

Syllabus
MF 612 Person, Family, and Culture
Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary
Summer 2007 2 Units
Monday, Wednesday, Thursday July 9-26
8:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

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Office Hours: Monday, Wednesday, Thursday 2:30-4:00 and by appointment

Course Description: This course will examine the individual and family in the context of changing forces in American society. It is a sociological and psychological study of the family in terms of its development, structure, organization, and interaction. Students are expected to develop an understanding of the role of religion in the family in the modern world.

Objectives:

1. To explore the constructs of personhood, family, and culture from biblical, theological, anthropological, psychological, sociological, and literary perspectives.
2. Out of the exploration of those constructs, develop specific plans for future study and growth in the ability to facilitate spiritual and psychological growth in persons, families, and cultures.
3. To help students understand themselves as persons within families and cultures.
4. Out of their understanding of themselves, develop specific plans for growth as a person within families and cultures.

Related Degree Outcomes:

1. Demonstrate commitment to live as a disciple of Jesus in Christian community.
2. Interpret diverse cultural contexts of ministry using theological perspectives integrated with social scientific approaches.
3. Articulate integrative views of humanity, theology, and counseling.
4. Demonstrate understanding of individual and family life cycle development and intervention across the life span.
5. Demonstrate appropriate use of one's personal self in response to human need.
6. Demonstrate proactive understanding, awareness, and relational skills across cultures, religions, and special populations.
7. Demonstrate proactive commitment to a community of witness, justice, and peace.

Course Requirements:

1. Reading Outline: A summary of the content of the reading assigned for that class, not more than one page long, due at the beginning of each class session.
2. Reading Reviews: Reviews of three of the assigned readings (an assignment is an entire novel, or a chapter in a text or article from a journal), one due each Thursday. Please use Allen Gunther's "Writing Book Reviews" as a guide for this assignment (on web page under handouts).
3. Paper: Students will write a broad paper describing their exploration of what is a person, family, and culture and how they are related. The paper should be informed by Biblical theology and the social sciences but should also include personal application. (Students are not expected to disclose more about themselves than they are comfortable disclosing.) The paper should conclude with carefully crafted questions the student is asking about the subject areas of this class and preliminarily, but specific, thoughts regarding how they will proceed to develop answers to those questions. The grade will be based on (1) the student's ability to integrate theological, scientific, and personal information, and (2) the student's ability to craft good questions that will direct further growth.

Students may turn in a draft of an assignment one week before its due date for feedback from the professor.

Except for the Reading Outlines, all written assignments are expected in a professional format. For counseling students, this is the format of the American Psychological Association publication Manual, 5th edition, for theology student it may be either APA format or MLA format. Papers that are not presented in the appropriate professional format will be returned unread.

The APA publication manual can be found on reserve at the Hiebert Library. Another option is to purchase an APA template for MS Word entitled APA Style Helper 3.0. Many summaries of APA format are available on the internet. One example is published by The Owl at Purdue at <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01/>.

The MLA style manual and guide to scholarly publishing is also available at Hiebert Library. An example of a summary of MLA format is published by the Owl at Purdue at: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/>.

Grading Scale:

A	90-100%
B	80-89%
C	70-79%
F	< 70%

Seminary Academic Polices: Academic Policies. MBBS academic policies (as well as other school policies) are described at <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/>. These policies provide guidance on academic integrity and plagiarism, accommodation for disabilities, incomplete course work, extensions, dates for changing registration, non-discriminatory and inclusive language, appeals, etc. Students are expected to be familiar with these policies and will be held responsible for adhering to them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to you or to a situation that you face in your studies, please speak to the professor or consult the Registrar.

Required Texts

Hoff, B, (1994). *The singing creed where the willows grow: The mystical nature diary of Opal Whiteley*. New York: Penguin.

Huntsberger, G. R., & Van Gelder, C. (1996). *The church between gospel and culture*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Lints, R., Horton, M. S., & Talbot, M. R. (Eds.) (2006). *Personal identity in theological perspective*. Grand Rapids: MI: Eerdmans.

Pamuk, O. (2004). *Istanbul: Memories and the city*. Trans. Maureen Freely. New York: Vintage.

Shafranske, E. P. (Ed.) (1996). *Religion and the clinical practice of psychology*. Washinton, D.C.: APA.

Shelly, M. (1831). *Frankenstein*.

Tentative Class Schedule

Date	Topic	Assignment
July 9	Asking Questions	Hunsberger & Van Gelder Intro & Cpt. 1 Rose & Rose
July 11	What is a Person? Biblical Responses	Lions et al. Sec. 1
July 12	What Is a Person? Scientific Responses	Shelly
July 16	What is a Family?	Lions et al. Sec. 2 Augsburger Cpt. 6*

July 18	What is a Family?	Clinton*
July 19	What is a Family?	Hoff
July 23	What is Culture?	Hiebert in Hunsberger & Van Gelder
July 25	What is Culture?	Hall* Sanneh*
July 26	How do Person, Family, & Culture Relate?	Pamuk Reading Reviews Due Paper Due

*Students may receive extra credit for including these in their Reading Outline for this class. Additional extra credit will be given for a Reading Review of these books.

Bibliography

A Kemis, T. (1995). *The imitation of Christ*. Garden City, NY: Image.

Augustine. (1961). *Confessions*. London: Penguin.

Barna, G. (2001). *Boiling point: Monitoring cultural shifts in the 21st century*. Ventura, CA: Regal.

Browning, D. S., Miller-McLemore, B.J., Courture, P.D., Brynoff, L., K., & Franklin, R.M. (1997). *From culture wars to common ground: Religion and the American family debate*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox.

Cameron, N. (1990). *Are Christians human? An exploration of true spirituality*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Clinton, H. (2006). *It takes a village*. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Coupland, D. (1994). *The way of the (modern) world*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Hall, D. J. (1997). *The end of Christendom and the future of Christianity*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity.

Hart, A. (1992). *Me, myself, and I: How far should we go in our search for self fulfillment?* Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications.

Merton, T. (1961). *The new man*. New York: Noonday Press.

Nowen, H. (1994). *Here and now*. New York: Crossroads.

Sanneh, L. O. (1996). *Religion and the variety of culture: A study of origin and practice*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity.

Volf, M. (1996). *Exclusion and embrace*. Nashville: Abingdon.