TM5xx or TC5xx (SOT) American Culture: Social Location and the Gospel (4 units)

MP5xx (SIS) American Culture: Social Location and the Gospel (4 units)

Mark Lau Branson, Homer Goddard Associate Professor of Ministry of the Laity
Ryan K. Bolger, Assistant Professor of Church in Contemporary Culture

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DESCRIPTION:

Students will be introduced to American culture and examine the various structures and practices within American society. Students will explore modernity and postmodernity, popular culture, economics, and politics, and the media. Students will learn to think theologically about American culture as well as formulate a missional response for local congregations.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students who complete this course will have:

-- Compared and analyzed differing perspectives on American culture, with attention to theoretical approaches and the interpretation of cultural practices and artifacts

-- Worked toward a theological understanding culture, with a specific focus on American culture

-- Gained an appreciation for cultural studies and their role in congregational and missional initiatives.

-- Proposed a missional response to a particular aspect of American Culture

COURSE FORMAT:

This is a ten week course utilizing lectures, discussions, interaction, film and television viewing, small group work, a field trip, and web-based research.
REQUIRED READING:

Student will read 1000 pages according to the course schedule.


*Course Reader*

ASSIGNMENTS:

1. Students will read all assignments according to the course schedule and complete a log concerning dates and materials read. (15%)

2. Students will complete book reviews for each book read, art observed, film viewed. Reviews will follow a format based on Mortimer Adler’s *How to Read a Book*. (15%)

3. Students will prepare and lead a class discussion (or small group discussion) on a particular topic in American Culture. Prior to leading the class discussion, the student will submit a one-page memo on topics and perspectives that are most important for the group conversation. (10%)
4. Students will attend all course sessions and actively participate in discussions. A visit to specified museums or cultural sites will be substituted for one class meeting (20%)

5. Students will research and write a paper (3000 words) on cultural and theological perspectives concerning a specific matter of American culture and Christian discipleship and ministry. Topics must be preapproved by an instructor. (40%)

6. Students wishing to pursue an A/A- must do exceptional work on all assignments and complete one additional paper. After reading *Colossians Remixed* by Brian Walsh and Sylvia Kessmaat (IVP), write a 1000 word review based on Adler’s guidelines, with half of the paper explaining the Walsh/Keesmaat thesis and arguments, and half of the paper articulating specific implications for ministry.

**TOPICS COVERED**

Understanding the Powers, National Ideology, Individualism in America, Race in America, Gender in America, Capitalism, Consumer Culture, Media and the Arts, America Futures

**PREREQUISITES:** None

**RELATIONSHIP TO CURRICULUM:** SOT/MA Cultural literacy. SIS Elective.

**FINAL EXAM:** None

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