

**HT 506 : The Church and the World**  
**Winter 2011 : Course Syllabus**

**Instructor: William C. Davis, Professor of Philosophy, Covenant College;**  
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**Texts, Required:**

Corbett & Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts*  
Crouch, Andy, *Culture Making*  
Gornik, Mark, *To Live in Peace*  
Niebuhr, H. Richard, *Christ & Culture*

**Exam:** The **Final Exam** will require students to answer questions about the lectures and readings. (Because of the compressed meeting schedule, the exam will not assume that all the reading has been completed.) This Exam will be given in class on Saturday afternoon, **January 8, 2011.**

**Written Assignment: 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 **January 29, 2011** 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 **February 12, 2011 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 two parts:

**a. Characterization & Bibliography**

**i. A Concise Account** of the area of culture for which resources are being described, and

**ii. An Annotated Bibliography** of 6-8 resources (books, websites, magazines, etc.) available. Each resource listed should be accompanied by a 3-4 sentence description of the resource's principal aims and value.

**iii. The Characterization and Bibliography are due** by midnight on **January 29, 2011.**

**b. 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.

**A final draft** of the entire Literature Survey is due by midnight on **February 12, 2011** **OR one week following receipt of instructor's comments on the Characterization and Bibliography.** Target length for the whole Survey (both parts) is 1800-2000 words.

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

Final Exam.....	40%
First part of the Field Investigation.....	20%
Concluding portion of Field Investigation.....	25%
Participation (presence, active involvement).....	15%

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

**Wednesday, January 5, 2011: *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:** (if possible) Niebuhr (all)

**Thursday, January 6, 2011: *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:** Crouch (all)

**Friday, January 7, 2011: *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:** Corbett & Fikkert (all)

**Saturday, January 8, 2011: *The Church IN the World*** (The church as the hermeneutic of the gospel and the peculiar challenges of economic injustice, religious pluralism, and radicalized religious ideologies)

**Reading Assignment:** Gornik (all)

**Writing Assignment: Final Exam** (in class)

**Saturday, January 29, 2011** (postmarked or e-mailed by midnight): **Field Investigation Report OR Characterization & Bibliography Due**

**Saturday, February 12, 2011** (postmarked or e-mailed by midnight): **Field Investigation Analysis OR Literature Review Due**

**Note:** Unless permission is given the by instructor—and it can be had simply by asking—work that is late more than one business day will be assessed a penalty of one letter grade per business day.