

**CANADIAN SCHOOL OF PEACEBUILDING  
CANADIAN MENNONITE UNIVERSITY**

**June 7 – 18, 2021**

**BTS/PCTS-3295C Creation and Community in Biblical and Indigenous Perspectives  
Course Syllabus**

Instructor: Danny Zacharias, PhD (Aberdeen/Highland Theological College)

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Co-Instructor: John Boopalan, PhD (Princeton Theological Seminary)

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Lecture times: 8:30-11:30am (Winnipeg Time)

Office hours: By appointment

Last date for voluntary withdrawal without academic penalty: **July 15, 2021**

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## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

By intentionally working to shed western lenses, a decolonized Indigenous reading of the biblical text can render fresh and biblically faithful insights into the reading of the scriptures. After a discussion on the hermeneutical lens, this course will work closely through a variety of biblical texts related to creation and community in an attempt to understand afresh the community of creation of which we are a part.

## **OBJECTIVES**

**After successful completion of this course students should have:**

- An understanding of Indigenous-informed biblical exegesis
- An understanding of an Indigenous-informed biblical theology of land
- An understanding of community models in scripture

## **REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS & READINGS**

**It is the participant's responsibility to order texts ahead of time, whether online, as e-books, or from local book-sellers.**

1. Bahnson, Fred and Norman Wirzba. *Making Peace With The Land: God's Call To Reconcile With Creation*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2012.
2. Glanville, Mark R. and Luke Glanville. *Refuge Reimagined: Biblical Kinship in Global Politics*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2020.
3. Pui-lan Kwok, "Discovering The Bible in the Non-Biblical World," *Semeia* 47 (1989), 25–42.
4. Tamez, Elsa. "The Bible And The Five Hundred Years Of Conquest." Pages 13–26 in *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*. ed. R. S. Sugirtharajah. 2006.
5. Woodley, Randy. *Shalom and the Community of Creation: An Indigenous Vision*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012.

### TEACHING APPROACH

In addition to lectures, there will be class discussion most days based on our readings and our interaction around the biblical text. Students will be expected to keep up with readings and actively engage in class activities.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND DUE DATES (for credit)

The following are the general outlines of requirements for those taking the class for credit. Others are encouraged to read as much as possible, however, in order to receive maximum benefit from the course.

Assignments are due as scheduled. Marks will be deducted for lateness (2% per day), unless previous arrangements have been made with the instructor. All submissions should be done through Moodle.

### ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

ASSIGNMENT	DUE DATE	VALUE
1. Class participation		10%
2. Read Woodley text	June 7	20%
3. Reflection and contextual application of <i>Refuge Reimagined</i>	July 15	30%
4. Community of Creation Portfolio	Last day of class	40%

### ASSIGNMENT GUIDELINES

1. Actively participate in class time.

Value: 10%

2. Read and prepare to discussion Woodley's *Shalom and the Community of Creation*

Due: June 7

Value: 20%

Description: After completing your reading, please write 3–4 questions or discussion points for class time which will take place June 8–9.

### 3. Reflection and contextual application of *Refuge Reimagined*

Due: July 1

Length: 1,500–2,000 words

Value: 30%

Description: After completing your reading of *Refuge Reimagined*, provide a book review of approximately 750–1,000 words. In the remaining 750–1,000 words, apply the insights from *Refuge Reimagined* to a current situation in your church, neighbourhood, or community. (If the situation is about specific people, please change all names of real people to maintain anonymity).

### 4. Community of Creation Portfolio

Due: Aug 10

Length: 2,000 – 4,000 words

Value: 40%

Description: Students will choose the location which they will in the near future most likely inhabit (eg. students who have accepted jobs elsewhere should choose that place, students from away should choose their hometown, etc). Using the provided template, students will create their *Community of Creation Portfolio*, conforming to Chicago style. This portfolio will require research into local ecoliteracies and engage in biblical and theological reflection and descriptions of intentional embodied practices.

## STYLISTIC REQUIREMENTS

CMU has adopted the following as its standard guide for all academic writing:

Hacker, Diana. *A Pocket Style Manual*. Ninth edition. Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2020.

All assignments should adhere to Chicago style.

## OTHER REQUIREMENTS

*Academic Integrity*—All material referred to in any assignment MUST be appropriately referenced. Plagiarism is a serious matter. Students should be aware of CMU Academic Policies, particularly those regarding academic misconduct (plagiarism and cheating), which apply to all University courses. These are detailed on CMU's website (<http://www.cmu.ca/students.php?s=registrar&p=policies>) and in the CMU Calendar. If you still have questions about appropriate referencing and what plagiarism is, a useful tutorial can be found here: <http://www.indiana.edu/~istd/>.

*Attendance*—In order to maximize the potential of the educational process, and given the intensive nature of CSOP courses, it is necessary that each student attend all classes. On occasion, a student may need to miss some class time. A half-day of class (4 total hours) is the maximum allowable absence, and any student missing more than this may be barred from further class attendance. In such cases the student is responsible to advise the instructor before the class occurs. It is the responsibility of the student to become familiar with all academic policies, including those pertaining to attendance, academic misconduct, and grading.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

CMU strives to provide a fair and supportive learning environment for academically qualified students with disabilities. If you are eligible for these services or have questions about becoming eligible, please contact Sandra Loeppky, Coordinator of Accessibility Programs at [sloepky@cmu.ca](mailto:sloepky@cmu.ca) or 204.487.3300 x.340.

In recognition of individuals with asthma, allergies and severe environmental/chemical sensitivities, CMU is striving to become a scent-free campus. Students, staff and guests are asked to refrain from wearing fragrances and scented personal care products at CMU. This includes perfumes, colognes, aftershave and scented hair products. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated by those affected.

## **EVALUATION**

Good communication skills are essential for justice and peacebuilding work. Thus, in general, instructors should look for quality writing that adheres to the assignment guidelines, expresses ideas clearly, concisely, and persuasively, and demonstrates engagement with readings and class sessions. All written work should be well informed, well organized and well documented.

Students to take up any concerns or questions regarding grades first with the instructor. If this does not produce a satisfactory result, the student should submit a written appeal to the Registrar ([spenner@cmu.ca](mailto:spenner@cmu.ca)).

**NOTE:** Grades are not final until vetted and approved by the Dean's Office.

For more information on CMU policies regarding grades, academic misconduct, appeals, and other matters, please see the *CMU Student Handbook*.

## **LETTER GRADE/PERCENTAGE SCALE**

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Grade Points</b>	<b>Descriptor</b>
A+	90-100	4.5	Exceptional
A	80-89	4	Excellent
B+	75-79	3.5	Very Good

B	70-74	3	Good
C+	65-69	2.5	Satisfactory
C	60-64	2	Adequate
D	50-59	1	Marginal
F	0-49	0	Failure

<u>Criteria</u>	A - Excellent	B - Competent	C - Below Expectations
<b>CONTENT</b> (quality of the information/ideas and sources/details used to support them)	- has clarity of purpose - has depth of content - displays insight or originality of thought -demonstrates quality and breadth of resources	- has clarity of purpose - has substantial information and sufficient support - contains some originality of thought -uses quality resources	- has clarity of purpose -lacks depth of content and may depend on generalities or the commonplace - has little originality of thought -uses mostly quality resources
<b>STRUCTURE</b> (logical order or sequence of the writing)	- is coherent and logically developed -uses very effective transitions	- is coherent and logically developed -uses smooth transitions	- is coherent and logically (but not fully) developed -has some awkward transitions
<b>CONVENTIONS</b> (appearance of the writing: sentence structure, usage, mechanics, documentation)	- has virtually no errors of conventions	- has minimal errors of conventions	- is understandable <u>but</u> has noticeable problems of sentence structure, usage, mechanics or documentation
<b>STYLE</b> (personality of the writing: word choice, sentence variety, voice, attention to audience)	- is concise, eloquent and rhetorically effective -has nicely varied sentence structure -is engaging throughout and enjoyable to read	- displays concern for careful expression -has some variation in sentence structure -is generally enjoyable to read	- has some personality <u>but</u> lacks imagination and may be stilted and may rely on clichés -has little variation in sentence structure -is not very interesting to read

## **EXTENSIONS**

The last date within the semester an instructor can grant as an extension is AUG 15. If a student is unable to complete the requirements of a course by this date, the student must submit a written appeal for an "incomplete" to the Registrar's office ([spenner@cmu.ca](mailto:spenner@cmu.ca)). The student should seek the instructor's support for the appeal and must submit it by AUG 16.

If the student's appeal is granted, the instructor will enter a grade of I (for incomplete) accompanied by a temporary grade (which is based on completed work and assigns a value of zero for uncompleted work). Instructor grades are due by AUG 21. If the student completes the remaining work within the extension period, the grade will be recalculated and the incomplete status will be removed. If the student does not complete the work within the extension period, the incomplete status will be removed and the provisional grade entered alongside the "incomplete" will become the final grade. The maximum extension for courses ending in August is DEC 1.

## **SCHEDULE, TOPICS & READINGS**

This schedule, along with assigned readings, may be adjusted slightly in response to pace of discussion and other scheduling issues. The instructor will provide advance notice of any changes.

Monday, June 7: The Indigenous Hermeneutical Lens  
Readings: Pui-Lan Kwok article and Elsa Tamez article

Tuesday, June 8: Woodley text discussion pt. 1  
Readings: Woodley text to be read prior to class

Wednesday, June 9: Woodley text discussion pt. 2  
Readings: Woodley text, continued

Thursday, June 10: Creation Texts pt. 1  
Readings: Bahnson and Wirzba, prologue – ch. 3

Friday, June 11: Creation Texts pt. 2  
Readings: Bahnson and Wirzba, ch. 4 – epilogue

Monday, June 14  
Readings: Glanville ch. 1

Tuesday, June 15  
Readings: Glanville ch. 2

Wednesday, June 16

Readings: Glanville ch. 3

Thursday, June 17

Readings: Glanville ch. 4

Friday, June 18: Community of Creation final project

### **SCHEDULE NOTES**

July 15            The final date to withdraw from the course without academic penalty.

Aug 15            Instructors cannot grant extensions past this date.

Aug 16            The last day for students to appeal in writing to the Registrar's office for extensions past Aug 15.

Aug 21            Last day for instructors to submit grades.