

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary

MF-520 (3 units) ***CROSS-CULTURAL COUNSELING*** January 2008

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course will explore facets of culture and ethnicity that affect family therapy and communication. While the course examines a wide variety of cultural and ethnic issues from a systems perspective, emphasis will be placed on specific issues related to First Nations, Native American, African-American, Latino, and Asian-American families typical of the North American context and the students' own ethnic and cultural background.

Note: The students in IS-520 (Cross-Cultural Encounter) meet as a cohort along with the students in MF-520 (Cross-Cultural Counseling) to jointly share this experiential learning course. Each group, however, has its own syllabus.

II. SCHEDULE AND COURSE CONTEXT:

January 5-13, Session #1 - CCE/C - Los Angeles (1.5 units)
January 14-20, Session #2 - CCE/C - Fresno (1.5 units)

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- A. To develop vision, understanding, and appreciation for the cultures, diversity, and opportunities that grace God's people in an urban context.

- B. To provide a different learning context for students through an intensive and diverse exposure to a variety of counseling/social service agency/church/ministry models in Los Angeles and Fresno. The context for the course also includes a diversity of participants which brings a range of personalities, perspectives, and ministry experiences to this "school on wheels." This adds to the richness of our learning together.

- C. To focus skill training and resourcing in five primary areas: counseling, cross-cultural communication, evangelism, discipling, urban church planting/growth.

- D. To learn through an experiential model of education, beginning with praxis and moving to theory, with a careful assessment of the theology and counseling theories that shape each place and person we visit (i.e., what is the definition of wellness, community, salvation, theology of church, leadership, structures/systems, and lay involvement, embodied in this particular ministry or social service agency?).

E. To discern, analyze, assess, and personalize basic principles of counseling and ministry in the urban context. This means journaling and group processing are an integral part of the course. Assignments for the course will be reflective, analytical, personal, integrative, and application oriented.

IV. MBBS PROGRAM GOALS: This course contributes to the larger goals of the Seminary program in that it will help the student to:

A. Awaken and nurture a heart for different populations and cultures as demonstrated by Jesus, noting both the beauty and challenges of diverse cultures, ministries, and religions (MBBS desired outcome #1: *Demonstrate commitment to live as a disciple of Jesus in Christian community*).

B. Engage in the hermeneutical task of analyzing, synthesizing, and engaging contemporary church, culture, psychological and world issues from a biblical theological perspective (MBBS desired outcome #2: *Articulate commitment to a biblical theological Christian perspective*).

C. Nurture healthy interpersonal relationships and effective communication patterns in the context of the learning cohort, giving special attention to assessing the significance of cultural context for interpreting the Bible and the counseling task within and across cultures (MBBS desired outcome #3: *Interpret diverse cultural contexts of ministry using theological perspectives integrated with social scientific approaches*).

D. Develop and practice skills in sound cross-cultural engagement, dialoguing respectfully, witnessing effectively, serving and leading faithfully, relating appropriately and sensitively across cultures, religions, and special populations (MBBS desired outcome#4: *Practice skills in pastoral and educational leadership*).

V. REQUIRED TEXTS:

Elmer, D. (2002). *Cross-Cultural connections*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity.

Fadiman, A. (1997). *The spirit catches you and you fall down*. New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux.

McGoldrick, M., Giordano, J., & Pearce, J. (2005). *Ethnicity and family therapy (3rd ed.)* New York: Guilford.

Miller, G. (2003). *Incorporating spirituality in counseling and psychotherapy: Theory and technique*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

VI. Recommended Texts:

Augsburger, D. W. (1986). *Pastoral counseling across cultures*. Philadelphia: Westminster.

Bobes, T., & Bobes, N. S. (2005). *The couple is telling you what you need to know*. New York: Norton

McGoldrick, M. (1998). *Re-Visioning Family Therapy*. New York: Guilford.

Shenk, D.W. (1995). *Global gods: Exploring the roles of religion in modern societies*. Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press.

Sue, D. W., & Sue, D. (2007). *Counseling the culturally diverse: Theory and practice (5th ed.)*. New York: Wiley.

Fuder, J. (1999). *A heart for the city: Effective ministries to the urban community*. Chicago: Moody.

Richards, P.S. & A.E. Bergin. (2000) *Handbook of psychotherapy and religious diversity*. Washington D.C.: American Psychological Association.

White, R. (1996). *Journey to the center of the city: Making a difference in an urban neighborhood*. Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity Press.

VII. ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Culture & Ethnicity Journal. Maintain a journal during the 3 weeks of cross-cultural experience in Los Angeles and Fresno. Reflect on situations, persons, or experiences that challenged your view of a particular cultural or ethnic group. Focus on what is happening to you and how this affects your counseling.

DUE DATES: Jan 12th and Jan 22nd. (20%)

2. From your journal entries, write **FOUR two page critical reflections** that include your outlook before the event, the psychological and spiritual changes it precipitated in you, and your conclusions after reflection. How will you be a different counselor because of this experience?

DUE DATES: Submit two (LA) on Jan 14th and two (Fresno) on Jan 22nd. (20%)

3. Reading Assignments and Annotated Bibliography.

The reading assignments that follow, are listed in the order that you are encouraged to read them: There are also some excellent journal articles and optional cross cultural novels and movies that you may wish to include in your reading log.

Part I (L.A.): Augsburger (1986) chs.5,10; Elmer (2002); Miller, chs.1-6; McGoldrick, et al.(2005) chs. 1,5,11,17,23,36; McGoldrick (1998) chs.1-5,11,19,22,25,30; Richards & Bergin, Ch. 12, 13, 15

Part II (Fresno): Augsburger (1986) chs. 9,11; Bobes & Bobes (2005); Fadiman (1997); Goldenberg & Goldenberg (2001) pp.289-331 & ch. 8; McGoldrick, et al. (2005) chs. 21,28,31,48,52; McGoldrick (1998) ch. 27; Piercy, Sprenkle, & Wetchler (1996) ch. 10; Sue & Sue (2007) part I & part III; Richards & Bergin, chs. 11,16-19.

Your reading and interaction with assigned texts should begin *before the* course begins, as it is critical to your ability to process these experiences. Keep an accurate list of everything that you read and the media that you view. Write a 2-3 page annotation for the text by Fadiman, interacting with themes salient to culture/ethnicity, and your response to the author(s) presentation of argument (roughly half and half). Include some reflection on how this will affect you in your work as a counselor. Each student needs to choose at least some reading from the supplemental materials listed in the syllabus. This can include movies and novels which describe cultural and ethnic issues. In the case of an edited text, like McGoldrick, list the chapters or portions which you read.

Due Dates: Bring a list of all reading which you have completed by the beginning of class, and your review of Duane Elmer's book, Cross Cultural Connections, to the first class meeting 8:30am on **Jan 5th**. The Fadiman review is due **Jan 15th**; a final annotated reading log is due **Jan 28th**. **(20%)**. Your daily responses are included in this total.

- 4.** The **Daily Response Forms** are to be completed on a daily basis while impressions are current and fresh. The purpose of this feedback is to help us assess strengths/weaknesses in the program. This also shows us how you are reading the culture and the contexts which you are experiencing. These are 4% of your log.

Due Dates: **Section 1 L.A. due Jan 15th; Section 2 Fresno due Jan 22nd.**

- 5. Integrative Paper (30%).** This 12-15 page paper will represent an analysis of how the various issues experienced and studied in this course have changed your viewpoints and practice as a professional who will be working with multiethnic families from a variety of religions, classes, races, and sexual orientations. Do not repeat things already stated in your critical reflections or annotated responses to the readings. Use APA Style for your footnotes and bibliography. Critical thinking, multiple sources, and serious reflection are all required!

Begin your paper by briefly describing your own worldview/cultural system. Include relevant religious, ethnic, racial, or class data about your own particularity this course, which you feel may contribute to your counter transference and ability to serve others. In the first section of your paper, you may find it helpful to

incorporate a geographical genogram, timeline, or diagram that describes your family system inclusive of cultural/ethnic/religious roots, acculturation between generations, and issues of value orientation between the family and the wider culture (American, or the culture of your country of origin).

In the second section of your paper, outline briefly the types of cross cultural issues and families you expect to be working with during your practicum (or SME) and post graduation experiences. Describe at least three different cultural groups where you are developing some competency in both understanding and skills. Discuss salient points of similarity and diversity; then provide some relevant and appropriate principles/techniques/theories for working with families from the cultures you have chosen. Utilize the questions, examples, and ideas in McGoldrick's edited texts to help frame and organize your thinking and writing. For example, in Revisioning, page 88, there are nine questions that focus on hopelessness, beliefs and patterns of coping, adversity, and resilience. As you address at least three different cultural groups, include systemic issues such as 1) patterns of separateness and connectedness, 2) modes of interaction that become central family themes, 3) how the family or culture deals with birth, death, and aging, 4) definitions of supernatural experience, God and existence in the family or cultural narrative, 5) family patterns for dealing with intimacy, conflict, power, and shame, and 6) family attitudes toward other ethnic groups. If possible talk to persons who come from these cultures. If you have limited access to or experience with indigenous families, you may use the family in Fadiman's book or those found in other descriptive ethnic novels, biographies or films to illustrate your points.

In the third section of the paper be sure to address how differences in faith, beliefs, cultures, values and outlook may affect you and those you serve in counseling sessions. How do you view illness, healing, change, wholeness, evil? What is God calling you to do and be? Minimally, this part of the paper would cover views of suffering, salvation, change, healing, violence, peace. What is "shalom"? How will you help your clients find "shalom"? Show your readers that you have developed some competence in working with persons whose culture, ethnicity, class, religion, etc. are different from you. The Augsburg text and other sources in the blue binders and journal literature will be particularly helpful in completing this assignment. This paper requires critical, analytic thinking, footnotes and documentation.

DUE DATE: Jan 28th. Early papers are welcome.

- 6. Complete online course evaluation.** Grades will not be issued until this is done.

SCALE

A= 90-100% Excellent	Culture & Ethnicity Journal	20%
B=80-89% Above Average	Four Critical Reflections	20%
C=70-79% Average	Annotated Bibliography (Jan. 5 log & Elmer review 5%, Fadiman 5%; Daily Responses 4%, Final Reading Log 6%)	20%
F=50-69% Unacceptable	Integrative Paper	30%
	Participation.....	10%

VIII. FOR STUDENTS NEEDING ONLY 1.5 UNITS:

Please note ALL students are required to attend orientation.

Reading: Consult with instructors and arrange/propose an assignment plan roughly half of the amount expected for 3 unit students, tailored to whether you are doing the L.A. session or the Fresno session.

Written Requirements: Complete the journal, two critical reflections and Daily Response Sheets as described in the syllabus above. Begin your integrative paper, covering the aspects which fit most closely with your experiences in the class. Because you are only completing half of the course, your paper can be considerably shorter than what is described in the syllabus (6-8 pages). Talk with the Instructors to determine which portions of this assignment would be best for you to focus on.

IX. NOTES:

A. 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, incomplete course work, extensions, dates for changing registration, non-discriminatory and inclusive language, appeals, accommodations for disabilities, grading, 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 an instructor or consult the Registrar.

B. Evaluation. "Student work will be evaluated by two standards: a) by what is considered the appropriate level of graduate performance, and b) by comparison with work submitted in a given class" (<http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/grading>).

All assignments must be completed in order to be eligible to earn a passing grade for this course.

C. Submitting assignments. Students are asked to submit hard-copy versions of their assignments to the instructor indicated in the assignment description above. The instructors will not print papers sent electronically as file attachments.

D. Course Evaluations. Course evaluations are to be completed on line and are due

after the completion of the course. Official grades will not be posted until the student's evaluation of the course is completed.

X. Summary of Due Dates:

- January 5 Initial Reading Log & Elmer Book Review – Bring to class, 8:30 a.m.
- January 15 Fadiman Review: Due Jan. 15
- January 15 Critical Reflections L.A. (Part 1),
- January 15 Daily Response Forms for L.A. (Part 1)
- January 22 Critical Reflections Fresno (Part 2)
- January 22 Journal and Daily Response Forms for Fresno (Part 2).
- January 28 Integrative Paper and Final Reading Log

This course is a wonderful opportunity for personal, spiritual and professional formation. It also provides experiential learning in the fields of cross cultural communication, counseling/psychotherapy, world religions, & various forms of ministry, faith and service.