

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
Continuing Education Course
Northwest College
Kirkland, WA
February 7- 8, 2002
2 Credit Hours

PTHE 640 MINISTRY IN THE POSTMODERN WORLD

**A class/conference partnering of the
Assemblies of God Theological Seminary**

www.agts.edu

and

Northwest College

<http://www.nwcollege.edu/>

at

Vision Northwest 2002: Ministry in the Postmodern World

<http://www.nwcollege.edu/vision/index.html>

Earl G. Creps, Ph.D.
1-800-467-AGTS
ecreps@agseminary.edu

Spring 2002

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Vision Northwest 2002: Ministry in the Postmodern World is a conference experience hosted by Northwest College (<http://www.nwcollege.edu/>). It will be the site *and* the raw material for theological reflection on our emerging culture and the church that must emerge to engage it.

Conference information and registration is available from Northwest College online at:
<http://www.nwcollege.edu/vision/index.html>

COURSE REGISTRATION

Register for AGTS credit by contacting the Continuing Education Team:
Phone: 1-800-467-AGTS.
Email: lmayne@agseminary.edu

Online: http://agts.edu/continuing_education/index.html

COURSE OBJECTIVES

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

PTHE 640 Ministry in the Postmodern World

Earl Creps

Page 2

- *Cultural exegesis*: to experience 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)

Sine, Tom. *Mustard Seed versus McWorld: Reinventing Life and Faith for the Future*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999. (249 pages)

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

Sweet, Leonard. *Postmodern Pilgrims: First Century Passion for the 21st 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)

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

PTHE 640 Ministry in the Postmodern World

Earl Creps

Page 3

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)

Brenda, Brasher. *Give Me that Online Religion*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2001 (208 pages)

COURSE OUTLINE

1. Four plenary sessions will feature presentations by Len Sweet. Many additional workshops will provide presentations by scholars and practitioners of the church in postmodern culture. Informal times of interaction will enrich both the presentations and the relationships formed at the event. A conference schedule is available at: <http://www.nwcollege.edu/vision/schedule.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 by email 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 Sine and Sweet required texts. Write a 2-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.
2. *Write:* a 3-page paper summarizing what you believe to be 3-5 "Big Ticket Items" you picked up from the McLaren required text. Be sure to focus on *why* you feel they are the "BTI's" and how they relate to your life and ministry.
3. *Communicate:* email your pre-conference papers to me (ecreps@agseminary.edu) 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. *Personal Growth Plan*: write a 7-10 page paper detailing your plan for learning more about the emerging culture/emerging church and developing the ministry skills relevant to it over the next year. Describe the area in which you feel the most need for development. The plan should include reading, personal research, peer consultations, spiritual disciplines, changes in your ministry context, and other personal growth assets. Skills should include communication, leadership, and discipleship as minimums.
3. *Sermons*: using insights gained from the class/conference, write two sermons of significant length designed to reach a postmodern, pre-Christian 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 postmodern churches on the internet and prepare a 7-10 page paper on your findings. The presentation should include descriptions of the various churches, web links, their worship styles, and other key features. Draw conclusions about their use of the internet itself, 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), and conclude by developing your own typology of emerging churches.

PTHE 640 Ministry in the Postmodern World

Earl Creps

Page 5

6. *Multimedia Project*: using the course/conference as a starting point, develop a brief multimedia (Web-based, Powerpoint, etc.) presentation that would accomplish either of two goals: making the postmodern 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, 6th edition.

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

Due date: May 8, 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:	40
Conference attendance	20
Post-session options	140

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

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, September, 2001.