



## **NORTH PARK** THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

### 24/S2 MNST 6125: Issues of Faith in the Americas: Developing Ecclesial Communities in Cultural Diversity Draft Course Syllabus

#### **Instructors:**

Rev. Dr. Paul H. de Neui

Professor of Missiology and Intercultural Studies, North Park Theological Seminary

3325 W. Foster Ave, Chicago, IL, USA 60625

Office (773) 244-6230

[pdeneui@northpark.edu](mailto:pdeneui@northpark.edu)

Prof. Armida Belmonte Stephens

Theology Teaching Fellow, North Park Theological Seminary

3325 W. Foster Ave, Chicago, IL, USA 60625

Office (773) 244-5228

[abelmontestephens@northpark.edu](mailto:abelmontestephens@northpark.edu)

#### **Course Description:**

This hybrid course allows seminary students to explore what it means to share and live out the good news of the gospel interculturally in conversation with leaders from the Covenant Church of Colombia and other Latin American countries. As an international learning community, this group will travel to diverse regions of Colombia to address together topics such as racism, colorism, sexism, ageism, worldview differences, and how ecclesial communities (churches) interact with difference on all levels. This course, team taught by participants from several distinct cultural backgrounds, will explore anthropological perspectives as well as biblical-theological perspectives together on the subject. Online prework and postwork included. Participants must be able to carry luggage and walk. Pre-application and instructors' approval required. Scholarships for up to 50% of non-tuition expenses for tuition paying enrolled seminary students. Fulfills diversity course requirements for all programs. 3 semester credits.

#### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

As a result of participation in this communal learning experience, course participants will be able to:

1. Recognize, record, reflect, and respond to God's missional movement in diverse cultural contexts through biblical and sociological lenses.
2. Develop investigative skills in conversation with others in order to understand and interpret major challenges in participating with God's mission in diverse cultural contexts focusing on God's priorities of reconciliation and restorative justice in sacred and social contexts.
3. In community, analyze, evaluate, and provide responses to arguments and issues related to the use of various approaches dealing with diversity in culture, in mission, in ministry, and in worship settings.
4. Create a missiological approach addressing a major challenge in the participants' ministry context demonstrating practices that embody participation in God's priorities in the church and world.

This course contributes toward the following learning outcomes for NPTS degree programs:

- Demonstrate vision and growing capacity to excel in leadership for God's mission.
- Communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ in contextually appropriate, and effective ways.

- Engage diversity and exhibit growth towards inter-cultural competence for ministry reflective of God's global redemptive work.

### REQUIRED TEXTS AND LEARNING MATERIALS

Branson, Mark and Juan F. Martinez. *Churches, Cultures and Leadership: A Practical Theology of Congregations and Ethnicities* (IVP Academic, 2011).

Kim, Grace Ji-Sun. *Intercultural Ministry: Hope for a Changing World* (Judson Press, 2017).

Padilla, C. René. *What is Integral Mission? Global Voices of Latin America* (Fortress Press, 2011).

Additional articles and learning materials posted in each online module in Canvas.

### RECOMMENDED

Elmer, Duane. *Cross-Cultural Conflict: Building Relationships for Effective Ministry* (IVP, 1993).

Lanier, Sarah. *Foreign to Familiar: A Guide to Understanding Hot- and Cold-Climate Cultures* (McDougal Publishing, 2000).

Law, Eric H.F. *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb: A Spirituality for Leadership in a Multicultural Community* (Chalice Press, 1993).

### COURSE FORMAT

At the beginning of spring semester before travel, learning materials will be made available online in weekly Modules in Canvas and participants will be asked to review these materials and follow instructions as to what is expected in posts and responses each week. Dates of travel from Chicago to Colombia will be March 7 to 17. Following travel time in Colombia there will be online reflective work found in Canvas.

### LEARNING ACTIVITIES

- 1. Creative Conversations: 20% of course grade.** Participants are asked to share personal discoveries each week drawing from each module's required learning materials. Participants are asked to respond to the postings of *at least two* other class participants each week. Follow the rubric provided in Canvas. Due dates are listed in the schedule below and in Canvas.
- 2. Daily Participation: 20% of courses grade.** All members of the group are expected to fully participate in group activities including cheerful full-bodied participation. Individuals will not be allowed to separate from the group.
- 3. Topical Presentation: 20% of course grade.** Participants will present at least one 45 minute talk on a pre-determined topic relevant to the course theme. This may be done in a small group or individually. Printed manuscripts must be available for translators to follow. Presentations may be individually or in pairs must include activities for listeners to participate and time for question and answer. Follow the rubric provided in Canvas. Due dates are listed in the schedule below and in Canvas.
- 4. Travel Reflection Journal. 10% of course grade.** In preparation for the travel component of the course, participants will learn the daily discipline developed by Matthew Dicks called, "Homework for Life." Using this method, participants will keep a travel journal and summarize highlights from their journal to turn in at semester's end using the rubric found in Canvas. Due dates listed in Canvas.
- 5. Final Project 30% of course grade.**  
The final project will be personally selected based upon one or more areas of focus from the class. Students should consider presenting this project to a specific ministry context post-travel within a designated period of time. The goal is that results of this course would lead to further advocacy addressing the topic of the course. The final project must include materials and topics

covered in the class and help the church “back home” address the issue of cultural difference in some tangible way. Use the rubric provided in Canvas. Due date listed in Canvas.

**Grading:** The weight of assignments is as follows:

Creative online conversations: reflections and responses	20% Course Grade
Participation	20% Course Grade
Topical presentations	20% Course Grade
Travel reflection journal	10% Course Grade
Final project or paper	30% Course Grade

Grading Scale (based on NPTS catalog):

95-100 %	A	80-83%	C
93-94 %	A-	78-79%	C-
91-92%	B+	76-77%	D+
88-90%	B	72-75%	D
86-87%	B-	70-71%	D-
84-85%	C+	69% and below	F

Grade Reduction for Late Assignments

Letter grades for late assignments without excuse or request for an incomplete will be reduced 1 letter for each day late.

### **Additional Notes**

**Academic Accommodation:** NPTS provides services for students with documented disabilities to ensure equal access to programs, services, facilities, and activities. Students with a disability who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact Seminary Academic Services as soon as possible. If desired or necessary, discussion pertaining to documentation and accommodation can take place at another suitable location or by telephone. Further information about the American Disabilities Act Services is found at <https://www.northpark.edu/campus-life-and-services/student-success-and-wellness/disability-resources/>.

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

- Plagiarism - the use of another's work as one's own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
- Copying another's answers on an examination.
- Deliberately allowing another to copy one's answers or work.
- Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.
- Use of ChatGPT or other AI composition software to impersonate individual assignments.

For a fuller discussion of academic dishonesty, see the Seminary Academic Catalog.

**Canvas:** For any questions or concerns about Canvas please open an online Helpdesk ticket.

**Harassment Policy and Title IX:** Students who believe they have been harassed, discriminated against, or involved in sexual violence should contact the Dean of Students (773-244-6222) or Director of Human Resources (773-244-5601) for information about 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 (<http://www.northpark.edu/Campus-Life-and-Services/Safe-Community>) for contact information and further details.

**Inclusive Language:** NPTS encourages all students to follow the Statement of Inclusive Language of the ECC which explains, "We are committed to being inclusive in language and imagery in an effort to eliminate prejudice, whether gender, racial, ethnic, national, religious, denominational, cultural, or physical. This way of proceeding in no manner seeks to deny personal identity; rather, it guards against any use of word or phrase that tends to exclude people." Consider how you can best incorporate inclusive language into all of your communication (written and oral) during the course particularly in your references to God and to humanity.

**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 the [Seminary Academic Catalog](#).

**Online/Zoom Etiquette:** While online in class students are required to keep cameras on. This gives all in the class the ability to connect at least visually, if not in audibly. Please use the same etiquette you would use when in the classroom with other students. This means **avoid** traveling in your car, preparing a meal, dressing, showering, personal grooming, or engaging in other activities at the same time as when you are in the online classroom. We understand that cats, dogs, and young children like to be in on the activity and that is not a problem as long as they do not distract from your ability to engage and learn. When not speaking, please mute microphones unless asked to do otherwise. When necessary, course participants may send chat messages to instructors during the class time. Online programs such as internet use, solitaire and other computer games, email, social media, and any other online connections not related to the course should not be open during class time.

**Writing Format:** Use the Turabian style for references in your writing. Refer to the Seminary Writing handbook for more information regarding formatting or writing style. It can be found at: <https://www.northpark.edu/seminary/academics/student-resources/>

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Subject to change. Contact information to Follow

Prewrite online begins Jan 13, 2025

Travel Schedule – March 7-17, 2025

Friday March 7 – Travel from Chicago to Medellín via Miami on American Airlines. Overnight in hotel.

Saturday March 8. Breakfast in Medellín hotel. Lunch at airport before flying to Montería. Evening meal and Session #1 together at the Finca.

Sunday March 9 – Breakfast at the Finca. Travel together to churches. Session #2 in afternoon. Debriefing together in evening.

Monday March 10 – Breakfast at the Finca. Session #3 in the morning, Session 4 afternoon.

Tuesday March 11 – Breakfast at the Finca. Travel to San Marcos, Lunch and visit churches in San Marcos. Session #5 in evening at the Finca.

Wednesday March 12 – Breakfast at the Finca. Fly to Medellín. Meet with Sanders for lunch and debriefing time. Stay in homes of church members that evening.

Thursday March 13 – Breakfast in homes. Travel to Bible Seminary for Service with students. Session #6 at Seminary. Evening in homes.

Friday March 14 – Breakfast in homes Visit Casa Embera and Iglesia Fuente de Salvación. Evening in homes.

Saturday March 15 – Breakfast in homes. Tourist Day in Medellín. Evening in homes.

Sunday March 16 – Breakfast in homes. Participate in Churches in Medellín

Monday Marzo 17 – Depart Medellín for Chicago in the morning.

Postwork online by semester end May 8, 2025

**Estimated Budget (Subject to change)**

International Ticket	\$1000
Domestic travel costs (air, bus, van)	\$400
Housing/Meal Board	\$450
Student NPU Insurance	\$50.
Other fees	\$100
Total per student:	\$2000 US

Note: Tuition paying seminary students are eligible for a 50% discount for non-tuition costs for NPTS travel courses when they participate in NPTS' Global Studies Fund.