



**BRISBANE COLLEGE OF THEOLOGY
UNIT OUTLINE**

**GRADUATE CERTIFICATE IN MINISTRY
GRADUATE DIPLOMA IN MINISTRY
MASTER OF MINISTRY**

UNIT TITLE	MISSION OF THE CHURCH
UNIT CODES	E74025
UNIT STATUS	GCertMin: <i>Elective</i> GDipMin and MMin: <i>Core</i> .
HOST FIELD	E
PREREQUISITE/S	-
INCOMPATIBLES	E52025 is incompatible with E74025
CREDIT POINTS	10cp
REQUIREMENTS	All students do 3 hours of classes and 7 hours of study per week over a 13 week semester. The last two nights of the 13 weeks will be for group presentations of their mission projects. Postgraduate students will spend two of the first 11 nights in their mission project group(s). The other 9 nights, the 2.5 hours contact will be combined with the undergraduates. On those 9 nights, postgraduates will also work separately in a theology of mission seminar for 0.5 hours.
FREQUENCY OF OFFERING	Annually — Semester 2
PREPARED BY	Revd Dr Neil Sims
UNIT COORDINATOR	Revd Dr Neil Sims
TEACHING STAFF	Revd Dr Neil Sims and Mrs. Penny Carroll
DATE PREPARED	10 March 2004

Rationale:

Mission is fundamental to the identity, nature and purpose of the Christian church. When the dynamic of mission is absent or ignored, the church tends to be preoccupied with the powers of institutionalism and secularisation. If the church is not engaged in mission, it is not the church of Jesus Christ. The church is a sign of the purposes of God, especially as it calls people to faith and as it pursues justice and mercy. Evangelism (or evangelisation) and social justice both belong within the purposes of God. This is evident in the New Testament, but this mission must be reinterpreted for the language and context of today.

When a global view is taken, it leads to a more realistic exploration of mission in its context. With this perspective, consideration is given to how the mission of the church finds contemporary expression in both the Australian and local church setting.

Aims

The aim of the unit is to examine theologically the purpose of the church's life and witness in such a way that the students will develop their understanding of the directions and strategies the church in Australia might take in order to live and present the gospel in attitude, word and deed, particularly in a defined context.

For postgraduate students, this aim becomes sharpened by a focus on two dimensions of all ministry:

- appreciating one's faith tradition sufficiently to have a clear theology for mission
- appreciating the context of mission

Postgraduate students will work together on their theology of mission, and their class presentations will be focused as if the audience were potential participants in the mission they promote.

Learning Outcomes

On completion of this unit, successful students will be able to:

1. develop their own theological foundations for the mission of the church in the world.
2. apply this to a particular context, *in conjunction with other students*, by
 - analysis of the basic demography of the context, community identity and strengths, and critical issues for the local people
 - developing a model of mission for the context, with associated goals and strategies, and a plan for ongoing evaluation
 - defining how leaders and members of the various churches may work together with the people in the context as part of the model for mission.
3. a carefully articulated and integrated theology of mission, and
4. a model of mission which is closer to implementation. (The form of their presentation of their model to the class will be that of a presentation to the appropriate church body or bodies which may be involved in its implementation!)

Content:

The thirteen weeks will be as follows:

1. *Overview of the Unit and Initial Understandings of Mission and Evangelism:*
Formation of mission project groups; Challenging and reinforcing students' understandings of mission and evangelism with reference to the literature.
2. *The Scriptural Basis for Mission, Evangelism and the Gospel:*
Key scriptural passages and themes that shape our approach to mission, evangelism and the gospel.
3. *The Church's Stance towards the World*
Is the church against the culture, accommodated to it, above it, in tension with the culture or the friendly critic and transformer of it, or a combination of these?
4. *Mission as Social Capital:*
The church may contribute through its mission to the building of relationships and community beyond itself, and so be a resource for the wider society.
5. *Urban and Rural Mission:*
The distinctive features of the urban and rural contexts, how these shape the mission of the church, and some possible models for mission.
6. *Equipping the People of God for their Life in the World:*
The church needs to support its members in their societal involvement in such a way that they see this as an expression of their Christian vocation or discipleship.
7. *Evangelism and Dialogue:*
Dialogue provides a framework in which Christians have the opportunity to explain the hope that sustains them.
8. *The Local Church 1 – Its Interaction with the Community:*
The local congregation needs points of connection with its community for mission and evangelism to take place.

9. *The Local Church 2 – Its Purpose:*
A congregation's sense of mission becomes clearer as it defines its purpose in terms of three relationships – with God, within the church community and with the wider community.
10. *Multicultural Mission – Culture and the Gospel:*
Facing the issues of cross-cultural communication helps the church to recognise the distinctiveness of its own culture, and how that gives shape to its life in particular contexts.
11. *Towards an Australian Theology of Mission:*
It is critical to think about how one's theology of mission finds appropriate expression in the context of contemporary Australia.
12. Group Presentations of Mission Projects
13. Group Presentations of Mission Projects

Postgraduate students will participate in all the sessions above except for sessions 5 and 10. Those two nights will be available to them to work in their mission project group(s). In addition, the last half hour of evenings 1-4, 6-9 and 11 will be a seminar format on the students' Theology of Mission.

Organisation and Teaching Strategies

The contact time will include lectures, class and small group discussions, time in groups working on specific projects and group presentations. Postgraduate students will also participate in 9 seminars on Theology of Mission.

Assessment

1. Each **person** must hand in an initial paper of 1000 words, outlining the work undertaken to date, the research methods adopted, and the direction(s) in which it is anticipated the project will develop. A listing of resources drawn on for the whole project must be attached. The paper is to include a brief statement of the student's theology of mission.
Due in Week 6. (Objectives 1, 2, and 3) **10%**
2. Each **group** will be required to make a **creative presentation** to the whole class of its **model for mission**. A maximum of **20 minutes** will be allowed for the presentation and **10 minutes** for responses and questions. The presentation should convey **enough basic information** about the proposed context for the proposed model to make sense in relation to it.

The creative presentation to the class will be *in the form of a presentation of your mission model/project to one or more church congregations or councils or other appropriate Christian group in the chosen context with a view to educating them and encouraging them to join in the implementation of the model/project.*

(Objectives 1, 2 and 4) **30%**

*Marks for the **group presentation** will be awarded on the following basis:*

<i>Overview of context studied</i>	8
<i>Model proposed and rationale for it</i>	10
<i>Quality and creativity of presentation</i>	5
<i>Key learnings through the project</i>	7

3. **Each student** will hand in a final paper of at least 4000 words. This must be the personal work of the student. It is **not** a group paper. (Objectives 1, 2 and 3)
50%

Marks for this paper will be awarded on the following basis:

<i>A description and analysis of the research data, and how it was obtained</i>	10
<i>A foundational theological rationale</i>	15
<i>Clearly stated goals emerging directly from the research findings</i>	5

<i>Specific strategies that detail how these goals are to be achieved</i>	15
<i>A description of how church members will be involved in the process and how leadership will be provided</i>	5
<i>How ongoing evaluation will happen</i>	5
<i>Mutuality in mission i.e. how the church will work ecumenically AND with, not for others</i>	5

4. A paper of 1000 words on Critical Learnings from the unit, worth 10% of the marks. This will include
- The ‘big’ questions the unit raised for me and my learnings about myself
 - My learnings about the process of planning with others for Christian mission
 - My learnings about participating in the ministry of the whole church
 - My learnings about the changing shape of the church’s mission
 - My reflections on how the unit would better assist my learning (Objectives 1, 2, 3 and 4)

Generic Skills

- Advanced skills in working independently and as part of a team
- Advanced skills in gathering and analysing critical data from the context of study, and articulating appropriate implications
- Advanced skills in articulating an integrated theoretical foundation for action based on careful research informed by the questions arising from the context of the study
- The capacity to articulate clearly to others an integrated approach in terms of rationale, theoretical foundation, model, and strategies for actions in the particular context

Textbooks

Required

A book of readings will be provided at cost, with some readings designated for each week, offering a foundation for the process of the class.

Recommended

Bosch, David *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991.

Mead, Loren *The Once and Future Church: Reinventing the Congregation for a New Mission* Frontier Alban Institute, 1991.

Academic and General Resource Requirements

References - Books

Babin, Pierre and Zukowski, Angela Ann *The Gospel in Cyberspace: Nurturing Faith in the Internet Age* Chicago: Loyola, 2002.

Bellamy, John, Kaldor, Peter *et. al. National Church Life Survey: Initial Impressions 2001* Adelaide: Openbook, 2002.

Brueggemann, Walter *Biblical Perspectives on Evangelism* Nashville: Abingdon, 1993.

Costello, Tim *Ministry in an Urban World* Acorn, 1991.

Diehl, William E. *Ministry in Daily Life: A Practical Guide for Congregations* New York: Alban, 1996.

Gibbs, Eddie and Coffey, Ian *Church Next: Quantum Changes in How We Do Ministry* Leicester: IVP, 2001.

Guder, Darrell (ed.) *Missional Church* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

Hauerwas, Stanley *After Christendom?* Sydney: ANZEA, 1991.

Hawkes, Nicholas *The Country is Different: Ministry and Hope for Rural Australia* Melbourne: JBCE, 1998.

Kaldor, Peter, Castle, Keith and Dixon, Robert *Connections for Life: Core Qualities to Foster in your Church* Adelaide: Openbook, 2002.

Niebuhr, H. Richard *Christ and Culture* New York: Harper, 1951.

- Robinson, Anthony B. *Transforming Congregational Culture* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Swidler, Leonard, Cobb, John, Knitter, Paul and Hellwig, Monica *Death or Dialogue: From the Age of Monologue to the Age of Dialogue* London: SCM, 1990.
- Thornhill, John *Making Australia* Millenium, 1992.
- Walker, Christopher C. *Seeking Relevant Churches for the 21st Century* Melbourne: JBCE, 1997.
- Yoo, Seongja, Crowe, Colville and Mavor, John *Building Bridges: Sharing Life and Faith in a Multicultural Church* Sydney: UCA National Mission, 1993.

References – Journal Articles

(Articles in the book of readings are not listed here!)

- Goddard, Hugh “Christian-Muslim Relations: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow” *International Journal for the Study of the Christian Church* 2003, 1-14.
- Louk, John “Baby Steps in Birthing a Postmodern Church, Part 1” *Net Results* September/October, 2003, 6-11.
- Sine, Tom W. Jr. “Globalization, Creation of Global Culture of Consumption and the Impact on the Church and its Mission” *Evangelical Review of Theology* Vol. 27, No. 4, October, 2003, 353-370.
- Whiteman, Darrell L. “Anthropology and Mission: The Incarnational Connection” *Missiology: An International Review* Vol. 31, No. 4, October, 2003, 397-415.

Relevant Journals

Evangelical Review of Theology
International Bulletin of Missionary Research
International Review of Mission
Ministry, Society and Theology
Missiology
Net Results
Pointers, Bulletin of the Christian Research Association
South Pacific Journal of Mission Studies
St. Mark’s Review
The Australasian Catholic Record
Uniting Church Studies

References – Online and Other IT Resources

Websites

- Better Together: The Saguaro Seminar on Social Capital. www.bettertogether.org -
- Mackenzie, Alistair. *Faith at Work: The Journey and the Issues*. www.faithatwork.org.nz
- Pastornet: The Australian Christian Network. <http://www.pastornet.net.au>
- Postmission.com: An International Forum on Christian Mission in Postmodernity. www.postmission.com
- Recreating Australia: 2004 national Congress on Evangelism . . . and Beyond. www.recreatingaustralia.org
- Service of Documentation and Studies on Mission. www.sedos.org – e.g.: McVey, Chrys, “Befriending: The Heart of Mission”; Smith, Susan, “The Holy Spirit and Mission in Some Contemporary Theologies of Mission”.
- Seedbed: A Network Nurturing Effective Innovation in Christian Mission. www.seedbed.info
- The World Council of Churches’ Website Listing Other Sites related to the Churches in Mission and Evangelism. www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/links/evanmiss.html

Video

- Australian Catholic Bishops’ Conference “Faces: The Mission of the Australian Church” Canberra, 1998 (38 mins.)

Graduate students are also expected to search out their own resources.