

THEO 3252 / THEO 5352: Approaches to Mission Studies

Course Outline

Teacher Prof. Dr. Tobias Brandner
Tel 3943 1368
e-mail tobiasbran@gmail.com

TA To be confirmed

Venue ARC G01
Language English

A. Course description and syllabus

The course aims at presenting different approaches to mission studies, different mission and contextualization models, and at discussing issues related to the mission of the church.

An important objective of the course is to foster an understanding of existing mission organizations and, for students taking course THEO 5352, to guide them to creatively design a mission plan.

The course will lead to a deeper understanding in following areas:

- The biblical and historical basis of the mission of the church
- Patterns of mission and evangelism in the past and present with particular attention to a tension between evangelical and ecumenical mission models since the mid-20th century
- Contemporary challenges to the mission of the church
- Mission in the context of Hong Kong and China
- Issues in the intercultural communication of the gospel

The course will be taught

- a) in seminar-style lectures accompanied by handouts (2h / week)
- b) with tutorials including student presentations (for THEO 5352 only) and discussion (1h / week).

B. Learning outcomes

The course is a double-coded course with different learning outcomes expected for undergraduate students and for graduate students and with different requirements.

- All the students will gain a general understanding of the whole field of mission, particularly of the biblical basis, historical development, and present-day forms of mission.
- Students will grow in sensitivity regarding the ambiguities of past mission history and present-day missionary outreach.
- Students will learn about different agents in mission and about their specific features.
- Students will be informed about present-day local and international mission

agencies.

- Students of THEO 5352 will learn to design a mission outreach plan that is applicable and relevant in actual church life.

C. Assessment scheme

For THEO 3252	Oral participation (see a)	20%
	Reading report (see b)	30%
	Report on a mission agency (see c)	50%
For THEO 5352:	Oral participation (see a)	20%
	Report on a mission agency (see c)	30%
	Term paper (see d)	50%

a) Oral participation

Regular, active, and interested *class and tutorial participation* and reading of the weekly assignments (20%)

b) Reading report

Choose one of the books below and write a reading report:

- Dana L. Robert, *Christian Mission. How Christianity Became a World Religion*, Chichester, U.K. and Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009
- Stephen Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, New York: Orbis, 2002 (revised and expanded edition)
- Bosch, David J.: *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, New York, Orbis, 1991 (also available in Chinese), 349-520 (chapters 10 to 12)

Note: a reading report is not the same as a book report. A reading report is more casual and less academic. It aims firstly at giving evidence of thorough reading of a book (or a part thereof, as in the case of Bosch) and secondly at showing engagement with the reading. It may be more personal.

Length: 2,000 words

Deadline: 29 October 2021

Language: English or Chinese is accepted

Assessment Criteria:

- Content: does the paper reflect a good understanding of the texts?
- Thought: Does the student critically engage with the thoughts expressed?
- Form: does the form of the presentation enhance the understanding of the written essay? (Neatness of the paper, good structuring, concise writing, mastering of language and proper use of source material)

c) Report about a mission agency (30% for THEO 5352, 50% for THEO 3252):

Choose any existing mission organization or mission agency and describe it. You may also choose to describe the mission department of your denomination, if there is such a department.

Leading questions:

- External elements (short): size, organizational background and structure, addressee, history of the organization

- Vision behind the organization; how did it develop; who is mainly carrying the vision
- How does the organization work? Where is financial support coming from?
- Strengths and weaknesses?
- What mission theology does the project reflect?

Note the following when writing the mission agency report:

- a) Expected length up to 3,000 words for THEO 5352 (around 4,500 Chinese characters); up 5,000 words in English for THEO 3252 (around 7,000 Chinese characters) – note: length requirements should be observed; a longer essay is not a better essay; try to write more in less words!
 - b) Deadline: 29 Oct 2021 for THEO 5352 or 15 Dec 2021 for THEO 3252
 - c) English or Chinese is accepted
 - d) Avoid simply gathering information from an organization’s website! Try to interview representatives or clients of the organization. Give an independent and critical assessment.
- e) **Term paper (50% for THEO 5352):**
Design a mission outreach program in a team work of two persons and write an individual report (e.g. mission program to a national group, an ethnic minority group, a marginalized people group, a professional group, another religious group; etc.) with following elements:
- Get in touch with the people group you choose and analyze their needs
 - Introduce their background (religious / ethnic / cultural / social)
 - Describe the principles of mission theology that guide you
 - Design strategies of outreach for the people group
 - Reflect the strengths and weaknesses of your mission program
 - Length of the whole paper: around 5,000 to 6,000 words in English or 7,000 to 9,000 中文字
 - Class presentation in November – around 10 minutes per person (not more than 5 slides)
 - Deadline for individual written report: 15 Dec 2021
 - English and Chinese is accepted
 - The assignment will be assessed based on the joint oral presentation and the individual written report.

A note on plagiarism

- The University places great emphasis on students’ academic honesty. A short video clip (in three different versions – Cantonese, Mandarin, and English) introduces you to the notions of plagiarism and academic honesty:
- http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/clear/tnl/acad_honesty.html
- Read also the following academic honesty website:
<http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>

Grading

The grading follows the general grading policy of the CUHK outlined below (in short form):

- Grade A / Excellent: Outstanding performance on ALL learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would surpass the normal expectations at this level and typical of standards that may be common at higher levels of study.
- Grade A- / Very Good: Generally outstanding performance on all or almost all learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to synthesize and apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would fully fulfill the normal expectations at this level and occasionally reaches standards that may be common at higher levels of study.
- Grade B / Good: Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for slightly less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance. Demonstrates the ability to apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a comprehensive manner that would sufficiently fulfill the normal expectations at this level.
- Grade C / Fair: Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes. Demonstrates the ability to partially apply the principles or skills learned in the course in a manner that would meet the basic requirement at this level.
- Grade D / Pass: Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes. Addresses the task inadequately by meeting the basic requirement at this level only in some areas while responding minimally with possibly tangential content in others.
- Grade F / Failure: Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements. Fails to address the task and likely does not understand what the task requires. In other words, the work completely misses the point.

For submission of assignments, please follow the following rule:

1. Upload your assignment on the Blackboard website. **Only word-format is allowed. PDF is regarded as non-submission.**
2. At the same time also upload a soft copy of the completed assignment to the plagiarism detection engine VeriGuide, at the URL: <https://veriguide2.cse.cuhk.edu.hk/cuhk/>
3. The system will issue a receipt which also contains a declaration of honesty, which is the same as that in <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/p10.htm>. The declaration should be uploaded in pdf to the blackboard system.

D. Handbooks and important publications

Journals

- International Review of Mission
(based in Geneva, WCC)
- Mission Studies: Journal of the International Association for Mission Studies
- International Bulletin of Missionary Research
(based in Overseas Ministries Study Center, next to Yale Divinity School)
- Missiology. An International Review
(published by American Society of Missiology)
- Studies in World Christianity
(published by Edinburgh University Press, based on the Centre for the Study of World Christianity)

On mission studies and contextual theology

- Stephen Bevans, *Models of Contextual Theology*, New York: Orbis, 2002 (revised and expanded edition) – classical handbook introducing basic models of contextualization
- Bevans, Stephen B. and Roger P. Schroeder: *Constants in Context. A Theology of Mission for Today*, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis, 2004)
- Bosch, David J.: *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, New York, Orbis, 1991 (cited as *Transforming Mission*) – most recommended handbook – also available in Chinese [BV2063.B649 1991](#)
- Bosch, David J.: *Witness to the world. The Christian mission in theological perspective*, London: Marshall & Morgan 1980 [BV2063.B65](#)
- Camps A., L.A. Hoedemaker, M.R. Spindler, and F.J. Verstraelen (eds.), *Missiology: An Ecumenical Introduction. Texts and Contexts of Global Christianity*, Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1995 (cited as *Missiology: Introduction*) [BV2030. M55 1995](#)
- Costa, R.O. (ed.): *One Faith, Many Cultures: Inculturation, Indigenization and Contextualization*, Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1988.
- Kirk, Andrew J. *What is Mission? Theological Explorations*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000.
- McGavran, Donald A. *Understanding Church Growth. Third Edition*. Revised and edited by C. Peter Wagner, William Eerdmans Grand Rapids, Michigan 1990.
- Robert, Dana L. *Christian Mission. How Christianity Became a World Religion*, Chichester, U.K. and Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009
- Thomas, Norman (ed.): *Readings in World Mission*, SPCK London 1995 (320pp.; reader accompanying Bosch's *Transforming Mission* gathering all the important reference texts to the different sections of Bosch's book) [BV2063 .R42 1995](#)
- Walls, Andrew: *The Missionary Movement in Christian History*, Maryknoll NY : Orbis ; Edinburgh : T&T Clark, cop. 1996.
- Walls, Andrew: *Mission In The Twenty-First Century: Exploring The Five Marks Of Global Mission*. London : Darton, Longman and Todd, 2008
- Winter, Ralph D. and Steven C. Hawthorne (ed.): *Perspectives of the World Christian Movement. A Reader*. Third Edition, William Carey Library, Pasadena

California 1999

(ca 750pp., huge volume with 124 articles by different authors on all aspects of Christian World Mission; on biblical, historical, cultural, and strategic perspectives; on E-1, E-2 and E-3 Evangelism) [BV2070 .P467 1999](#)

- Wrogemann, Henning. *Intercultural Hermeneutics: Intercultural Theology, Volume One*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic 2016 (Pp. 413).
Theologies of Mission: Intercultural Theology, Volume Two. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic 2018 (Pp. 454).
A Theology of Interreligious Relations: Intercultural Theology, Volume Three. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic 2019 (Pp. 502).

On Global or World Christianity

- Farhadian, Charles E. *Introducing World Christianity*. Chichester, West Sussex; Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell 2012.
- Jacobsen, Douglas G. *The World's Christians: Who They Are, Where They Are, and How They Got There*. Chichester, West Sussex, U.K.; Malden, MA, USA: Wiley-Blackwell 2011.
- Jenkins, Philip. *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press 2006.
- Jenkins, Philip. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press 2002.
- Pachuau, Lalsangkima. *World Christianity: A Historical and Theological Introduction*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press 2018.
- Sanneh, Lamin. *Whose Religion is Christianity? The Gospel Beyond the West*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: W.B. Eerdmans 2003.

E. Overview

8 Sept 2021
(Session 1)

Course information

I. Introduction

What is Mission?

Mission – Ecumenics – Global Christianity

15 Sept 2021
(Session 2)

II. Foundations of Mission

The biblical basis of mission

Tutorial: On the biblical basis of mission

22 Sept 2021

Public holiday (mid-autumn festival)

29 Sept 2021
(Session 3)

The historical development of mission

Tutorial: On the history of the mission movement

6 Oct 2021
(Session 4)

Historical developments since the 1950s: The ecumenical and evangelical understanding of mission

Tutorial : On the Protestant Mission era and on the impacts of the Protestant mission

13 Oct 2021
(Session 5)

III. Patterns of Mission
Mission as evangelism

Tutorial:

1) Evangelism

2) Evangelical and Ecumenical Mission Tradition

20 Oct 2021
(Session 6)

Mission as church planting and church growth: The church growth movement

Tutorial: What kind of missionaries do we need?

27 Oct 2021
(Session 7)

World evangelization and frontier mission

Tutorial: On church growth

3 Nov 2021
(Session 8)

Mission in the context of poverty and injustice

Tutorial: A case study – the story of HKCIC

10 Nov 2021
(Session 9)

Mission and inculturation (1): Backgrounds. The gospel and culture

Tutorial: What does inculturation in the Chinese context mean?

17 Nov 2021
(Session 10)

Mission and inculturation (2): Problems of inculturation and models of inculturation

Tutorial: On Christianity and people of other faith

IV. Issues and Challenges of Mission in the Present

24 Nov 2021
(Session 11)

The Challenge of other faiths

Tutorial: Students' presentations

1 Dec 2021
(Session 12)

Mission and communication: How do we communicate the gospel?

Tutorial: Students' presentations
