



Evangelism In the Local Church

Syllabus

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Updated 2006

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Syllabus

Course Overview

This course is a study of evangelism ministry with special attention paid to the context of a local church setting. Students will be encouraged to make specific applications of the lectures and assignments to the particular setting of their present or intended ministry (e.g., urban core, commuting suburban, rural, single professionals, ethnically diverse, and so forth). The course begins with a study of the biblical and theological foundations for evangelism. On this basis we will study methods of personal and group evangelism, how to equip laity to witness (and why most Christians don't respond to training seminars on evangelism), the use and development of church and para-church structures in evangelism (both on-going and special), the care of new converts and discipleship, and selected current issues in evangelism. Assignments focus on practical application of workable solutions for evangelism in the local church. Those in para-church ministries will find much to relate to their particular and often unique needs.

Course Objectives

Given active participation, upon completion of this course you should be able to:

1. Know the essential content of the Gospel message, at least one method for communicating this message, and criteria for evaluating presentations of the gospel with respect to accuracy and effectiveness.
2. Explain the function of apologetics in evangelistic work.
3. List important issues that contemporary apologetics can address, and know resources that can be used for this.
4. Describe how an effective evangelistic program could be integrated into the total program of a local church structurally and systemically.
5. Describe how to synthesize relevant Biblical and secular source material into an effective evangelistic sermon or message and analyze a sermon or message to determine how to conclude it with an evangelistic appeal.
6. List the essential content of a follow-up program and be familiar with at least two methods for communicating it.
7. Define discipleship and describe resources available to the local church for discipling.



Syllabus

8. Identify and discuss some of the current issues and heresies in evangelism such as eternal damnation (hell), lordship salvation, friendship or initiative methods, the use of figurative language in Gospel presentations, liberation theology, ministries to special groups, the role of social involvement and urban ministry in evangelism and witness ministry, and so forth.

COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Whether you sit in a traditional classroom or study from a distance, you will benefit from interaction, collaboration, and spiritual formation (ATS schools, note Standards 3.2.1.3; 10.3.3.3; 10.3.4.3). In order to meet this need in distance theological education, ITS is developing structures and resources to encourage spiritual formation and community interaction in our courses. In this course, we have included three collaborative learning features:

1. ITS Online Interactivity Forum (see course requirements) - fosters peer-to-peer interaction in a global, threaded discussion (required for all students)
2. Spiritual Formation Project (see course requirements) - fosters mentor-to-learner interaction in a mentor-guided reflection, discussion and application (required for all students)
3. Learning Community Assignments (see end of syllabus) - fosters peer-to-peer collaboration in a group approach to assignments (optional but recommended where possible)

Go to www.ITScourses.org/interactivity/ for the most up-to-date ITS resources.

Course Requirements

All major papers (those worth more than ten points) must include a separate bibliography prepared in standard form. The bibliography should include all sources read or consulted in the preparation of the paper such as books, commentaries, periodical articles, and oral interviews.

The following chart summarizes the assignments. Please note that there are several options for the Follow-Up and Witness assignments. The particular option that you will do is determined by criteria listed in the assignment. *You are not free to choose any one of the options for these two assignments.* The options are given so that all students will have an assignment aimed at their level of background and previous experience. Read the introduction to each option for these two assignments to determine if you should do it or move to the next option.

Syllabus

ASSIGNMENT	OPTION (S)	PAGE	POINTS
I. POST-CONVERSION FOLLOW-UP	1. Conversion follow-up materials 2. Current issue paper 3. Social ministry paper	3 4 5	20
II. WITNESS	1. Witness with words 2. Witness with walk 3. Witness to special religious groups 4. Evangelistic speaking	5 7 8 10	20
III. EXAM		10	10
IV. EVANGELISTIC STRATEGY		10	20
V. HANDOUTS		12	10
VI. INTERACTIVITY		12	5
VII. SPIRITUAL FORMATION PROJECT		13	15

I. Post-Conversion Follow-Up (Complete **one** of the following three options.)

Those students who have never discipled a believer in the basics of Christian living and doctrine should complete the following:

A. Evaluation of post-conversion follow-up materials

1. Obtain two widely available follow-up plans or books.
 - a. These should be materials designed for initial follow-up of a new or very young believer. For example, Campus Crusade's Step 1, "The Christian Adventure," in the *Ten Basic Steps To Christian Maturity* series and its Teacher's Manual; "Discovery Group Student Guide" in *The Discipleship Series* and its Leader's Guide; the Navigator's "Lessons On Assurance" in the *Growing In Christ Follow-Up Series*; *Survival Kit*; or another widely used follow-up program [an out of print but excellent book is Kuhne, *The Dynamics of Personal Follow-Up*, (Appendix 1, "A Schedule of Ten Follow-up Appointments")].



Syllabus

- b. The two plans or books should be significantly different in basic approach or target audience. For example, a "fill-in-the-blank" booklet (such as the CCC or Navigator materials) and Kuhne's discussion-outline approach. Or, materials designed for high school youth and materials designed for business professionals. If the booklet chosen is part of a series, only the booklet that is designed for initial follow-up need be purchased.
2. Survey each follow-up plan or booklet, and in a separate paragraph for each lesson, summarize the content of that lesson. In addition to this summary of the content of each plan or booklet, compare and contrast the two follow-up strategies.

For example, consider the target audience of the material, how long ago it was developed, how effective you judge it to be, what it was written to accomplish, how the material sets about doing this, and so forth. Strive to understand the strengths and limitations of the materials you have chosen and then apply these observations and conclusions to your own determination of usefulness of the materials.

3. Thoughtfully complete one of the two booklets, including appropriate memorization. On a separate sheet of paper, include a statement that the verses were memorized.

If one of the two plans you surveyed is not in booklet form (e.g., Kuhne) then use the other. If a Teacher's Manual or a Leader's Guide is available, use it also.

4. When noted on the schedule, turn in the name of the author (if given), titles of the two plans or books, the summary sheet and comparison-contrast analysis of each, and the completed booklet.

Students who have been involved in follow-up before may do either of the following (B or C), to be turned in when the Follow-Up assignment is due.

- B. An 8-12 page typed paper on a current issue in evangelism** – for example, lordship salvation, the reality of hell, Jesus as the only way to salvation, etc. *Use at least one primary source* – see the bibliography and the ATLA database in your library for some sources. Your opening paragraph should define the scope



Syllabus

of your paper. Also include a separate bibliography, prepared in standard form. The bibliography should include all sources read or consulted in the preparation of the paper such as books, commentaries, theologies, periodical articles, and oral interviews.

1. Suggestions: do a survey of the issues in the current debate by reading and evaluating several books or articles. Focus on a Biblical passage central to the debate and critique how several different authors treat it. Examine an author who has written on the issue.
2. Whatever the scope of the paper, it is to be a critical review (not a summary) of the issues/authors/interpretations defined in the opening paragraph. Carefully read the handout on Critical Reading Skills for what is expected in a critical review (found in the Supplemental Materials section).

C. An 8-12 page typed paper on either or both of the following social ministry questions.

1. *Are ministries that seek to raise people's living standards or quality of life (such as relief and development work, medical ministries, educational ministries and so forth) a part of the Great Commission?*
2. *Are actions that promote the image of God or encourage a witness to justice (such as Operation Rescue, pro-life counseling centers, drug rehab units, some counseling ministries, and so forth) a part of the Great Commission?*
 - a. Answer "Yes" or "No" in the first paragraph and then defend your answer in the rest of the paper.
 - b. Demonstrate interaction with at least one published supporter of the view you do not hold, adequate Biblical research, and relevant books and periodicals. The format of your paper may be a research paper or a position paper for your ministry. If done as a research paper, the final page should contain specific applications of your conclusions to the evangelism and missions programs of your present ministry or a typical local church in your expected area of ministry. A separate bibliography, prepared in standard form, should include all sources read or consulted in the preparation of the paper such as books, commentaries, theologies, periodical articles, and oral interviews.



Syllabus

- c. When noted on the schedule, turn in your paper as described above.

II. Witness (Complete only *one* of the following four options.)

Students who have not previously either read a book on personal evangelism or taken personal evangelism training (such as Evangelism Explosion, Child Evangelism Fellowship, Campus Crusade, or a similar program) should complete the following:

A. Witness with Words

1. Read *Tell It Often – Tell It Well* by Mark McCloskey (Here's Life Publishers, 1985), or *How To Give Away Your Faith* by Paul Little (Inter-Varsity Press, 1988).
2. On three different occasions, share the Gospel with at least three different people, using a transferable method that is theologically accurate and communicates clearly.

A transferable method is one such as Little teaches or the Four Spiritual Laws. If at all possible, do this evangelism under the observation of an experienced student or layperson.

3. In at least one of the sharing situations, share your evangelistic testimony (i.e., conversion).
4. Distribute at least five pieces of evangelistic media (tract, article, book, tape, etc.) to someone you have talked with, work with, live near, etc. Later, attempt to talk with them about it.
5. When noted on the schedule, turn in the following:
 - a. The name of the author and title of the book you read, plus a 2-4 page review of the book describing the thesis (i.e., not just what was said but why it was said), and why you agree with it or not.
 - b. A summary of the gospel presentation you used (one typed page). If you used a popular method such as the *Four Spiritual Laws* you may attach a copy of it and include any individualizations you used, such as your introduction, illustrations, additional verses, and conclusion.



Syllabus

- c. A list of the people with whom you shared the gospel and your testimony, and their response.
- d. A list of the literature you distributed, to whom given (e.g., a co-worker, neighbor), and their response when you asked them what they thought of it (if possible).
- e. A description (one page) of how your work for this assignment has affected your lifestyle. Will you do anything differently in the future? If "Yes," what? Do you think that initiative methods are easier than friendship methods? Do you think that these methods would be profitable in your future ministry? Why or why not?

B. Witness with Walk

1. Read a friendship evangelism book.

For example, consider the following popular books. *Living Proof* by Jim Petersen (Nav Press, 1989) or *Life-Style Evangelism* by Joseph C. Aldrich (Multnomah Press, 1981; part 2 may be skimmed).

2. Do three separate relation-building activities with non-Christian neighbors, co-workers, or friends (e.g., go to a ball game, have over for a meal, help with a project, etc.). The three activities must be done with at least two different non-Christians.

Allow plenty of time for these activities as they often (usually) take several attempts to realize.

3. Share your personal evangelistic testimony (i.e., conversion) with at least one non-Christian, preferably one of those in #2 above.
4. When noted on the schedule, turn in the following:
 - a. The name of the author and title of the book you read, plus a 2-4 page review describing the thesis (not just what was said but why it was said), if you agree with it or not, and why or why not.
 - b. A description (one page) of each activity undertaken for item #2 above.



Syllabus

- c. A 2-4 page evaluation of your effectiveness in building relationships with the individuals described in #2 and #3 above. Consider the following questions (adapted from Aldrich, 1981):
 - ◆ What do you know of the person's religious background?
 - ◆ What opportunities have you had to "plant seeds?" What was the response to them?
 - ◆ Do you sense that they enjoy being with you?
 - ◆ What needs have you discovered which relate to the gospel solution?
 - ◆ What caricatures have you been able to eliminate from their arsenal of questions and excuses?
 - ◆ What signs of openness have you detected?
 - ◆ Questions about religious things?
 - ◆ General freedom to discuss religious concepts?
 - ◆ Openness to reading literature?
 - ◆ Willing involvement in some Christian event?
 - ◆ A generally positive, seeking attitude?
 - ◆ How much of your personal testimony have you had a chance to share?
- d. A summary (one page) of your plans (and your spouse's, if married) for further witness to these people.
- e. A description of how your work for this assignment has affected your lifestyle. Consider the following questions:
 - ◆ Will you do anything different in the future? If "Yes," what?
 - ◆ Do you think that initiative methods are easier than friendship methods?
 - ◆ Do you think that these methods would be profitable in your future ministry? Why or why not?

C. Witness to Special Religious Groups

1. Select a major cult or non-Christian religion (such as Mormonism, Buddhism, etc.) and study their theology, particularly in the area of soteriology.
 - a. Note how they agree and differ with an evangelical understanding of soteriology and theology in general.



Syllabus

- b. Use at least one primary source (one written by a member of that group to explain their beliefs and who is not a convert to any other religion).
 - c. Summarize your study in a typed paper of at least five pages. A separate bibliography, prepared in standard form, should include all sources read or consulted in the preparation of the paper such as books, commentaries, theologies, periodicals, and oral interviews.
2. Arrange an interview with a member of that group who would be familiar with their theological beliefs to determine the accuracy of your understanding of the group's beliefs and to discuss the issues you raised in your paper.
 - a. Attempt to give the member your paper and then ask for comments and evaluation. You will probably encounter answers you were not prepared for and you may find that the beliefs they represent the group as holding are in some ways different from what you thought they believed.
 - b. After you have interacted with the member concerning his/her understanding of the plan of salvation, ask for a response to *your* understanding of the plan of salvation.
3. In a paper of whatever length is necessary, evaluate your research and the interview.
 - a. Your initial research:
 - ◆ Was it accurate?
 - ◆ Did you correctly state their views?
 - ◆ Did you adequately demonstrate how their views vary from evangelicals?
 - b. The interview:
 - ◆ Was it a demonstration of the love of Christ?
 - ◆ Did you demonstrate the fruit of the Spirit (especially patience, kindness, gentleness, and self-control)?
 - ◆ Did the person you interviewed understand the differences between an evangelical understanding of salvation and theirs?
 - ◆ Are you effective in dialogue with a committed believer of another faith?



Syllabus

- ♦ What areas of your ministry did this interview demonstrate to be strengths or weaknesses?
 - ♦ What aspects of the plan of salvation do you need to study further?
4. When noted on the schedule, turn in your initial paper (1), a brief description of the person you met with (name, position in group, address, phone, etc.), your evaluation (3), and a photocopy of the thank you note you sent to the member thanking him or her for their time and consideration given to you.

D. Evangelistic Speaking

This assignment assumes skill in the art of speaking. Since these skills are not taught in this course, students who do not already possess them should not attempt this assignment.

1. Write a word-for-word evangelistic sermon (textual or topical) or message.

Consult the handouts referenced in lesson eight ("Presenting the Gospel: A Survey of Methods") for the criteria used to evaluate the sermon or message.

2. On a separate sheet, briefly describe the intended audience (location, age, educational background, religious background, etc.). Based on this description, explain how the topic, the location, and the time of the meeting will appeal to the intended non-Christian audience.
3. No work done for previous sermons or messages, either for a course or a ministry, may be used for this assignment.
4. Submit a final typed manuscript copy of the sermon or message, the audience description, and the message/topic rationale when noted on the schedule.

III. Exam

Request your take-home exam after you have completed lesson twenty-two. This is a **closed book** exam worth 10 percent of your final grade.



Syllabus

IV. Evangelistic Strategy

- A. Complete the Evangelism Evaluation summary found in the Supplemental Materials section. The data you collect should be very helpful in completing this assignment, as will the lectures.
- B. Think through the nature of the community where you minister (or expect to minister after graduation). Describe the community. Thoughtfully discuss any obstacles that a witness ministry has or may have in this community and how you might deal with them. Consider the following factors to the best of your ability:
1. Religious and cultural belief systems that a significant number of area residents embrace. Consider dominant church or religious background (Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Baptist, etc.); worldview (New Age, agnosticism, atheism, etc.); presence of extended family and cultural heritage; and any other background factors that should be considered in developing an evangelistic strategy.
 2. The history of previous efforts (positive and negative) to convert individuals from your community and how (if at all) this must be addressed by your present strategy.
 3. Any other factors that an effective evangelistic program for your community should consider. These factors may be obvious to you, but state them in a clear and concise manner.
 - ◆ For example, list factors such as rural, suburban, urban, lower-income, blue collar, farming, professional, college-educated, semi-literate, illiterate, dominant religion, religious heritage, and so forth.
 - ◆ If you do not have any present preference or direction, then use a community to whom you have ministered previously.
- C. Demographic studies have alerted us to the rising number of elderly. Yet the church has historically focused its ministries on youth and families. Describe (in a paragraph for each) ten practical ways retired members of this ministry could be involved in a witness ministry to peers, youth, and younger couples.
- D. One of the great problems of the church is the retention of its youth. Describe how you could seek to ensure that all children in the local church you attend will



Syllabus

understand the Gospel and how you would seek to avoid "overkill" with this age group. Use the church in the community described above.

- E. List five service talks (non-expository topical messages) for a non-Christian audience that would be useful in the community you have chosen. Give a one-paragraph description of each talk.
- F. Listen to your pastor's sermon one Sunday and write one page on how you would have given an evangelistic thrust to the message in a 4-7 minute statement.
- G. If you do not anticipate a preaching ministry, you should listen to a sermon, message, lesson, or Bible study based on the context in which you expect to minister. Explain this on a cover page.
 - 1. In one page or less describe the audience and summarize the sermon/message/lesson/Bible study.
 - 2. Assume that at least ten to twenty percent of the audience is not converted and that at least some in your audience have no religious background.
 - 3. Write out in manuscript form (i.e., word for word, not an outline) your evangelistic close. The final section of the lecture notes "Developing an Evangelistic Message" may provide some help as well as the lecture notes entitled "The Gospel Message: Terms and Definitions" and "Presenting the Gospel: A Survey of Methods."
 - 4. Do not assume too much background religious knowledge of the non-Christians in the audience. Be sure to illustrate and make the invitation clear.
- H. When noted on the schedule, turn in all parts of the assignment.

V. Handouts

All notes and handouts in the Supplemental Materials section of this guide are required reading. The percentage of notes and handouts read should be reported on the attached Reading Report form and turned in when noted on the schedule.

In addition to the assignments discussed by Dr. Green in Lesson 1, you will complete two final assignments that will assimilate course principles and promote application.
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Syllabus

VI. ITS Online Interactivity Forum

Participate with other students worldwide in an ongoing asynchronous threaded discussion of two major course topics. Go to www.ITScourses.org/interactivity/ to register for and enter the ITS On-Line Forum. In order to get the fullest benefit from the Forum, complete the assignment **after** you have listened to *all* the lectures. Be sure to return to the forum after finishing the course to see how others respond. Follow these steps to complete the assignment:

- ◆ Post an original answer to each question for your course (75 word min.).
- ◆ Post your response to any previous answer given to each question (75 word min.).
- ◆ Submit a document to your proctor that contains the original questions, your postings, and the postings to which you responded.

NOTE: Please read the “Assignment Instructions” in the Forum for details.

Objective: to develop critical thinking skills through personal interaction with the content of the course and the responses of others within a diverse community of learners.

VII. Spiritual Formation Project

RATIONALE: Ministry preparation and the Christian life require more than academic exercises. Learners also need personal, spiritual formation, which involves theological reflection and critical thinking on their current practices and assumptions. This process occurs as learners engage in self-reflection and interaction in a community of learning. **With this in mind**, ITS includes in all courses a capstone project addressing these issues and facilitating interaction beyond the formal learning environment (ATS schools, note Standards 3.2.1.3; 4.1.1; 10.3.3.3).

Write a **five-to-six page reflective essay** and **interview a mentor**, discussing the spiritual impact of this course on your life. *Identify your mentor early in the course*, and submit the essay to your grader when you take the final exam. This last project should not be a summary of course content, but an application of course principles. Complete the following:

1. **Personal Reflection and Evaluation: *Reflect on the course*** – To integrate your academic studies with your walk of faith, reflect on the content of the course and evaluate your life in light of what you learned.



Syllabus

- a. Follow these steps in your reflection:

Step 1: What **one** theme, principle, or concept in the course is the most significant to you personally? Why is it significant?

Step 2: What portion(s) of the course brought this theme/principle/concept to light?

Step 3: Think about your past. Why is it vital now for you to deal with and apply this theme/principle/concept?

Step 4: How should this affect your thoughts and actions, and what *specific steps* should you take to *concretely* apply what you have learned?

- b. Write your answers to the above questions in full paragraph form. (Recommended length for this reflection: **approximately three pages**)
- c. Give a copy of this reflection to your mentor (see #2).

2. Community Reflection and Interaction: *Interview a mentor* – Since the Holy Spirit uses the input of others to guide and form His people, interview a mentor according to the following guidelines:

- a. Who should you interview? (1-3 are required; 4-6 are recommended)

1. Someone with whom you have a reasonably close relationship.
2. Someone who is a mature Christian ministry leader (i.e. a pastor).
3. Someone who is **not** your grader or a family member.
4. Someone who values the spiritual formation process.
5. Someone who is familiar with and values the subject of the course.
6. Someone who has experience using the content of the course in ministry.

NOTE: ***Identify your mentor early in the course***, and give him/her the page entitled “Guidelines for Mentors.”

- b. Focus of the interview – Your interview should focus on the issues and questions you raise in your essay. For example:

- ♦ What feedback can your mentor give in response to your essay?
- ♦ In light of the course content, are the conclusions you made appropriate? Why or why not?
- ♦ What additional advice, deeper insights or broader applications might he/she suggest from his/her own life and ministry?

NOTE: Conduct this interview either in person (preferred) or over the phone. Do **not** use electronic communication (i.e. email, instant messenger, etc). Suggested length: 45 minutes.



Syllabus

3. **Synthesis and Application: *Draw your final conclusions*** – Having reflected on the course and the discussion with your mentor, synthesize what you have learned in these three sections:
- a. Section 1: Begin your essay with the personal reflection from #1 above. This should be exactly what you gave your mentor for the interview.
 - b. Section 2: Comment on your interview, explaining what you discussed and the insights you gained from your mentor. Include the following:
 - ◆ What were the mentor's comments regarding your essay?
 - ◆ What advice did he/she give?
 - ◆ How did his/her comments expand or correct your application of the course?
 - ◆ Include the person's name, occupation, and the length of the interview.
 - c. Section 3: Conclude with a synthesis of what you have learned. Answer the following:
 - ◆ If your mentor corrected any thoughts in your "Personal Reflection and Evaluation", how do you feel about these corrections? Do you agree or disagree? Why?
 - ◆ Synthesizing your thoughts from section one and your mentor's insight in section two, what final conclusions have you reached? How is this different from section one?
 - ◆ In light of the interview and further reflection, what additional, *specific* changes need to occur in your life and what *concrete* steps will you take to implement them?

NOTE TO STUDENTS: Your effort in this assignment will determine its benefit. If by the end of this course you have not yet reflected critically on your life in light of what you have studied, allow this assignment to guide you in that process. The instructor for this course will not score your essay based on the amount of spiritual fruit you describe; so do not exaggerate (or trivialize) what you have learned. **The primary grading criteria is that you have thoughtfully considered the principles of the course and realistically sought to apply them to your life.** If you have done this and met the minimal requirements (as noted above), you will earn the full points for this assignment.

Note on confidentiality: Perhaps the Holy Spirit is dealing with you in some very personal areas of your life. Because of this, your grader will keep your essay entirely confidential and either return or discard it.

Objective: to stimulate reflection and interaction on course principles in order to enhance personal spiritual formation. Revised 10/05

Syllabus

Notes Regarding This Downloaded Syllabus

This downloadable syllabus is not exhaustive. It is designed to provide learners with a picture of the course, not a full outline of the course. Grader Guidelines, Appendixes, Bibliographies, Lecture Outlines, and Review Questions have been removed. The complete course syllabus is included with purchase of the course in either a digital or hard-copy format.

Likewise, individuals taking the class for credit are responsible for the syllabus requirements of the specific institution through which the course is offered. Each individual institution has reserved the right to alter or change the syllabus as deemed necessary.

