

**ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY**  
**Continuing Education Course**  
**2 Credit Hours**

**PTHE 640 MINISTRY ON THE EDGE:  
THE MISSION TO POST-CHRISTIAN AMERICA**

A class/conference experience provided by the  
Assemblies of God Theological Seminary  
[www.agts.edu](http://www.agts.edu)

In cooperation with the Penn/Del District Council and Valley Forge Christian College

at

*Ministry On The Edge: The Mission To Post-Christian America*  
*with*  
*Brian McLaren*

November 18-19, 2002

Renaissance Hotel  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

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Fall 2002

**COURSE SYLLABUS**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

*Ministry On The Edge: The Mission To Post-Christian America* is a *Leadership Roundtable* conference experience hosted by AGTS. It will be the site *and* the raw material for theological reflection on our emerging culture and the church models that must emerge to engage it.

**COURSE REGISTRATION**

Conference information and registration is available from the AGTS Continuing Education office in several ways:

- Online: [http://www.agts.edu/conferences/leadership\\_roundtable2002.html](http://www.agts.edu/conferences/leadership_roundtable2002.html)
- By telephone: 1-800-467-AGTS
- By email: [matterson@agts.edu](mailto:matterson@agts.edu)

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The course/conference is an arena for learning and growth of several kinds:

- *Cultural exegesis*: to understand and interpret major forms of cultural influence that are creating the context in which the emerging church must operate.
- *Theological reflection*: to hear culture posing critical theological questions, and to exercise reflective skills needed to begin the process of developing meaningful answers.
- *Personal reframing*: to see personal and corporate ministry as an evolving, holistic, missional calling rather than a set of static roles played by executing a list of functions.
- *Professional networking*: to develop relationships with other leaders devoted to the life of the emerging church in an environment that maximizes long-term peer learning.
- *Leadership enhancement*: to grow in the character, skills, and gifts associated with the leadership arts as they relate to the emerging culture and church.

## **COURSE READINGS**

### **Required Texts**

(Note: you can save on shipping costs by ordering all the texts from the AGTS bookstore. Call Arlene at 1-800-467-AGTS x1055, or email her at [adilley@agseminary.edu](mailto:adilley@agseminary.edu))

McLaren, Brian *A New Kind of Christian: A Tale of Two Friends on a Spiritual Journey*. John Wiley & Sons, 2001. (192 pages)

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Church on the Other Side: Doing Ministry in the Postmodern Matrix* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000. (227 pages)

Sweet, Leonard. *Postmodern Pilgrims: First Century Passion for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Church*. Broadman & Holman, 2000. (224 pages)

### **Substitute Texts**

(To be substituted in order for any required texts already read.)

Grenz, Stanley J. and John R. Franke. *Beyond Foundationalism: Shaping Theology in a Postmodern Context*. Westminster John Knox, 2000. (296 pages)

## **PTHE 640 Emerging Models of Ministry in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

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Morgenthaler, Sally J. *Worship Evangelism*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1999. (320 pages)

Nash, Robert N. *An 8-Track Church in a CD World: The Modern Church in the Postmodern World*. Macon, Georgia: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2001. (144 pages)

Towns, Elmer and Warren Bird. *Into the Future: Turning Today's Church Trends into Tomorrow's Opportunities*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000. (244 pages)

Beaudoin, Tom. *Virtual Faith: The Irreverent Spiritual Quest of Generation X*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1998. (240 pages)

Sweet, Leonard. *Carpe Manana: Is Your Church Ready to Seize Tomorrow?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001. (208 pages)

### **COURSE OUTLINE**

1. Plenary sessions will feature presentations by Brian McLaren as well as Byron Klaus and Earl Creps. Additional small group sessions and panel discussions will also be included in the experience. Informal times of interaction will enrich both the presentations and the relationships formed at the event. A conference schedule is available at: [http://www.agts.edu/conferences/leadership\\_roundtable2002.html](http://www.agts.edu/conferences/leadership_roundtable2002.html)
2. A brief orientation session will be held during the conference for all those taking it as a for-credit class. You will be notified at the conference of the time and place. This will give us a chance to meet and ask questions about the course assignments. Attendance is required.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

#### **a. Pre-conference:**

1. *Read* the required texts.
2. *Write* a 3-page response to each book that reflects its major themes and how they relate to your ministry context. If you have read these books already, choose replacements from the Substitute list that will have approximately the same number of pages. Specifically, address how these themes could be applied to your life and ministry, and what might be some of the challenges you would face in those applications.

3. *Communicate*: email your pre-conference papers to me ([ecreps@agseminary.edu](mailto:ecreps@agseminary.edu)) or turn them in by the end of the conference.

**b. During the class/conference**

Be present for all conference sessions, workshops, and events. Participation in events, experiences, and relationships is critical for learning and growth. It's even more critical to receiving a passing grade.

**c. Post-conference projects: CHOOSE 2 OF THE FOLLOWING 6 OPTIONS**

1. *Reading Reflection*: read one of the Alternate Texts and write a 7-10 page paper that outlines the author's central thesis and responds to it in terms of your ministry context. This is to be a high-quality reflective essay, not a library research assignment.
2. *Ministry Development Plan*: write a 7-10 page paper detailing your plan for developing a new model of ministry in your setting. This should include background research, personal leadership growth, model characteristics, implementation challenges, and a timeline.
3. *Sermons*: using insights gained from the class/conference, write two sermons of significant length designed to reach a pre-Christian emerging culture audience. *Do not recycle old messages!* You may do either a manuscript, or a very, very detailed outline. While all sermons must be turned in hard copy, they may be accompanied by audiocassette and/or media support (e.g., PowerPoint, video clips, etc.) If you speak without notes, an audiocassette is required.
4. *Research Paper*: choose a major theme related to the course/conference and write a 7-10 page research paper. The paper should identify and reflect upon key ideas related to the topic, report on some of the major literature in the area, and apply conclusions to your ministry context. Supporting footnotes and a 15-item bibliography are required.
5. *Internet Project*: research internet-based models of ministry and prepare a 7-10 page paper on your findings. The presentation should include a brief review of the literature, descriptions of the various models, web links, and other key features. Draw conclusions about their use of the internet itself, and the application (if any) of their ministry model to your own (i.e., what you learned from them that could be applied in your context).
6. *Multimedia Project*: using the course/conference as a starting point, develop a brief multimedia (Web-based, PowerPoint, etc.) presentation that would accomplish

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either of two goals: making the emerging church comprehensible to the mainstream church, or, making the gospel comprehensible to a postmodern audience.

All written assignments are to be typed, double-spaced, represent quality graduate level work, and follow the *Turabian* style manual, 6<sup>th</sup> edition.

All assignments can be emailed to the professor ([ecreps@agseminary.edu](mailto:ecreps@agseminary.edu)) with a title page that includes your name, address, phone and email, and the course number.

*Due date:* June 5, 2002

**Note: the participant will be charged a \$15 change-of-grade fee if work is turned in after the due date stipulated on the syllabus, even if permission has been given by the instructor.**

## **GRADING PROCEDURE**

	<i>Points</i>
Pre-session writings:	50
Conference attendance	50
Post-session options	200

Grading will be on a percentage basis, with 90% of the total points required for an A, 80% of the points required for a B, etc. Plusses and minuses will be used for point totals within 2 points of any grade level.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

*Emerging Church/Emerging Culture: A Select Resource List* is available at my AGTS faculty web page. A downloadable pdf version is also available there.

[http://agts.edu/faculty/faculty\\_publications/bibliographies/creps\\_bibliography/index.html](http://agts.edu/faculty/faculty_publications/bibliographies/creps_bibliography/index.html)

The free Acrobat reader required to read pdf files is available at:

<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep.html>

## **SPECIFIC DATA**

Course syllabus prepared by Earl Creps, December 2001.