

## HT 506 : The Church and the World Summer 2008 : Course Syllabus

**Instructor: William C. Davis, Professor of Philosophy, Covenant College;  
Adjunct Professor of Systematic Theology, RTS/Atlanta  
[davis@covenant.edu](mailto:davis@covenant.edu) ; 10 Krupski Loop; Lookout Mountain, GA 30750-4503**

### **Texts, Required:**

Gornik, Mark, *To Live in Peace*  
Newbiggin, Lesslie, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*  
Niebuhr, H. Richard, *Christ & Culture*  
Romanowski, *Eyes Wide Open*  
HT 506 Reader (available electronically on the IQ Web course home page) [Sire, Yoder, Wallis, Bahnsen, Clouser, Anderson, Petcher & Morris, Hart, Davis]

### **Exam:**

**The Final Exam** will require students to answer three questions about the lectures and readings. This Exam will be given in class on **Saturday afternoon, July 26, 2008.**

### **Papers:**

**Students will complete two papers, BOTH a Case Study Comparison AND a Field Investigation:**

**Case Study Comparison:** In connection with the five models presented in Niebuhr's *Christ & Culture*, students will be randomly assigned two models. In order to compare the models, each student will devise a Scenario (a fictitious problem calling for a plan of action), explain how the two assigned models would respond to the scenario, and give a brief reflection on the relative merits of the two models in light of what Scripture teaches. The Scenario itself (the problem itself) should be single-spaced and should not exceed one typed page (c. 600 words). The target length for the whole Case Study (including the Scenario, the explanations and the reflection) is 1200-1500 words. **Due by midnight on Friday, July 18, 2008.**

**Field Investigation:** Students will complete ONE of the following, EITHER the Report & Analysis OR the Literature Survey:

#### **1. Report & Analysis of a Christian effort at Cultural Engagement.**

This paper will consist of two parts, a Report and an Analysis:

- a. The Report:** Drawing upon published materials, first-hand accounts, or personal interviews, students will explain the goals, commitments and practices of an organized effort by Christians to live out the cultural mandate as faithful servants of Christ. **The Report is due by midnight on Friday, July 26, 2008** and may include questions about what features of the organization's work that may deserve attention in the Analysis. Target length for the Report is 1000-1200 words;
- b. The Analysis** will be a reasoned assessment of the organization's efforts in light of biblical and theological considerations developed in the course. **The Analysis is due by midnight on Friday, August 15, 2008.** Target length for Analysis is 800-1000 words.

**2. Literature Survey regarding an area of Christian Cultural Engagement.** The Survey has three parts:

- a. A concise Characterization of the area of culture for which resources are being described,
- b. An annotated Bibliography of resources available, and
- c. A thoughtful Review of the most significant substantial resource in the bibliography. The review should bring course considerations to bear in its analysis.

The annotations for the Bibliography should consist of three or four sentences explaining the purpose and value of the work for Reformed Christians interested in the chosen area of cultural engagement.

**The Characterization and Bibliography are due by midnight on Friday, July 26, 2008. A final draft of the entire Literature Survey is due by midnight on Friday, August 15, 2008.** Target length for the whole Survey is 1800-2000 words.

**Group Quizzes:** Each session will include a brief **group** quiz over the assigned readings and prior class lectures/discussions and/or a graded group project/game. The lowest quiz grade will be dropped. (During the first weekend groups may be formed for this purpose. Group members can divide up the readings (if desired) to prepare for the quizzes.)

**Grading:** Grades will be calculated using the following percentages:

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Final Exam.....                                | 20% |
| Case Study Comparison.....                     | 25% |
| First part of the Field Investigation.....     | 20% |
| Concluding portion of Field Investigation..... | 25% |
| Quiz/Participation Average.....                | 10% |

**Schedule of Topics, Readings & Assignments:**

**July 11-12: *The Enduring Challenge: Calling, Task & Culture*** (The Biblical Call to Engage Culture without being Captured by It: a persistent and perpetually renewed challenge that is just as difficult today as it has ever been. Insights from many Christian traditions will be discussed, including Reformed contributions.)  
**(no reading or writing assignments)**

**July 18-19: *Theoretical Resources for Meeting the Challenge*** (Systematic and theological considerations that have informed Christian efforts at faithful engagement. Careful attention will also be given to the origins and the state of postmodern, pluralist culture.)

**Reading Assignment: Niebuhr (all), Newbigin (all), Reader (Sire, Yoder, Wallis, Bahnsen, Clouser)**

**Writing Assignment: Case Study Comparison**

**July 25-26:** *Practical Models for Meeting the Challenge* (How Christians have and are fulfilling their calling with regards to culture: critical appreciation and setting biblical goals.)

**Reading Assignment: Gornik, Romanowski, Reader (Anderson, Petcher & Morris, Hart, Davis)**

**Writing Assignments:**

**Third Weekend portion of Field Investigation**

**Final Exam (in class Saturday)**

**August 15, 2008: Completed Field Investigation Due (postmarked or e-mailed)**

*Note: Work that is late more than one business day will be assessed a penalty of one letter grade per business day.*