

Overview of Courses

Introductory Courses

Becoming a Cross-Cultural Worker

This course is specially designed for people who are considering moving into cross-cultural ministry. The aim is that you should have a successful transition to a new setting so that you can have a fruitful ministry there. You may not have decided that this is definitely what you want to do or you are well on your way to going. Either way, we hope you will find the material in this course helpful for you in your preparation. In this course, you will look at important issues involved in moving into and working in a setting that is very different from your own. We will be looking at the issues from biblical, theological, and practical perspectives.

Units:

1. Getting into Ministry
2. Identifying with Your Host Community
3. Learning a New Language
4. Adjusting to a New Setting

Intercultural Communication

The aims of this course are to understand culture, to grasp how values differ in different cultures, and to understand how they affect intercultural communication. After an initial unit on the topic of culture, the topic of communication is introduced with reference to both contemporary communication theory and theology. Units 3-7 deal in some depth with cultural values, comparing how different cultures approach life differently. Lessons are learned in terms of their impact on communication.

Units:

1. The Concept of Culture
2. Understanding Communication
3. Values in Cultures
4. How Communities are Organized
5. Social Orientation
6. Truth Orientation
7. Space and Time

Intermediate Courses

Church and Mission

The aim of this course is to explore one question: What is mission? To accomplish our aim, the Bible is examined along with the way it has been understood, particularly in recent centuries. The relationship of mission to the church is particularly focussed on.

Units:

1. Changing Paradigms of Mission
2. Historical Paradigms of Mission
3. Seeking a Holistic Paradigm
4. A Biblical-Theological Paradigm of Mission

Ethnography

This course introduces you to ethnography. There is a little bit of theory to begin with (quantitative and qualitative research methodologies are introduced and assessed for their relative usefulness in the study of religion and culture). But most of the course is on how to go about getting to know a community that is new to your experience and then writing about that community. To do this, you need to go out and get to know such a community. So, you will need to go out of your comfort zone! That can seem daunting but you will be guided in how to do that. The rewards are worth it. Ideally this course should be taken along with the Encountering Other Traditions course as the latter provides more of a theoretical exploration of human societies.

Units:

1. Ethnographic Research
2. Coding Your Data
3. The Qualitative Interview
4. Further Analysis
5. Writing an Ethnographic Paper

Strategic Issues in Cross-Cultural Ministry

The aims of this course are to grasp the influence of major factors in changing global conditions, to engage critically and creatively with contemporary writing on mission, and to critique contemporary missiological approaches. The course focuses on a number of issues that are current in missions today. A consideration of current global issues, including poverty, societal structure, and migration, leads to the critical examination of trends in missiological response to these issues in areas such as business as mission and church planting among unreached peoples. Changes in mission structures and funding, as well as the phenomenon of short-term missions are also explored.

Units:

1. A Church for Every People
2. Migration
3. Partnership
4. Access and Risk

Advanced Courses

Encountering Other Traditions

The aim of this course is to introduce you to the complexities involved in interacting with people from other traditions and encourage the development of a mature approach to introducing the gospel. The course focuses on how we meet with people of other traditions and interact with them. It will introduce the complexities of definition of the term 'religion' and explore its relationship with the concept of worldview.

Units:

1. Approaching Other Traditions
2. Defining Religion
3. The Development of Tradition
4. Religion, Culture and Worldview
5. Introducing Change Appropriately

Principles of Contextualization

The aims of this course are to understand the historical development of the concept of contextualization, to grasp a rigorous approach to interpreting the Bible in cultural context, and to appreciate the complexities of local and global theologising. In the course, the factor of cultural context in ministry is developed to some depth. The concept of indigeneity is defined in its historical context and the limitations of the concept are delineated. The biblical basis for contextualisation is examined and the crucial element of hermeneutics is outlined leading to a discussion of ethnotheology and global theologizing.

Units:

1. Indigenization to Contextualization
2. Christ and Culture
3. Doing Theology in Context
4. Local and Global Theology

Issues in Contextualization

The aim of this course is to introduce students to some of the issues involved in the contextualization of the message of the Bible in various cultures. You will look at a few issues that come up as we consider the contextualization of the gospel. These are Bible translation, ecclesiology (the doctrine and practice of the church), theological education, and spiritual warfare. We could add other issues but this selection gives you an opportunity to consider some of the significant issues. By looking at these you will develop habits of mind that will help you consider other issues as well.

Units:

1. Bible Translation
2. Ecclesiology
3. Theological Education
4. Spiritual Warfare
5. Fear, Shame, and Guilt (pending)