



Urban Mission And Ministry

Syllabus

Roger S. Greenway, Th.D.
*Retired Professor of World Missiology
Calvin Theological Seminary*

INSTITUTE OF
THEOLOGICAL
STUDIES



Updated 2006



Syllabus

Course Rationale

As the cities go, the world goes – politically, intellectually, economically, socially, and religiously. Historically, the Church has tiptoed around the City, seeing it as the playground of Satan. Not wanting to get too close to the fire, the Church has typically focused on her rural heritage. She has tried to keep the City of God away from the City of Man.

Recent trends in urbanization, however, present a new challenge for missions: if we want to reach the people, we must reach the cities. People are flocking to the cities like never before. Thus, major cities are the new frontier of Christian vocation and ministry. It is the purpose of this course, therefore, to help learners discover and explore the many aspects of urban mission and ministry in light of the increasingly urban world in which we live.

Course Overview

This course focuses on Christian mission and ministry in the world's growing cities. A Biblical basis for urban ministry is presented and case studies of effective urban strategies worldwide are examined. The course provides key logistics, strategies, models, and insights from one of the day's leading experts in urban missions. Throughout the lessons the instructor emphasizes *holistic* ministry, i.e., meeting the social, civil, and political needs as well as the spiritual.

Course Objectives

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

1. Articulate the biblical and theological framework for urban ministry.
2. Evaluate contemporary urban ministries in light of biblical principles.
3. Recognize various models of effective urban church planting/ministry.
4. Synthesize course content into a workable urban ministry paradigm.
5. Assess one's giftedness and calling in light of God's call to evangelize and minister to urban populations.

Syllabus

Course Texts

1. **Required Reading:** The learner will read the following articles and chapters that are included in the course materials:

Claerbaut, David. "The Urban Church and the Urban Minister." In *Urban Ministry*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan (1983), 189-210.

Greenway, Roger. "Jeremiah: How to be a City Saint." In *Apostle to the City: Biblical Strategies for Urban Missions*. Grand Rapids: Baker (1979), 29-42.

_____. "Don't Be an Urban Missionary Unless..." *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 19:2 (April 1983): p. 86-94.

_____. *Guidelines for Urban Planting*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1976. Chapters 1, 2, and 8.

Reeder, Harry L. "Revitalizing a Dying Church." In *The Pastor-Evangelist: Preacher, Model, and Mobilizer for Church Growth*, ed. Roger S. Greenway, 162-181. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1987.

2. **Collateral Reading:** The learner will read **1,000 pages** from the course bibliography. At least one book must be read in its entirety. The reading will be assessed by an annotated bibliography. (See below.)

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.



Syllabus

Course Learning Activities

Learning Activity #1 – Lectures

The learner is expected to listen carefully to each of the twenty-four lectures, utilizing the lecture outline as a guide and the note-taking page for recording thoughts. The learner should find a quiet environment that limits unnecessary distractions.

Objective: to accumulate course content through active and careful listening.

Learning Activity #2 – Required reading/reports

Annotated Bibliography – **all** reading completed by the learner will be stipulated and summarized in an annotated bibliography to be turned in upon completion of the course. For each reading, the student will list the number of pages and a one-paragraph annotation. Remember, at least one complete book must be read. (See “course texts” above.)

Objective: to acquire a deeper, broader knowledge of course content and to demonstrate that knowledge through brief written assignments.

Learning Activity #3 – Study Questions

The learner is strongly encouraged to participate in the reflection questions provided after each lecture. While the questions are not factored into the grading system, the final exam will be composed exclusively of select questions from the Interactive Learning Guide. To the extent learners can answer these questions, they will perform well on the exam.

Objective: to foster immediate and cognitive interaction with the lecture content and to force evaluation of where the learner stands in relation to that content.

Learning Activity #4 – Research Abstract

Learners will develop a **4-5 page** research paper wherein they “update” the status of *their own country* in regard to ethnic breakdown and urban patterns. The paper should include the following: ethnic composition, current urban migration patterns, and religious breakdown as seen in her largest cities. The paper should be detailed by current statistics, trends, and reasons. Students will also include a reflective/theoretical section that will briefly outline practical suggestions for today’s urban focus in light of the findings.



Syllabus

Objective: to provide learners with a supplemental update on the state of cities in their country, making them more aware of what's happening in the world around them.

Learning Activity #5 – Strategy Paper

Learners will compose a **12-15 page** paper wherein they incorporate the principles learned in this course into a strategic mission plan. Learners will use the nearest 100,000-population city (or a city within the land they desire to serve) as their “target.” Key aspects of the course should be utilized in organizing this paper, including research, evaluation, strategy, consideration of models, and a plan for implementation. Learners will pay attention to the history, demographics, and the social/ethical/religious concerns of the city. Based on the research, specific strategies and goals will then be outlined. It is important that students be concerned with “holistic” ministry.

Objective: to force the learner to engage in many crucial levels of learning, including *knowledge, comprehension, application, and synthesis*.

Learning Activity #6 – 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.



Syllabus

Learning Activity #7 – 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.
 - 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:



Syllabus

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.

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.



Syllabus

- 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

Learning Activity #8 – Final Exam

At the end of the course, learners will participate in a final exam. The exam will incorporate questions taken directly from the Interactive Learning Guide.

Objective: to reinforce and assess knowledge of lecture content.



Syllabus

Course Grading

Reading (as assessed by annotated bibliography).....	10%
Research Paper	10%
Strategy Paper	40%
ITS Online Interactivity Forum.....	5%
Spiritual Formation Project.....	15%
Final Exam	<u>20%</u>
	100%

Guidelines for Mentors

(Students, give this sheet to your mentor for the Spiritual Formation Project.)

Thank you for your involvement in this student's ITS coursework. We believe the Christian life is more than an academic exercise, so we encourage students to critically reflect on their life in light of what they learn and then apply those insights to the daily life of faith.

Therefore, students taking ITS courses are required to complete a final assignment called the "*Spiritual Formation Project*." This assignment involves two parts: an **essay** and an **interview**:

The ESSAY: After completing their coursework, students reflect on the content of the course, evaluate their lives, and discuss the **one** theme, principle or concept that is most significant to them and why. Students are to identify specific ways this theme/principle/concept should apply to their lives and what action steps they plan to take in order to make these changes a reality.

The INTERVIEW: After writing this reflection, students give a copy to their mentor and meet with him/her to discuss their thoughts and get feedback. **The goal of this interview is to facilitate the student's growth through interaction with a mature believer.**

NOTES ON THE INTERVIEW:

- ◆ You do **not** need to be familiar with the course to participate in this interview. You will primarily respond to the thoughts of the student. (However, general knowledge of the subject matter of the course and/or experience applying it to ministry is valuable.)
- ◆ Prior to meeting with the student, read his/her "Personal Reflection and Evaluation" and prepare to discuss the following:
 1. What feedback can you give the student in response to his/her essay?
 2. Are the student's conclusions from the course appropriate? Why or why not?
 3. What additional advice, deeper insights or broader applications would you suggest from your own life and ministry?
- ◆ Meet with the student either in person (preferred) or over the phone. Do not use electronic communication (i.e. email, instant messenger, etc.).
- ◆ Suggested length of the interview: 45 minutes

Thanks again for participating in this project! You have a real opportunity to guide this student in the application process and to help him/her connect academics to life – a *valuable process for all who wish to grow in Christ.*

NOTE: If the student's school makes any changes to this assignment, their requirements should replace those described here.



Syllabus

Course Bibliography

- Bakke, Ray and Jim Hart. *The Urban Christian: Effective Ministry in Today's Urban World*. Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1987.
- Claerbaut, David. "The Urban Church and the Urban Minister." In *Urban Ministry*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan (1983), 189-210.
- Conn, Harvey, ed. *Planting and Growing Urban Churches: From Dream to Reality*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1997.
- _____ and Manuel Ortiz. *Urban Ministry: The Kingdom, the City, and the People of God*. Downer's Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2001.
- Fuder, John, ed. *A Heart for the City: Effective Ministries to the Urban Community*. Chicago: Moody, 2000.
- Greenway, Roger S., ed. *Discipling the City: A Comprehensive Approach to Urban Mission*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1992.
- _____. "Jeremiah: How to be a City Saint." In *Apostle to the City: Biblical Strategies for Urban Missions*. Grand Rapids: Baker (1979), 29-42.
- _____. "Don't Be an Urban Missionary Unless..." *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 19:2 (April 1983): p. 86-94.
- _____. *Guidelines for Urban Planting*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1976. Chapters 1, 2, 8.
- _____ and Timothy M. Monsma. *Cities: Missions' New Frontier*. Second edition. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000.
- Harper, Nile, ed. *Urban Churches, Vital Signs: Beyond Charity Toward Justice*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.
- Hiebert, Paul G. and Eloise Hiebert Meneses. *Incarnational Ministry: Planting Churches in Band, Tribal, Peasant, and Urban Societies*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996.
- Meyers, Eleanor Scott, ed. *Envisioning a New City: A Reader on Urban Ministry*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992.
- Reeder, Harry L. "Revitalizing a Dying Church." In *The Pastor-Evangelist: Preacher, Model, and Mobilizer for Church Growth*, ed. Roger S. Greenway, 162-181. Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1987.
- White, Randy. *Journey to the Center of the City: Making a Difference in an Urban Neighborhood*. Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 1997.