Syllabus and Pre-Assignments
IMM 332 Immersion: Rural Community and Church
Saint Paul School of Theology
Summer, 2015

Course: IM 332: Rural Community and Church (2 semester-hours credit)

Dates: August 3-7, 2015

Location: Great Bend, Kansas region

Instructor: Ed Kail

Physical/postal: 414 NW 72nd Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64118-6541
Telephone: (816) 783-7632
Email: ed.kail@spst.edu

Course Description:

Students will live with families in community, experience life in the homes and towns of their hosts, and reflect theologically on the place of the church and its ministry in these contexts. Emphasis will be placed on the relationship of church to community and how lay and professional ministries relate to their contexts. The particular locus of the immersion may include rural disaster relief efforts, to a comparison of urban and rural ministries, to the place of farming and agriculture. (Credit/No Credit)

Required Texts:
Both to be read prior to the Immersion week:

Hoeft, Jeanne; Jung, L. Shannon; Marshall, Joretta – Practicing Care in Rural Congregations and Communities (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2013)
Pappas, Anthony G. – Entering the World of the Small Church, 2nd Edition (Alban Institute, 2000)

Recommended Texts:
Optional: From the list below choose one additional background text, according to interest:

Flora, Cornelia B. et. al. – Rural Communities: Legacy and Change (Boulder, Westview Press, 1992)
In addition, recent information and data about agriculture, rural communities, and social trends can be found on the [www.usda.gov](http://www.usda.gov) website, particularly at ers.usda.gov, and by searching the USDA website for “Amber Waves”, their main publication.

**Pre-Immersion Assignments:**

1) Read the two required texts listed above. Reading from the list of recommended texts will also be helpful. Also be attentive to newspaper and media items having to do with agriculture, the American food system, and trends in rural communities.

2) Write a two-page paper describing:
   a) Your own “social location”, i.e. how you would answer the questions, “Where are you from?”
   b) Your previous experience of rural communities or cultures; and,
   c) What you hope to gain and/or learn from the Rural Immersion experience.

The paper is due July 15, 2015.

3) Attend the Immersion Orientation Session scheduled for May 7, 2015 at 9:00 a.m. – either in person at the COR campus or by video link to the Oklahoma campus.

**Post-Immersion Assignment:**

A four-page reflection paper on the Immersion experience is due to the instructor 2 weeks after the end of the Immersion, i.e. by August 21st. The paper should give evidence of interaction with assigned texts and the lived experience of the Immersion, along with theological reflection around implications for the Church and its mission and for the student’s ongoing ministry. Grading for the course is on a credit/no credit basis.

**Tentative Immersion Schedule:**

See the “Tentative Plan for Rural Immersion” attached. More details will be shared at the Orientation Session.
Basically, Monday morning of Immersion Week is for travel to the meeting site. Monday evening through Friday morning will encompass the Immersion experience, based in host families, community interviews and church-based encounters. Friday morning will be dedicated to debriefing, with dismissal for travel home after lunch.

Students will be provided “bed and breakfast” accommodations by host families. Other meals and incidental expenses will be at the student’s discretion and expense. While some “doubling up” or car-pooling may be necessary, it will be helpful if each student can arrange his/her own transportation, so as not to burden host families with transporting students.

**Student Learning Objectives for the Immersion:**

1. **Student will exhibit an understanding of the Church, its mission, and its local and global contexts.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Minimally Satisfactory</th>
<th>Student demonstrates basic understanding of the church and its mission in both local and global contexts.</th>
<th>Evidence: basic knowledge of historical and contemporary scholarship on the church and its mission; reflection on personal experience in the church and its mission; reflection on the church in local and global contexts.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>MDIV Appropriate</strong></td>
<td>Student critically analyzes, appropriates and interprets scholarship on and practices of the church and its mission from various theological, contextual, multi-ethnic and global perspectives.</td>
<td>Evidence: critical engagement with historical and contemporary scholarship on the church and its mission from diverse perspectives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Exemplary</strong></td>
<td>Student makes constructive proposals for renewing the church and/or society drawing upon critical engagement with diverse perspectives on the church and its mission.</td>
<td>Evidence: constructive proposals for renewing the church and/or society drawing upon critical engagement with diverse perspectives on the church and its mission.</td>
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2. **Student will exhibit competence in integrating theory and practice related to skills for ministry.**

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<tr>
<th>Minimally Satisfactory</th>
<th>Student demonstrates basic competence integrating theory and practices for ministry</th>
<th>Evidence: basic articulations of how theory informs the practice of ministry</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>MDIV Appropriate</strong></td>
<td>Student critically analyzes, appropriates, and integrates diverse theories and practices in ministry.</td>
<td>Evidence: critically engages diverse theories and practices of ministry appropriate to diverse contexts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exemplary</td>
<td>Student creatively integrates theory and practice for constructive proposal regarding ministry.</td>
<td>Evidence: constructive proposals regarding ministry drawing upon a creative integration of theory and practice.</td>
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3. **Student will show spiritual grounding that will sustain ministry.**

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<th>Minimally Satisfactory</th>
<th>Student articulates the relation of spiritual disciplines to Christian ministry</th>
<th>Evidence: articulation of the relationship of spiritual practice to Christian ministry</th>
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<tr>
<th>MDIV Appropriate</th>
<th>Student critically engages diverse spiritual resources related to Christian ministry</th>
<th>Evidence: critical engagement with diverse traditions of spiritual practices, self-reflective articulation of spirituality and spiritual practices related to specialized ministry.</th>
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| Exemplary              | Student makes constructive proposals for spiritual practices that sustains Christian ministry in self and others. | Evidence: constructive proposals for spirituality and spiritual practice that sustains specialized ministry in self and others. |