

IN 782: Gospel in Context

University of Dubuque Theological Seminary | August 2024

3 Credits, letter grade only

Prerequisite: IN 520: God's Redemptive Mission

Instructors: Dr. Mary Emily Duba and Rev. Dr. Christopher James

Course Description

Wherever one does ministry, the character of the context shapes the forms of evangelism and mission that are viable, appropriate, and faithful. This course explores the work of contextualization—how the gospel is proclaimed and embodied contextually. This course includes an **immersion trip, August 9-12**, as well as classroom sessions to help students develop initial skills for exegeting contexts for Christian ministry. Building on a theological foundation, it considers how context is reflected in the forms of ministry and witness observed.

A fee (less than \$400, but TBD) per person will cover meals and (any necessary) accommodations during the immersion, and will be billed to students by the student accounts office. You are advised to book lodging through the weekend and will be notified if one or two nights should be canceled.

Course Learning Objectives

By participating fully in this class, students will be able to:

1. Discuss the universal promise of the gospel and its necessary particularity in cultural and communal embodiments.
2. Explain the theological basis for and practical importance of attention to context in Christian mission and evangelism.
3. Experiment with practices and postures for faithful Christian witness including humility, attention, curiosity, initiative, and collaboration.
4. Interpret the ways in which congregations live their understanding of the gospel in word and deed.
5. Design a plan for exegeting a context for Christian mission.

M.Div. Curricular Goals

1. Evangelize the world with faithfulness and contextual sensitivity.
2. Educate and equip individuals and congregations to live and minister joyfully and faithfully as part of their own denomination and the ecumenical church.
3. Lead and nurture congregations to promote peace and justice in the public arena and encourage the witness and service of the church in mission to the world.

MAMD Curricular Goals

1. Develop, implement, and assess strategies for missional living in a specific cultural context.

2. Adopt spiritual practices that nurture personal lives as faithful disciples and witnesses.
3. Develop skills and capacities for faithful and competent Christian witness.

MAM Curricular Goals

1. Articulate and interpret key themes from the Christian scriptures in conversation with contemporary and ecclesial contexts
2. Develop pastoral and practical theological methods and strategies for cultivating renewed and transformative ministry contexts
3. Apply key practices for personal, communal, and ministerial flourishing and compose a coherent plan for life and ministry

Required Reading

Scott Hagley, *Eat What is Set Before You: A Missiology of the Congregation* (Skyforest, CA: Urban Loft Publishers, 2019). ISBN: 978-1949625004

Choose one:

Eric Jacobsen, *Sidewalks in the Kingdom: New Urbanism and the Christian Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2003). ISBN: 978-1587430572

Brad Roth, *God's Country: Faith, Hope and the Future of the Rural Church* (Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2017). ISBN: 978-1513801612

Additional selected readings posted to Moodle

Course Administrative Information

1. All papers should be written in 12pt, Times New Roman, double-spaced, following the Turabian Style Guide unless otherwise noted in the assignment description. Page one should include a simple header with your name, course name, and date.
2. A grading penalty will be assessed on all late work unless a legitimate reason for tardiness exists. Please consult with an instructor before missing due dates.
3. All work must be a student's own. Be sure you know what plagiarism is and properly cite all quotations as well as ideas. In addition, you are not permitted to use AI tools to write your papers without explicit instructor permission. You are responsible for adhering to the Seminary's policies on academic honesty. The most recent Student Handbook details important information on plagiarism on page 101.
4. Americans With Disability Act (ADA) Statement: A student who has a disability that may affect his/her performance in this course should consult with the instructor and the campus ADA compliance office, in confidence, by the second class session. UD's ADA compliance officer can be reached at the Academic Support Center, ext. 3722.
5. Failure to attend class or participate in all aspects of the immersion may result in needing to repeat the course.

6. This course description is subject to change during the term.