



MNST 5120: Gospel Communication in Context
North Park Theological Seminary
Fall 2024, Thursday 5:45-7:15 pm, 3 credit hours

Room: TBD; Course Teams Meeting Id: TBD

DRAFT

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION:

Michelle S. Dodson: Nyval Hall #206
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773-244-5206

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Gracious and effective communication of the good news of the Christian gospel involves the complex interplay of many factors. Drawing from studies in communication, evangelism, and contemporary culture, participants in this course will engage in an exegesis of culture, an exploration of the mandate and means of evangelism, and the development of skills in listening and speaking.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, participants should be able to:

1. Effectively communicate the gospel message in a way that is biblical, holistic, and contextual.
2. Formulate a personal biblical theology of Christian communication through the study of scripture, analysis of case studies, personal reflection, and group interaction.
3. Lead the church in bearing witness to the gospel in ways that honor their own cultural and contextual particularities.

We will work towards the Seminary Learning Outcomes of:

- Communicate the whole gospel of Jesus Christ in contextually appropriate and effective ways.
- Interpret scripture with historical and theological integrity for diverse churches, communities, and contexts.
- Engage diversity and exhibit growth towards inter-cultural competence for ministry reflective of God's global redemptive work.



REQUIRED TEXTS:

BOOKS

- Downing, Crystal. 2012. *Changing Signs of Truth*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic
- Cardoza- Orlandi, Carlos and Justo Gonzalez. 2013. *To All Nations from All Nations*
Nashville, TN: Abingdon.
- Maggay, Melba. *Global Kingdom, Global People* (Carlisle, Cumbria, UK: Langham Global, 2017).
- Reeder, Caryn. 2022. *The Samaritan Woman's Story: Reconsidering John 4 After #ChurchToo*.
Downers Grove, IL IVP Academic
- Leong, David P. 2017. *Race and Place: How Urban Geography Shapes the Journey to Reconciliation*. Downers Grove, IL. IVP
- Swanson. David. 2020. *Rediscipling the White Church: From Diversity to True Solidarity*.
Downers Grove, IL: IVP

ASSIGNMENTS: (Numbers represent total possible points) DRAFT

Reading Log (12)

Each week you will complete a log of how much of the reading you did.

Syllabus Quiz (6)

This quiz serves as proof that you have read and understood the syllabus. You should review the syllabus ahead of the first class and come prepared to ask any questions you may have. The quiz will be posted after the first class and should be completed before our second meeting.

Presentation (30) "What does the Gospel have to say about _____?": For this assignment you will choose a current event and present a biblical response that is appropriate for your current contexts. This assignment will require you to construct a response that is not aimed at being right but at witnessing Jesus to a specific audience and with a specific place (context) in mind.

As an example, think about the question "mandatory vaccinations?" Speaking to an evangelical group in downstate IL that sees such mandates as infringing on a one's rights will require a different response than if one were addressing a progressive Christian organization in Chicago that is dismissive of anyone who holds such a view. To the first group one might choose to link vaccine mandates to love of neighbor. To the second group one might choose to emphasize our call to preserve the unity of the Church.

The form of your presentation can vary depending on your current ministry context. You may choose to preach a sermon, lead a topical bible study you have created, give a traditional powerpoint presentation or something else entirely! You will be graded based on how well you are able to communicate a biblically based and contextually relevant response to your topic. You will have 10 minutes to present followed by 5 minutes of questions and comments.



Class participation (7): Hybrid courses include both synchronous (1.5 hours) and asynchronous (1.5 hours) instruction weekly. Students should additionally plan to devote 3 hours each week per credit for coursework outside of instructional hours. Your full participation is integral to the success of this class. To that end, both your online and in class participation will be graded.

Each week you should come to class prepared to thoughtfully engage with both the reading and the content posted on Canvas for that week.

An Alternate Perspective: (33)

This assignment will require you to have a conversation with someone who holds a different opinion than you on a subject that matters to you.

GRADING SCALE AND RATIONALE:

Grades will be issued shortly after the conclusion of the term and posted on WebAdvisor. You will be able to access grades through your personal account after grades have been submitted. The grading scale is as follows (cf Academic Handbook):

<u>Total Points Earned:</u>	<u>Final Grade:</u>
95-100	A
93-94	A-
91-92	B+
88-90	B
86-87	B-
84-85	C+
80-83	C
78-79	C-
76-77	D+
72-75	D
70-71	D-
69 and below	F

A: Superior work (A = 95–100; A- = 93–94)

This grade applies to exceptional work, the quality achieved through excellence of performance, not merely the fulfillment of the course requirements.

B: Above average (B+ = 91-92; B = 88-90; B- = 86-87)

This grade applies to meritorious work, definitely above average, applied to more than the fulfillment of requirements.

C: Average (C+ = 84-85; C = 80-83; C – = 78-79)

This grade applies to average work that still fulfills the course requirements.

D: Unsatisfactory (D+ = 76-77; D = 72-75; D – = 70-71)

This grade, while indicating the student has completed a



course, is to be understood as reflecting below average work. Course work receiving this grade will not be counted toward a degree.

F: Failure (69 and below)

FACULTY EXPECTATIONS: GUIDELINES AND PROCEDURES

Guidelines for Written Work: All written work must be typed and double-spaced using either Arial or Calibri 12-point font. All written work must be submitted on time and should be submitted electronically via Canvas.

Writing Quality Policy: If in the process of grading your written work I have to make 10 or more grammatical corrections (this includes typos) on a single page, I will automatically deduct 5 points. So it is very important that you submit a reviewed, edited version of all written assignments. I strongly encourage you to have someone else proofread your written work before you submit it.

Lastly, I encourage you to read the seminary's inclusive language policy that can be found in the [Student Writing Handbook](#).

Late Work Policy:

Late assignments will not be accepted unless you have communicated with me **in advance** and I have given you an extension. Requests for an extension must be made no less than **24 hours** before an assignment is due. Except in the case of extremely extenuating circumstances, there will be no extensions given for the Weekly Papers.

Attendance & Lateness Policy: Your attendance is key and therefore required for all scheduled sessions. Frequent lateness (3 or more) and early departures (3 or more) will add an absence and will go against your participation grade. **Three absences will automatically result in 0 points for the participation part of your grade; Six absences will automatically result in a drop in letter grade. Each absence after the sixth will result in a half drop in letter grade.**

Email Policy:

During the school year I will make every effort to respond to emails within 24 hours. There is one exception to this rule: I stop checking email at 7:00 pm on Fridays and do not resume my regular email schedule until 7:00 am on Tuesday. **If you send me an email during this period you should not expect a response until Wednesday at the latest.**

ACADEMIC HONESTY

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park University is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating will receive a failing grade on the



assignment and are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion. Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another’s work as one’s own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another’s answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one’s answers or work.
4. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.

For additional information, see the [Seminary Academic Catalog](#), pp. 25–27.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Your experience in this class is important to me. North Park is committed to creating inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established your accommodations, please share your accommodation letter with me so we can discuss how your accommodations will be implemented in this course. If you have not yet established services and have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations, please [email the Disability Access Specialist](#) or contact by phone (773-244-5737). Student Engagement facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations.

TITLE IX

Students who believe they have been harassed, discriminated against, or involved in sexual violence should contact the Title IX Coordinator (773-244-6276 or TitleIX@northpark.edu) for information about reporting, campus resources and support services, including confidential counseling services.

As members of the North Park faculty, we are concerned about the well-being and development of our students, and are available to discuss any concerns. Faculty are legally obligated to share information with the University’s Title IX coordinator in certain situations to help ensure that the student’s safety and welfare is being addressed, consistent with the requirements of the law. These disclosures include but are not limited to reports of sexual assault, relational/domestic violence, and stalking.

Please refer to North Park’s [Safe Community](#) site for reporting, contact information and further details.

INCOMPLETE GRADES

If, due to extenuating circumstances (specifically, pregnancy, illness, personal and family issues, military assignment, etc.), a student anticipates they will be unable to complete course work within the allotted time, that student may request a grade of incomplete from the course instructor before the last week of class clearly stating the reason(s) for this request. Overscheduling and/or lack of self-discipline are not considered extenuating circumstances. If the request is timely and meets the criteria, student and instructor will submit the incomplete grade form and the grade for that class will be listed as “I” until the last day of the following semester. If coursework is not submitted by the last day of the following semester the listing of



“I” will automatically be changed to “F.” For the full policy, see page 15 of the [Seminary Academic Catalog](#).

COURSE SCHEDULE

Calendar of Due Date	Reading (Date below is when reading should be completed)	Asynchronous Media (Date below is when media will be discussed)	Assignments to Turn In
Week 1			
	Introductions, Syllabus Review and Class Pres. Sign Up		
Week 2			
	Downing (Preface, Introduction, Part 1)	Video (Semiology)	Weekly Paper 1 Syllabus Quiz
Week 3			
	Downing (Part 2)	Video (Downing)	Weekly Paper 2 <i>Part 1 Alternate Perspective Due (your perspective)</i>
Week 4			
	Downing (Part 4); Cardoza- Orlandi and Gonzalez (Ch. 1-2)	Sample Sermon 1	Weekly Paper 3 Start of Class Presentations
Week 5			
	Cardoza- Orlandi and Gonzalez (Ch. 5 and 11)	Video (Gonzalez)	Weekly Paper 4
Week 6			
	Maggay (Ch. 1-6)	Case Study 1	Weekly Paper 5
Week 7			
	Maggay (Ch. 7-12),	Sample Sermon 2	Weekly Paper 6 <i>(Alternate Perspective: Conversation Partner Due)</i>
Week 8			
NO CLASS	Leong (Part 1)	NO CLASS: Reading Week	Weekly Paper 7
Week 9			



Calendar of Due Date	Reading (Date below is when reading should be completed)	Asynchronous Media (Date below is when media will be discussed)	Assignments to Turn In
	Leong (Part 2)	Case Study 2	Weekly Paper 8
Week 10			
	Leong (Part 3)	Video (Leong)	Weekly Paper 9 <i>(Alternate Perspective Conversation date due)</i>
Week 11			
	Swanson (ch. 1-3)	Video	Weekly Paper 10
Week 12			
	Swanson (ch. 4-7)	Sample Sermon 3	Weekly Paper 11
Week 13			
	Reeder(Part 1)	Video	Weekly Paper 12
Week 14			
	Reeder(Part 2)	Case Study 3	Weekly Paper 13
Week 15			
	Reeder(Part 3)	Sample Sermon 4	Weekly Paper 14 <i>Alternate Perspective Paper Due</i>
Week 16			
	Class Wrap Up and last of any remaining Class Presentations		