

HT 506 : The Church and the World
Summer 2009 : Course Syllabus

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Texts, Required:

Gornik, Mark, *To Live in Peace*
Newbigin, Lesslie, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*
Niebuhr, H. Richard, *Christ & Culture*
Romanowski, *Eyes Wide Open*
HT 506 Reader (distributed in class and available at RTS' IQWeb) [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 25, 2009.**

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 Saturday, July 18, 2009.**

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 **Saturday, Aug. 1, 2009** 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 **Saturday, August 15, 2009 OR one week following receipt of instructor's comments on the Report**. 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 6-8 resources (books, websites, magazines, etc.) available, and

c. A thoughtful Review of the most significant or 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 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 **Saturday, August 1, 2009**. A **final draft** of the entire Literature Survey is due by midnight on **Saturday, August 15, 2009 OR one week following receipt of instructor's comments on the Characterization and Bibliography**. Target length for the whole Survey is 1800-2000 words.

Grading: Grades will be calculated using the following percentages:

Final Exam.....	30%
Case Study Comparison.....	25%
First part of the Field Investigation.....	20%
Concluding portion of Field Investigation.....	25%

Schedule of Topics, Readings & Assignments:

July 10-11 : *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.)

Reading Assignment: none

July 17-18: *How Our Culture Came to Be* (The culture we are called to engage is the product of many competing influences, from the lingering effects of hopeful "modern" projects to the swelling current of "postmodern" forces both hopeful and cynical. Charting our way forward means taking stock.)

Reading Assignment: Niebuhr (all), Reader (Sire, Yoder, Wallis, Bahnsen, Clouser, Anderson, Petcher & Morris)

Writing Assignment: Case Study Comparison

July 24-25: *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 (Hart, Davis)

Writing Assignment:

Final Exam (in class)

July 18, 2009: Case Study Comparison Due

August 1, 2009 (postmarked or e-mailed by midnight): **Field Investigation Report OR Characterization & Bibliography Due**

August 15, 2009 (postmarked or e-mailed by midnight): **Field Investigation Analysis OR Literature Review Due**

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