



Issues in the Youth Culture CEYH8302
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Christian Education Division
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The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church.

Purpose of the Course

The purpose of the course is to lead professional doctoral students to investigate the youth culture in the context of the local church with the intention of identifying opportunities for ministry initiatives for students and their families.

Core Value Focus

The seminary core value emphasis for 2014-2015 is *Spiritual Vitality*.

Curriculum Competencies Addressed

This course will address the following curriculum competencies:

1. Biblical Exposition – the goal of the course is to exegete culture in light of Scripture.
2. Theological and Historical Perspective –
3. Effective Servant Leadership
4. Interpersonal Relationships
5. Disciple Making
6. Worship Leadership
7. Spiritual and Character Formation

Course Description

This professional doctoral seminar is designed to explore the influence of issues that face teenagers and families of teenagers in the context of contemporary culture. Personal and social problems of youth in America are studied in their cultural context. The world of adolescents is studied in detail with attention given to school, media, friendships, family, community and church, and other relevant social issues. Ministry implications and current trends will also be discussed. Students will analyze various components of the youth culture with the goal of developing biblically sound and theologically sound ministry strategies to be implemented in current youth and adult culture.

Learning Objectives

The student involved in this course should be able to accomplish the following:

Cognitive: Students will identify trends in the youth culture in areas of family, friendships, economics, media, and anti-social behavior. Additionally, students will identify typical youth concerns through research and discussion.

Affective: Students will understand the missional urgency of understanding the youth culture in order to evangelize and disciple students within the context of the local church.

In keeping with the seminary core value emphasis, students will apprehend that they must practice self-care spiritually in order to lead students and student workers.

Psychomotor: Students will be able to:

- describe current youth culture through personal contact with teenagers.
- differentiate between normative adolescent challenges and extremes in the youth culture (juvenile delinquency).
- suggest implications for youth ministry within and without the local church.

Required Readings

The following texts and resources are required reading for class discussions and are to be read in their entirety unless otherwise specified.

Required Texts

Note on textbooks: *All textbooks are available on amazon.com or half.com as well as in the bookstore on campus*

Required Texts

Mueller, Walt. *Youth Culture 101*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan/Youth Specialties, 2007.

Turner, Steve, *Popcultured*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2013

Texts will be supplemented with articles and newsletters which will also be required reading. See www.cpyu.org for updates to the Mueller text.

Optional Texts

Clark, Chap. *Hurt 2.0: Inside the World of Today's Teenagers*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker House, 2011.

Erwin, Pamela. *A Critical Approach to Youth Culture: Its Influence and Implications for Ministry*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010.

Milner, Murray, Jr. *Freaks, Geeks, and Cool Kids*. Routledge (New York) 2004.

Moreland, J.P. and Mark Matlock *Smart Faith.. Think* (Think is an imprint of NavPress), Colorado Springs, CO, 2005.

Mueller, Walt. *Engaging the Soul of Youth Culture: Bridging Teen Worldviews and Christian Faith*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006.

Penner, Marv *Help! My Kids are Hurting..* Youth Specialties/Zondervan Publishers, Grand Rapids, MI., 2003.

A complete youth ministry bibliography is available online at: www.youthministryinstitute.org.

Additional Resources:

“The Lost Children of Rockdale County,” *Frontline*. PBS Online. Available at: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/georgia/>

“The Merchants of Cool,” *Frontline*. PBS Online. Available at: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/cool/>

Course Teaching Methodology

Units of Study: A general outline of the course content is as follows:

1. Introduction: What is Youth Culture?
2. Postmodern Families
3. Friends, Friendship, and Dating
4. Cool Hunting

5. Media and Medium
6. Social Networking
7. When Things Go Wrong
8. Spirituality and Faith

Teaching Method. Discussion, research and report, video, and lecture are used. The Seminar is scheduled for May 14- 16, 2012. Because it is a workshop format, the topics will be somewhat fluid.

Assignments and Evaluation Criteria

Pre-Seminar Work

1. Students will read the required textbooks and prepare a 2-3 page (double spaced) critical review of each book. The first page or two should be synopsis and the last page should be thoughtful critique. Was it well-written? Was it easy to follow? Was the author clear regarding the intended purpose? Did you agree with the conclusions? Why or why not?
2. Students will locate via library or web search a journal article describing a relevant study regarding the youth culture. It is preferred that the study be based in the United States, but if a student can defend the use of a study from an international context (for example, his or her church has a ministry initiative in a particular country). Students will prepare a 20-30 minute presentation of the study for the seminar. Presentations should include:
 - a. A summary of the significant elements of the study to the seminar
 - b. Leading a discussion of the ministry insights/implications of the book with the seminar.
 - c. Leading the seminar to propose how the insights/implications of the book might be used to impact their ministries.
 - d. A Power Point slide show and/or a handout for the seminar should accompany the presentation.
3. Students will interview youth to investigate the youth culture. Using the survey at the end of the syllabus, survey at least 30 youth (12-20 years old). ***Do not identify the students in any way on the survey or otherwise.*** Bring in the raw surveys--do not tabulate.

In-seminar Work

1. Book discussion. As a seminar, we will discuss Mueller and Turner with Dr. Jackson augmenting the discussion with additional lecture notes.
2. Individual presentations.
3. Survey analysis. We will take all of the surveys and tabulate them and discuss the results.

Post-seminar Work

1. Students will choose one of the following issues in youth culture to conduct in-depth study:
 - a. internet behavior of teenagers—include surfing, instant messaging, gaming, online social networks (myspace, twitter, facebook, etc.)
 - b. substance abuse
 - c. friends and friendships
 - d. media consumption and media literacy
 - e. violence, gangs, bullying
 - f. self-destructive behavior: eating disorders, cutting, suicide
 - g. spirituality/religion
2. Students will prepare and submit a research paper to report on the results of the research.
 - It is expected that the paper will be correct according to matters of form and style. (Turabian)
 - The paper should be 8-10 typed pages (New Times Roman font, 12 point) plus a cover page and bibliography.
 - The paper is due into the professor's office three weeks after the final class session and must be submitted in hard copy.

Course Schedule

Sept 30 – Oct 2, 2014

Tuesday, 9/30 - 1pm – 9pm

Wednesday, 10/1 – 8am – 4pm

Thursday, 10/2 - 8am – 4pm

Day One:

1. Seminar discussions: overview of youth culture and introduction to foundational reading
2. Students will present their review of the additional book and lead the seminar in a discussion of their findings.

Day Two:

1. Students will go to the library and/or internet to conduct additional research on “trending” in the youth culture. Particular investigation is in
 - a. Fads, fashion, technology, media, pop icons, and “cool hunting”
 - b. Impact of pop culture on families and adjustments families are making or should make in order to be faithful to a mission of discipleship

- c. Upon completion of library time, we will return to the seminar room where we will respond critically and constructively to the presentations with the goal of learning more widely applicable principles from these leaders in innovation.
2. Students will engage in a dialogue regarding the insights they have discovered about youth ministry in present culture as a result of the readings, seminar presentations, and seminar discussions.
3. Additional discussion regarding issues in youth culture will be led by Dr. Jackson

Day Three:

1. Students will tabulate and interpret their surveys. As a group, we will count all the responses and note the answers and try to interpret what we found.
2. Dr. Jackson will overview topics which are relevant in a discussion of the youth culture (Mueller's book and Turner's book inform these topics) and students will select the topic they will investigate for the post-assignment.

Course Policies

Course Evaluation

Pre-Seminar Work	40%
Textbook discussions	15%
In-seminar collaboration	20%
Post-assignments	25%

Grading Policies

1. Assignments are due on arrival to seminar. Late assignments will be penalized one letter grade for each day the assignment is late.
2. Email submissions are not accepted.

Style

Guidelines for papers submitted in this course are found in current edition of *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* by Kate L. Turabian, which is available in the bookstore.

Formatting

1. All assignments are to be typed, double-spaced with a 12-point font (Times New Roman preferred) and 1-inch margins unless otherwise indicated.
2. Be sure to include your name, date of submission and the assignment title on the cover page and staple all assignment pages together before submission.

Attendance/Class Participation

Students are expected to attend all class sessions. Any student needing to miss any part of any class should contact Dr. Jackson. Each case will be considered individually.

Selected Bibliography

A complete youth ministry bibliography is available online at www.youthministryinstitute.org

Youth Survey

1. On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being “I hardly think about it” and 5 being “very committed” **how involved are you in worship at your local church?**
2. On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being “very close” rate the closeness of your family.
3. On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being “I hardly think about it” and 5 being “very committed” **how involved are you in your church youth group?**
4. How much money do you spend each week on things just for you (fast food, clothing beyond what you need, music, recreation, etc.)?
5. On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being “I hardly think about it” and 5 being “very committed” **how involved are you in Bible study with a small group?**
6. Who would you say is the person or persons primarily responsible for your spiritual maturity?
 - a. parents
 - b. Other family member
 - c. Friend who was close to your age
 - d. Youth minister/pastor/youthworker at church
7. How much time do you spend each week consuming media? Count everything (internet, television, Hulu, Netflix, iPod, video gaming, etc.). If you do more than one thing at a time, do not duplicate the hours—for example count 3 hours of television while surfing as 3 hours.
8. Who helped you to initially become a believer in Christ?
 - a. parents
 - b. Other family member
 - c. Friend who was close to your age
 - d. Youth minister/pastor/youthworker at church
9. On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being, “very rarely” and 5 being “every week” **how involved do you think you will be in church when you leave home?**
10. On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being, “not at all” and 5 being, “I know it really well considering that I am not a professor or something” **how well do you think you know and understand the Bible?**

11. On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being “we hardly ever mention it” and 5 being “we talk about it every day” **how much do you talk about your relationship with Jesus to your closest friends?**
12. On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being “I hardly think about it” and 5 being “very committed” how involved are you in worship at your local church?
13. What type of music do you listen to (If “Christian,” be more specific)?
14. Describe your dating life.
15. How would you describe your religion?
16. What person or persons are your primary influence regarding spiritual things?
17. Have you ever done anything that should have gotten you arrested? If so, give a 1-3 word description.
18. How many close friends do you have?
19. Which of the following do you participate in on a regular basis? (Circle all that apply)
 - a. Devotions with my family
 - b. Prayer with my family
 - c. Bible study with my family
 - d. Memorizing Bible verses with my family
 - e. Mission activities with my family
 - f. Intentional study of interesting subjects with my family
 - g. Prayer with my youth group
 - h. Bible study with my youth group
 - i. Intentional study of interesting topics with my youth group
 - j. Memorizing Bible verses with my youth group or youth leaders
 - k. Mission activities with my youth group or youth leaders
 - l. Prayer with my friends
 - m. Bible study with my friends
 - n. Intentional study of interesting topics with my friends
 - o. Mission activities with my friends
20. Write anything that you want a researcher to know about what it means to be a Christian in 2012.