

Pacific School of Religion
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Catalyzing Creative Leadership for the Emerging Church

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Course Description

This course explores the relationships between culture and the emerging church and the implications of these relationships for effective congregational leadership. The course takes “change” as a fundamental, yet highly negotiated, dynamic of congregational life. In addition to references to church history and biblical scriptures, the course will continually connect contemporary (post-1960) societal arrangements with adaptation, reaction, innovation, and experimentation in congregational beliefs and practices.

By incorporating scholarship rooted in a sociological perspective, the course also looks more generally to the ongoing changes and negotiations that the Christian Church always makes in relation to the broader social world.

For such a short class on such a broad topic, it is inevitable that we orient around certain readings, certain topics, and certain focal points. However, this is not intended to limit discussion or points of view but rather to provide a common starting point for our times together. To make our conversations productive, please take time to obtain and read most of the 4 assigned books before our week together, and then take time to explore the optional texts.

Course Objectives

At the successful conclusion of the course, students will be able to:

- understand and appreciate the many complex interactions between church and culture using historical and contemporary examples of American congregational life,
- understand and appreciate the diversity of creative approaches to congregational life in America among denominational, geographical, ethnic, and demographic groups,
- analyze both the challenges and the opportunities for today’s pastoral leaders through case studies of religious movements and specific congregations,
- discuss specific elements of contemporary church structures, e.g., adaptations to age-specific ministries, changes in liturgy and musical worship, use of technology, incorporation of the creative arts, etc.,
- assess alternative responses by church leaders to the impact that changing societal structures are having on the daily life of individuals/groups and on the ministries of the local church,
- draw out the concrete possibilities, benefits, and implications of specific leadership initiatives from course participants for their own ministry contexts,
- enhance analytical writing through written assignments, and
- enhance oral presentation skills through class discussions.

Overview of the 5 Classes of the Course:

1. How to Develop a More Sophisticated Perspective on Religion and Social Change in America
2. The Profile of a Change-Friendly Congregation: Implications on Authority and Pastoral Leadership
3. What Does Creative Ministry Look Like in the Context of Advanced Capitalism?: The Interplay between Intentional and Accidental Religious Change
4. House Church/Megachurch/Emerging Church: New Stories of Liturgy, Spiritual Growth, and Social Service
5. Catalyzing the Future of American Religion

There are Four Required Texts: Please Purchase/Borrow and Read.

****Please Note: I suggest reading at least recommended chapters mostly before class begins. A few additional articles and chapter readings will be provided.**

- Jeanne Halgren Kilde. 2005. *When Church Became Theatre: The Transformation of Evangelical Architecture and Worship in Nineteenth-century America*. Oxford University Press. (Especially, Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6.)
- Gerardo Marti. 2005/2009. *A Mosaic of Believers: Diversity and Innovation in a Multiethnic Church*. Indiana University Press. (Especially, Introduction, Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6.)
- Donald E. Miller. 1997. *Reinventing American Protestantism: Christianity in the New Millennium*. University of California Press. (Especially, Chapters 1, 4, 6, 7, 8.)
- Gerardo Marti. 2008. *Hollywood Faith: Holiness, Prosperity, and Ambition in a Los Angeles Church*. Rutgers University Press. (Especially, Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and Conclusion.)

Optional Texts:

****Suggestion: Look through introduction/conclusion of texts, and select a few to read further.**

- Helen Rose Fuchs Ebaugh and Janet Saltzman Chafetz. 2000. *Religion and the New Immigrants: Continuities and Adaptations in Immigrant Congregations*. Altamira Press.
- Stephen Ellingson. 2007. *The Megachurch and the Mainline: Remaking Religious Tradition in the Twenty-first Century*. University of Chicago Press.
- Michael Emerson. 2008. *People of the Dream: Multiracial Congregations in the United States*. Princeton University Press.
- David Hackett Fischer. 1989. *Albion's Seed: Four British Folkways in America (America a Cultural History, Vol 1)*. Oxford University Press.
- Richard Florida. 2003. *The Rise of the Creative Class: And How It's Transforming Work, Leisure, Community and Everyday Life*. Basic Books.
- Craig Van Gelder. 2007. *The Ministry of the Missional Church: A Community Led by the Spirit*. Baker Books.
- Nathan O. Hatch. 1991. *The Democratization of American Christianity*. Yale University Press
- E. Brooks Holifield. 2005. *Theology in America: Christian Thought from the Age of the Puritans to the Civil War*. Yale University Press.
- George G. Hunter III. 2000. *The Celtic Way of Evangelism: How Christianity Can Reach the West...Again*. Abingdon Press.

- Fredric Jameson. 1979. "Reification and Utopia in Mass Culture." *Social Text*, No. 1 (Winter), pp. 130-148.
- Erwin Raphael McManus. 2001. *An Unstoppable Force: Daring to Become the Church God Had in Mind*. Group Publishing.
- Omar M. McRoberts. 2003. *Streets of Glory: Church and Community in a Black Urban Neighborhood*. University of Chicago Press.
- Mark Silk and Andrew Walsh. 2008. *One Nation, Divisible: How Regional Religious Differences Shape American Politics*. Rowman and Littlefield.
- Matthew Avery Sutton. 2007. *Aimee Semple McPherson and the Resurrection of Christian America*. Harvard University Press.
- Scott Thumma and Dave Travis. 2007. *Beyond Megachurch Myths: What We Can Learn from America's Largest Churches*. Jossey-Bass.
- James B. Twitchell. 2005. *Branded Nation: The Marketing of Megachurch, College Inc., and Museumworld*. Simon and Schuster.
- Grant Wacker. 2003. *Heaven Below: Early Pentecostals and American Culture*. Harvard University Press.
- Robert E. Webber. 2002. *The Younger Evangelicals: Facing the Challenges of the New World*. Baker Books.
- James K. Wellman, Jr. 2008. *Evangelical vs. Liberal: The Clash of Christian Cultures in the Pacific Northwest*. Oxford University Press.
- R. Stephen Warner and Judith G. Wittner (eds). 1998. *Gatherings in Diaspora: Religious Communities and the New Immigration*. Temple University Press.
- Alan Wolfe. 2003. *The Transformation of American Religion: How We Actually Live Our Faith*. Free Press.

Course Requirements & Evaluation

The basis for awarding a Pass or No Grade for this class will be:

- **Pass** represents satisfactory or outstanding achievement and a professional judgment that the work produced met or exceeded the criteria below.
- **No Grade** represents marginal or unsatisfactory achievement and a professional judgment that the work produced was insufficient to satisfy the criteria.

The following criteria will be the basis for evaluation:

- Attendance will be crucial, since there are only five classes.
- Understanding of assigned reading will be demonstrated by participation in discussion and through one 3 to 5 minute presentation.
- Written assignments will be evaluated according to degree of clarity, logic, organization, analysis, and synthesis of issues.

Description of Course Assignments and Expectations:

First: Attendance and Participation: 30% of final grade.

Second: 4 Written Papers: 40% of final grade Due on first, second, third, and fourth days of class. Each paper should be about 2-3 typewritten pages in length. Please be prepared to discuss each paper in class.

- *Writing Assignment 1* (due on first day of class): Please write a statement on the relationship between “religion” and “social change” using *Jeanne Halgren Kilde’s. When Church Became Theatre* as a base for discussion. The emphasis should include consideration on how change (both intended and unintended) affects religious beliefs and practices of the local church.
- *Writing Assignment 2* (due on second day of class): Please write a statement on the process and benefits of creating a “change-friendly” congregation using *Gerardo Marti’s A Mosaic of Believers* as a base for discussion. The emphasis should include consideration of pastoral practices (theology, ministry structure, conflict management) in the negotiation of social change on a congregational level.
- *Writing Assignment 3* (due on third day of class): Please write a statement on the ministry in the context of Advanced Capitalism using *Donald E. Miller’s Reinventing American Protestantism* as a base for discussion. This book may not speak directly about “Advanced Capitalism,” but I challenge you in this assignment to connect emerging ministry practices with broad aspects of contemporary social change.
- *Writing Assignment 4* (due on fourth day of class):): Please write a statement on congregational ministry and the future of American religion using *Gerardo Marti’s Hollywood Faith* as a base for discussion. In this assignment, you are welcome to synthesize cumulative thoughts from our readings and discussions.

Third and Finally: Oral Presentation or Special Project (Solo or with another class member): 30% of final grade. Due at final class.

Give a 3-5 minute oral presentation that synthesizes our reading and thinking on the following topic: “How creative leadership will emerge in my ministry.” (Alternative assignment: Prepare a special project that demonstrates a practical way to catalyze creative, innovative, experimental ministry in your church. Please do not be limited to “the way it’s been done before.”)

The purpose of this assignment is to get you to think creatively about invoking proactive change for transformative ministry. (For Special Projects, present proposal to instructor in advance for approval.)

The presentation should include 1) a very concise consideration of the ministry context, while the bulk of the presentation should be 2) a description of creative, innovative, experimental, strategic initiative that will catalyze the future of your ministry.

Detailed Course Outline

Class #1 An Overview of Religion and Social Change in America

Due: First Written Paper.

Purpose of class

- To answer the question: "What is the relationship between religion and social change?"
- To acknowledge the ongoing changes and negotiations that the Christian Church always makes in relation to the broader social world.
- To survey contemporary (post-1960) societal arrangements with adaptation, reaction, innovation, and experimentation in congregational beliefs and practices.

Required Readings for this class:

Jeanne Halgren Kilde. 2005. *When Church Became Theatre: The Transformation of Evangelical Architecture and Worship in Nineteenth-century America*. Oxford University Press. (Especially, Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5, and 6.)

Nathan O. Hatch. 1991. "Chapter 3: Storming Heaven by the Back Door," in *The Democratization of American Christianity*. Yale University Press.

Alan Wolfe. 2003. "Chapter 4: Tradition," In *The Transformation of American Religion: How We Actually Live Our Faith*. Free Press.

Class #2 Change-Friendly Congregations: Authority and Pastoral Leadership

Due: Second Written Paper.

Purpose of class

- To deepen participants' understanding of the changing role of pastoral authority in contemporary society.
- To look at consumerism and its implications for American religion.
- To explore the processes of change-friendly congregations.
- To understand the potential and implications of routinizing change processes in congregational life.

Required Readings for this class:

Gerardo Marti. 2005/2009. *A Mosaic of Believers: Diversity and Innovation in a Multiethnic Church*. Indiana University Press. (Especially, Introduction, Chapters 1, 3, 4, 5, and 6.)

Nathan O. Hatch. 1991. "Chapter 5: The Sovereign Audience," and "Chapter 6: The Right to Think for Oneself," in *The Democratization of American Christianity*. Yale University Press.

James B. Twitchell. 2005. "Chapter 2: One Market Under God," in *Branded Nation: The Marketing of Megachurch, College Inc., and Museumworld*.

Class #3 Creative Ministry in the Context of Advanced Capitalism: The Interplay between Intentional and Accidental Religious Change

Due: Third Written Paper.

Purpose of class

- To explore the challenge and opportunity of creative, innovative, experimental ministry in the context of contemporary American society.

Required Readings for this class:

Donald E. Miller. 1997. *Reinventing American Protestantism: Christianity in the New Millennium*. University of California Press. (Especially, Chapters 1, 4, 6, 7, 8.)

Class #4 House Church/Megachurch/Emerging Church: New Stories of Liturgy, Spiritual Growth, and Social Service

Due: Fourth Written Paper.

Purpose of class

- To examine the orientation and practices of emerging forms of congregational life.
- To analytically discuss the relationships between contemporary developments and current socio-cultural structures.

Required Readings for this class:

Gerardo Marti. 2008. *Hollywood Faith: Holiness, Prosperity, and Ambition in a Multiracial Church*. Rutgers University Press. (Especially, Chapters 3, 4, 5, 6, 8 and Conclusion.)

Scott L. Thumma. "Chapter 10: The Shape of Things to Come: Megachurches, Emerging Churches, and Other New Religious Structures," in *Faith in America : Changes, Challenges, New Directions: Vol. 1 Organized Religion Today*, edited by Charles H. Lippy, Vol:1 pp. 185-206. Preager.

<http://hrr.hartsem.edu/megachurch/organizationalchangechapter.doc>

Scott Thumma and Dave Travis. 2007. "Chapter 6: 'Megachurches Water Down the Faith'," In *Beyond Megachurch Myths: What We Can Learn from America's Largest Churches*. Jossey-Bass.

Or Megachurch Attenders Report.

Stephen Ellingson. 2007. "Chapter 1: The Restructuring of American Religious Traditions," "Chapter 2: The Trouble with Tradition," "Chapter 3: Constructing the Catalysts of Change," and "Chapter 7: Tradition and Change in the American Religious Landscape," In *The Megachurch and the Mainline: Remaking Religious Tradition in the Twenty-first Century*. University of Chicago Press.

Class # 5: Catalyzing the Future of American Religion

Due: Oral Presentation or Special Project: 30% of final grade Last class.

Purpose of class

- To offer feedback and insight on innovative possibilities for ministry that allows for experimentation and risk-taking.
- To discuss principles for creative spiritual leadership.
- To develop action strategies for individuals and congregations to respond to ongoing social change.

NO Required Readings for this class.