a death in the family.

Course Grading

100-91: A 90-81: B 80-71: C 70-60:D 59 or Below: F

Grade Descriptions

A. Excellent

A to A- This is work that is outstanding in every way, exceptional, marked by accuracy, creativity, scholarship, and/ or integrative thinking combined with good style.

B. Good to Very Good

B+ to B: This is work that is very good, accurately done, reflecting a proper grasp of the material, and done with interesting style.

B to B-: This is work that is good, but tends towards inaccuracy and imbalance, is written in a flat and unengaging style, ideas are present, but not developed.

C. Fair

C+ to C: This is work that is marginally satisfactory because it is deficient in identifiable areas of accuracy, clarity, balance; ideas are vague and disorganized.

C to C-: This is work that is not far from being unacceptable, reflecting serious inadequacies in dealing with the material.

D. Unsatisfactory; Just Passable

This is work that has been submitted, but is not satisfactory. It has dealt with the material, but in such an inaccurate or incomplete way that it cannot be judged as acceptable work.

F. Failure

This is a grade assigned to a paper, exam, or course in which the student has not submitted the required work or who has so completely distorted the assignment that it bears no resemblance to what was required.

In accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NTS is committed to providing students with disabilities the opportunity to participate and benefit from its programs and activities. Accordingly NTS will make reasonable modifications to its programs and activities to accommodate otherwise qualified students with disabilities, unless such modifications would impose an undue burden on the operation of the particular program or activity or would fundamentally alter the nature or purpose of the program or activity. Students needing accommodations should contact the Office of the Registrar. They also should contact the instructor no later than the end of the first class session to discuss learning needs and adaptive strategies, which have been beneficial for the student in the past.

Inclusive Language

NTS is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, NTS urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in their writings. All written work presented to meet course requirements must use gender inclusive language.

Distribution of Student Learning Hours

	Hours
Face-to-face class sessions	36
Reading	74
Writing	47
Other Assignments and Learning Activities	0
Total	157

Assignment	Due Date	Weight for course grade
A. Book Reviews	See Course Map	45%
B. Integrative paper	Feb 11, 2011	25%
C. Critique of fellow student's paper	As assigned	10%
D. Additional course reading	See Course Map	10%
E. Class Participation		10%
TOTAL		100%