1. Name of Applicant (Please give full legal name: first, middle, and SURNAME in uppercase letters):
   Marissa Michele Moultrie

2. Name of Supervisor, Department, & Institution:
   Dr. Katherine Wiley

   Mailing Address of Supervisor:
   12180 Park Ave S, Tacoma, WA 98447

3. Applicant’s Personal Information
   Gender: Female
   Date & Place of Birth: 12/10/1996, Federal Way, WA
   Citizenship: United States

4. Applicant’s Education History
   Highest Academic Degree: Bachelors
   Year Degree Awarded: 2019
   Institution Awarding Degree: Pacific Lutheran University

5. Applicant’s Current Doctoral Status
   Are you registered for a doctoral degree? No
   Date you expect to receive degree: __________
   Department and Institution that will award the degree: 
   What requirements for the degree (other than the dissertation/thesis) have yet to be completed, and what is their expected date of their completion?

6. Title of Project (15 words or less): The Assurance of Prosperity: Neoliberalism, the Prosperity Gospel, and Pentecostal Christianity in Southern Ghana.

7. Total requested for Dissertation Fieldwork Grant (maximum $20,000): US$ 19,873

8. Abstract of research proposal (Provide a general description of your proposal in plain English. If this proposal is successful, this abstract will be posted on the Foundation’s website.)
   My ethnographic research investigates how the prosperity gospel in Africa has influenced Christians in Ghana. Looking specifically at the prosperity gospel, I propose that the influence of neoliberalism is present in these Christian teachings, and as a result, has an impact on the beliefs of Christians in Ghana, connecting the prosperity gospel, neoliberalism, and the everyday lives of Christians. Specifically, I will look at how the prosperity gospel acts as a distraction for the marginalized and disempowered: providing hope but simultaneously preventing individuals from developing their own sense of agency. Through the ethnographic study, I will combine ethnographic methods and conduct participant observation to analyze how neoliberalism influences Christian communities both in their theological teachings and scriptural readings, as well as in their own communities and homes. This research will add to the anthropology of Christianity by looking at an area of Southern Ghana that has not yet been researched, and additionally looks at the everyday implications of the ideology of neoliberalism and how that is functioning within Christian communities. Through this work, I hope to understand how the implicit presence of neoliberalism perpetuates a cycle of hope, prayer, tithing, and Christian devotion.

9. Start and end dates of project for which support is requested (start date must fall between January 1 and June 30, 2019): September 1st, 2019 - August 19th, 2020

10. Location where project is to be carried out:
    Winneba, Ghana
11. List research permits and/or ethical approvals required for this project.
   - Issue of a Research Permit in Winneba
   - Clearance of the Human Participants Research Board
     (Pacific Lutheran University)

12. What date do you expect to have all required permits/permissions in hand?
   July 1st, 2019

13. Will you work with academic personnel (other than your supervisor) while conducting research? (Select)
    (If so, please list below. See the Application Information and Procedures for instructions.)
    - Cephas Nnah Omenyo, Religion Professor at the University of Ghana.
    - Wildred Asampambila Agana, local Ghanaian scholar.

14. Budget itemization: Provide a detailed budget for the requested funding (maximum $20,000).
    (See the Application Information and Instructions for budget guidelines, and include a justification for any piece of equipment that costs over $750, childcare expenses, research and/or transcription assistance, and per diem estimates. Please also include a justification for any budget items not specifically listed as allowable expenses. Press Ctrl key + Tab to utilize pre-set tabs in application form)

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Total Budget Requested from Wenner-Gren: $19,873
14. Budget Itemization continued. *(Use this page to list additional items to your project budget, if necessary.)*

1) I will be traveling with my audio/camera equipment, where additional baggage fees will apply via airline policies.

2) I will need to travel to the archdiocese of Tamale in order to speak with Wilfred Asampambila Agana, whom I'd like to meet with four times. Additionally, I will need a car for the days that I will travel to the University of Ghana in order to meet with professors of their Religion Department. These professors are local scholars of religion, and are located at that campus. Because I would like to do this at least 50 days out of my 11 month research period, this would mean I would need a rental car in order to get to the university or to get across town. This would mean I am able to interact with a local scholar about once per week.

3) The U.S department of State per diem rates for “other” locations in Ghana is $70/day. The amount of $15/day is requested.

4) A research assistant is requested to help with transcription and translation of interviews, as well as for providing some tutoring services for me while doing my research. A stipend is requested for this service.

5) A larger phone plan is needed in order to coordinate interviews and communicate with local scholars and churches.
15. Have you applied to other agencies for funds covered in this application? Yes  
   (If so, please list other funding sources you have contacted to aid this project and indicate whether funds have been awarded.)
   Ruth Landes Memorial Research Fund
   Woodrow Wilson National Fellowship Foundation

16. Sources of aid received for other phases of the project:
   N/A

17. Please help categorize your project by Discipline and Area or Topic:

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<th>Physical/Biological Projects Only</th>
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18. Key Words (Please provide "key words" and/or phrases that best describe your research project.)
   Religion, Neoliberalism, Pentecostalism, Governmentality, Africa, Ghana

19. Have you received a Wadsworth Fellowship? No
   (If so, Reporting Requirements for the Wadsworth Fellowship must be completed. Contact the Foundation for further information.)
20. Are you resubmitting an application that was unsuccessful in a prior season? No

If the current application is a resubmission of a previous unsuccessful Dissertation Fieldwork grant application, you must include a resubmission statement. This statement should describe how your application differs from your previous submission and how you have addressed reviewers' comments. Include this resubmission statement whether or not the current project is similar to your previous one. A resubmission statement is often a benefit to an applicant in demonstrating how and why his/her thinking has changed. (Press Ctrl + Tab to use tabs.)
21. Project Description Question 1: Describe your research question/hypothesis or research objective. That is, what will the focus of your investigation be? (Press Ctrl + Tab to use tabs.)

Neoliberalism is one of the most researched and heavily studied political and economic ideologies within the discipline of anthropology, due to the implicit impact it can have on the everyday lives of individuals, as well as the overarching global impact neoliberalism encourages (Harvey 2007, 3). Previous anthropological research has not yet connected how faith relates to the decline in state services and widespread economic inequality as displayed in the neoliberal context (Gant 2014; Schieman & Jung, 2012). My research will look at how the church might be filling the gaps that the state leaves behind as a result of the privatization of the states social services and the emergence of the private sector. Through participant observation and anthropological methods, I will analyze how the prosperity gospel influences the everyday lives of Pentecostals Christians in Winneba, Ghana, showing the connection between the ideology of neoliberalism and Pentecostal teachings prevalent in current and historical African economic and religious systems (Eriksen, Blanes & MacCarthy, 2019).

The prosperity gospel can be defined as a quickly spreading set of doctrines that promise followers both physical health and material success on earth (Robbins 2004, 122). Neoliberalism can be defined as a capitalism that presents itself as a gospel of salvation, and a capitalism that, if rightly harnessed, is invested with the capacity to transform the universe of the marginalized and disempowered (Comaroff 2000, 2). Looking at the everyday effects on both individuals and Christian communities, I will look at both the association between the economic structure of neoliberalism, and the connection that neoliberalism has with the prosperity gospel in Africa. With this, I will look at how the prosperity gospel impacts the everyday lives of Christians in Winneba, Ghana. To understand this, I will address the processes of conversion and ritual, such as prayer and acts of self-regulation in my research. My research will look at answering the following questions: Q1) In what ways does the ideology of neoliberalism and the prosperity gospel influence Pentecostal Christians in Africa? Q2) How does the prosperity gospel impact the everyday lives of Pentecostal Christians, shaping their reasons for conversion? Q3) After following the teachings of the prosperity gospel, how do Pentecostal Christians believe that conversion will fortify their lives? My research methods will be shaped by these research questions, but also in the hypothesis that the prosperity gospel is likely flourishing in Africa due to the existence of neoliberalism and the effects that capitalism has on non-elites in a particular society.

The prosperity gospel began to shape Christianity in Africa in the late 1980s and 1990s, as a result of the desire to move away from traditional Catholicism, protestantism, methodist, and evangelical churches in the 1970s. Pentecostalism as a way of Christian theology became popular during the healing revivals in the post-second world war era in the 1980’s (Kalu 2008, 256). Pentecostalism today can be seen as a movement of renewal in Africa, through the emphasis on the Holy Spirit and how the Holy Spirit infuses life and a living presence for believers (Wankan 2018, 106). Pentecostalism seeks a live and direct relationship with God, and as a result, prosperity gospel followers portray an increased outward expression of faith (Engelke 2010, 181). This outward expression of faith includes, most notably, Christian conversion.

There has been elaborate research completed about the cultural context of neoliberalism (Comaroff & Comaroff, 2000; Harvey, 2007), however, there has not been much literature published about the prosperity gospel applied specifically to African Christians. The continent of Africa includes some of the highest numbers of churches utilizing the prosperity gospel, making it incredibly important to study the prosperity gospel in Africa. Many theorists look at explaining the processes of neoliberalism in the anthropology of Christianity within African Independent Churches (AIC’s) and congregations that utilize the prosperity gospel (Engelke, 2010; Meyer 2004, 2007; Pfeiffer 2002, 2007; Robbins 2004), however there have not been many ethnographies written about the actual lived experience of members of these communities. This is important to study because through the lived experience of Christians we are able to understand the perspective of the congregants, going beyond the theoretical and conceptual element of neoliberalism, and seeing how it is intertwined into a deeper cultural practice (Comaroff & Comaroff 1997, 85). I will look at a very specific application of neoliberalism in my research, precisely looking at how the ideology of neoliberalism is integrated into daily life.

Africa is an important location for religious research because of the changing landscape of Christianity, and the move from more traditional forms (such as Catholicism) into what is seen today. The study of pentecostalism, especially, has considerably reconfigured how we can understand Christianity in Africa (Meyer 2004, 448). I will be doing my research in Winneba, Ghana, due to its geographical location near the capital, as well as the changing landscape and emergence of more pentecostal congregations in an area that was previously predominantly Roman Catholic, Anglican, or Methodist. The dynamic field in Winneba is important due to the new popularity of Pentecostal congregations, which will add to what we know about Africa and Christianity in the anthropological literature.

To conduct this research, I will be using primarily participant observation by living with Pentecostal converts and attending church services, small cell groups, bible studies, and any additional church events. I will also attend any additional non-church related events, including fellowship opportunities or volunteer groups; these events would be both inside and outside of church, reaching out into the community as well in order to see everyday lives more clearly. I will also analyze textual elements, including media outlets, prayers, bulletins, handouts, books, recordings, and sermons. To provide contrast, I will interview local clergy of all Christian denominations, local leaders and political representatives who have related experience or contextual knowledge about the presence of these churches in Winneba. I will also analyze prayer, specifically looking for evidence of prayer being utilized in hopes of providing relief from economic inequality as a result of the decline of state social services.

This project will add to the theoretical literature by engaging with neoliberalism and governmentality, as described by theorists David Harvey, John & Jean Comaroff, and Michel Foucault.
22. Project Description Question 2: How does your research build on existing scholarship in anthropology and closely related disciplines? Give specific examples of this scholarship and its findings. (Press Ctrl + Tab to use tabs.)

The prosperity gospel in Africa emphasizes money and health as the means by which God’s agency will reach believers; therefore, material wealth and good health are personal advantages that are linked to African sociological concerns (Schieman & Jung, 2012: 739). The prosperity gospel has been described as a type of casino capitalism, due to its ability to epitomize neoliberal economic strategies (Eriksen, Blanes & MacCarthy, 2019). The process of neoliberalism in this context can be defined as the changing relationship between the state and the market, creating, as a result, a reduction in the states role in the economy, a decrease in social services, the privatization of industry, and a new emphasis on personal responsibility (Ganti, 2014).

Neoliberal reforms, such as those that are implemented through the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund promote privatization that reduces social services and worsens economic inequalities. Pentecostal denominations are especially close to the neoliberal spirit, as Pentecostalism provides an attractive model of control over seemingly uncontrollable external circumstances (Comaroff & Comaroff, 1999, 2000; Brouwer, Gifford & Rose 1996, 179). David Harvey mentions that neoliberalism has, in short, become hegemonic as a mode of discourse (Harvey 2007. 3). As a result, many churches provide a way for people to feel protected, addressing the misfortunes that are specific to their vulnerabilities connected to neoliberalism (Pfeiffer 2007, 689). The Pentecostal emphasis on the healing power of the “Holy Spirit”, the authority of the New Testament scripture, speaking in tongues, and baptism ceremonies all seek to recruit new members who are seeking the treatment of illness or an escape from their daily lives, and a hope in something outside of their current communities (Pfeiffer 2002, 178). Prosperity gospels also provide response to inequality and the inability of the state to provide for its citizens (Barker 2007; Carrette & King, 2005). In other words, Pentecostalism fills the gaps left by the failure of the state to provide for essential social needs (Barber 2007, 409; Eriksen 2009).

As noted by Jean Comaroff, neoliberal capitalism can be seen as a contradictory interrogation in many aspects; it appears to both include and marginalize; it appears to produce desire and expectation, yet decrease certainty and security of work; it appears to magnify class differences only to undercut class consciousness; but above all, it offers instantaneous riches to those who master it’s spectral technologies, and, simultaneously, to threaten the very existence of those who do not (Comaroff, 2000, 8). The church, as a result, becomes a “state within a state” (Comaroff & Comaroff 1997: 261). These definitions are a baseline of what it is that we are looking for when we are looking at how the prosperity gospel is utilized; in the Christian context, this relates to how the prosperity gospel teachings influence human agency, increasing “fee for service” religions (Comaroff & Comaroff 1999, 15).

Within neoliberalism, the individualized self is also important. Capitalism as an economic system requires an expectant consumer, so buying and displaying goods is an important part of both self-making, and the journey towards finding the authentic-self (Meyer 2007, 9). The prosperity gospel focuses on wealth and power, which reflects the ability for elites to justify immense accumulation, while simultaneously still practicing Pentecostal principles (Haynes 2015, 7). Pentecostalism can, therefore, generate a sense of “personal agency” that creates worldly engagement and a desire to consistently improve aspects of one’s life. In the prosperity gospel, believers are taught that physical health and economic wealth are dominant blessings in a good relationship with God. There is a materialization in this miracle of prosperity that deeply relates Pentecostalism and capitalism (Meyer 2007, 12).

Additionally, the other theme emerging in the study of the prosperity gospel in Africa is governmentality, specifically as applied by anthropological theorist Michel Foucault, who shows how individual actions are important in followers of Christianity and the relation to Christian conversion. Christian converts tend to represent the process of radical change (Robbins 2007, 11). My project would look at this conversion process by observing the everyday lives of Christian converts in Winneba. Foucault (1999, 143) summarizes that Christian techniques of examination, confession, guidance, and obedience all aim to promote a renunciation of one’s world and of one’s self; in other words, self-transformation is an important step in Christian practices (Foucault 1999, 143). My work would add to Foucault’s analysis by looking at Christian practices that are specific to followers of the prosperity gospel, including these acts of penitence and the individual actions that encompass the greater hope of prosperity. Pentecostalism has embedded neoliberal economic activities by integrating self-regulated elements of neoliberal capitalism into society (Barker 2007, 407, 409).

According to the teachings within the prosperity gospel, prayer in many forms (including prayers of faith, prayers of agreement, and prayers of dedication), as well as the donation of one’s money through tithing (Kalu 2008, 256), can help in the ability of Christians to obtain God’s blessings. I will analyze prayer in my research as a way to understand how an everyday ritual provides believers with the potential for material signs of salvation, which, because of neoliberalism, are not present in the current political state (Haynes 2017).

My project will add to the literature by creating an ethnography about the lived experience of people in communities that are strongly influenced by neoliberalism and practices related to the prosperity gospel in Pentecostal Christian communities. Previous anthropological literature (Meyer 2004; Robbins 2007) has shown the relation between African Pentecostalism and it’s changing political and economic impacts, however there has not been a study about how neoliberalism influences conversion in Southern Ghana, and specifically, Winneba. My project will add new literature to the understanding of the impact of neoliberalism and African Pentecostalism by examining the everyday lives of Christians in Winneba. My project will build upon the anthropological conversation of neoliberalism and political power, and add to anthropology’s understanding of Pentecostalism by pursuing a region that is lacking in academic research.
23. Project Description Question 3: What evidence will you need to collect to answer your research question? How will you go about collecting and analyzing this evidence? (Press Ctrl + Tab to use tabs.)

My research will be performed in Winneba, Ghana among Ghanaian members of Pentecostal church congregations. Winneba is currently experiencing a growing number of new Pentecostal churches, and there is an increase in new members from previously Catholic, Methodist and Anglican congregations. My research will address how the ideology of neoliberalism, the prosperity gospel, and the notion of governmentality influence these Christian communities in Africa, and by what means this is utilized. Specifically, Q1) In what ways does the ideology of neoliberalism and the prosperity gospel influence Pentecostal Christians in Africa? Q2) How does the prosperity gospel impact the everyday lives of Pentecostal Christians, shaping their reasons for conversion? Q3) After following the teachings of the prosperity gospel, how do Pentecostal Christians believe that conversion will fortify their lives? Participant observation, life history, group and formal interviews, and archives will be employed in my research.

Taking place between September 1st, 2019 and August 19th, 2020, I will be present for the months leading into the Christmas season, as well as present for the majority of my research period before Easter, both of which are the largest Christian celebrations in the church's history. Having time before and after each of these events is an important element of being able to accurately complete participant observation and reflect upon my experiences, assessing the connection to Pentecostal history in Winneba. More specifically, having time before major events will also help me to develop a relationship with Ghanaian Christians.

Participant observation will be the foundation of my work in Winneba, beginning immediately upon arrival. Being involved in church services, small groups, meetings, everyday household rituals, everyday church involvement, and additionally any larger religious gatherings in the area will help me gather data for my research. I will also be involved in church gatherings among congregants outside of the church itself, such as fellowship opportunities or volunteer events. I am interested in seeing how believers utilize the prosperity gospel teachings outside of the church itself, so any form of activism or public gathering that congregants attend, I would also observe. An observation of events outside of church would help me gain knowledge about how the prosperity gospel teachings can influence everyday choices and actions. More specifically, I would observe how the disadvantages an individual faces with neoliberalism, and the relating anxieties, self-critique, and economic stressors influence a believer’s relationship with God. This is important because it will help me to see how the implicit economic system of neoliberalism is influencing Christian conversion in Winneba. Observing small groups from within the larger congregation will aid in how Christians navigate religious practices, as well as how church members utilize their faith in their interactions with each other and in their everyday lives outside of Sunday services, as churches and religious groups can fulfill a variety of duties beyond worship and liturgy (McCauley 2013, 15).

Participant observation will remain the most continual and present method utilized in order to observe how neoliberalism and governmentality is practiced in Pentecostal communities. Living with a family and group of people who are active members of a Pentecostal church will help me observe how their faith shapes their everyday lives and worldview. The ideal family would be recent converts into Pentecostalism, which would aid in my ability to see conversion practices and the relations to the prosperity gospel. I will be present and participate in all related ritual aspects, such as baptism, marriage, funerals, and any religious rituals (such as prayer) celebrated within and outside of the home. Baptism is an embodied form of action in conversion, and analyzing this experience will allow me to gain insight into the dynamic process of becoming a religious convert (Klaver 2011, 424). This observation will help me to see how believers are influenced by these events, and how the ritual of baptism can transform their lives (Bell, 1992).

Church documents and archives will be referenced to aid in understanding how religious conversion occurred in the past, the time in which it might have begun, and where there was a time in which conversion increased in the area. This is important in finding the relation between neoliberalism and the everyday lives of Christians. Archival research is also helpful in looking at how the church might be influenced by neoliberalism, specifically church documents and meeting minutes, and previous budgets that portray the spending and tithes requested. Budgets are important in understanding any pastoral work through the use of the prosperity gospel and spending associated with evangelism (Ngala, 2017). Using the prosperity gospel as a common ground, I will look at how these ideologies are organized in Christian communities in the African context, analyzing textual elements, including media outlets, bulletins, handouts, books, recordings, and sermons. Is the church creating specific prayer groups to help a specific struggle or concern, related to an economic disadvantage? Prayer will specifically be analyzed to look at how, as a result of the weakened neoliberal state, Christian communities look towards God to "fill the gaps" of state social services, fulfilling the hope of eventual prosperity and relief.

Oral history, group, and formal interviews will be carried out after I have started participant observation in the home(s) of Pentecostal Christians. The life and oral history will be targeted towards recent converts into Pentecostalism. I will gather information from both recent converts into Pentecostalism from the Catholic, Methodist or Anglican churches, as well as from new Christian converts within the past year with no religious background. Looking at both groups will give me information about how Christianity has changed over time, as well as how the context of Christianity has changed. This will help me to understand how shifts in religious teachings and the introduction of the prosperity gospel influenced Winneba Christian communities, and how the increase in Pentecostal churches has influenced all Christians. Group interviews will help me understand how everyday economic and social concerns are addressed, and how believers hope to utilize their faith. Formal interviews with local clergy of all Christian denominations, local leaders and political representatives will help me obtain information about the history of Pentecostalism and the multitude of potential outcomes of that emergence. Group interviews will also be utilized with local leaders and political representatives, looking at how current political/economic issues are influencing the changing religious landscape.
24. Project Description Question 4: What is your training; how are you prepared to do this research? List examples of your language competence, technical skills, previous research, and any other relevant experience. Describe any work you have already done on this project, and/or how it relates to your prior research. If you are collaborating with other academic personnel describe their role/s in the project and the nature of the collaboration. (Press Ctrl + Tab to use tabs.)

Consequent to the the the stages of this research project, I will have completed my undergraduate degree at Pacific Lutheran University (PLU) in anthropology and vocal performance. In addition to my degree coursework, at PLU I had the opportunity to take two semesters of both French and German, as well as a two semester course in French, German, Italian and English diction, learning how to use the International Phonetic Alphabet. IPA will be beneficial to my ability to replicate language sounds and ensuring correct pronunciation throughout my research. At PLU, I also completed a course in Early Christianity, which gave me a deep historical context about Christian conversion in the early church, including practices of the first Christians, paralleling the reasons for conversion in African Pentecostal churches. My education in anthropology, language and religion advances the backdrop for my research in Winneba, Ghana.

My academic background in anthropology has exposed me to important literature within the discipline, and because of this I am prepared to do anthropological research. My studies in anthropology have included classes on methods and theory, as well as a specialized course that focused on the anthropology of Africa. My previous coursework on methods and anthropological theory have made me qualified to design an anthropological project built off of existing literature, and designing methods that allow me to thoughtfully answer my research questions and engage with anthropological literature.

Through my anthropology coursework, I have experience in conducting structured individual interviews as a means of collecting anthropological data. Additionally, I have coursework experience in both qualitative and quantitative anthropological methods. The interviews that I collected for a study of identity for Latin Americans in the United States also gave me experience in collecting an oral history. This experience in both my courses as well as my previous interview experience will undoubtedly help me to conduct interviews and oral histories in Winneba, in order to gain a life history and understand the everyday experiences of Christians in Ghana. My training in research, primarily formulating anthropological research questions, conducting interviews and oral histories, as well as my training in the methods of participant observation will directly aid my ability to contribute to anthropology of religion, the anthropology of Christianity, and the anthropology of Africa. My coursework in the anthropology of Africa specifically included the study of colonial history in Africa and global African churches, which is important in my ability to apply my project to the larger context of anthropology.

My research paper for an anthropology of Africa class at Pacific Lutheran University focused on Western influence on urban language in Africa, and through that research I intensively studied colonialism and the social impact of colonial legacies and Pentecostal political elites. Additionally, in anthropological theory I completed my research and theoretical project on the Neo-Pentecostal movement in Latin America, in the Guatemala City context, which inspired me to continue to study Pentecostalism in Africa. In both my intensive courses in Latin America and Africa, the investigation of neoliberalism was greatly researched and discussed, furthering my previous studies of neoliberalism and benefitting my research in Winneba. This previous research and theoretical knowledge will help me in my application of researching how religion and the prosperity gospel is applied in the neoliberal context.

Beyond my experiences at PLU, I also had the opportunity to interact with Christian communities throughout my work as a church musician at four different congregations throughout the greater Tacoma, Seattle, and Portland areas. Most notably, I was the soprano choral scholar at St. John’s Episcopal Church Gig Harbor for four years, employed by the church to provide an additional voice in the choir each week as well as provide music during requested events. As a choral scholar, I attended weekly Sunday services, as well as weekly rehearsals. In addition to the weekly services, I attended major feast days, the entire triduum (Holy Week) liturgy, as well as funerals as requested. Furthermore, I attended any special prayer services, such as smaller liturgies in response to major news events. This position also gave me a first-hand look at liturgy planning, the liturgical calendar, and how Christian practices and rituals are executed. The process of gaining information and applying it to my research, as well as the ability to research how Christianity is practiced in a specific context will directly aid in my ability to research how Christianity is being navigated and processed in Winneba. Throughout these experiences, I have interacted with Christian converts as well as members of the congregation who have moved denominations and "rekindled" their faith. Additionally, I have been able to interact with individuals who are new to Christianity, and who are finding their faith over a period of time. My experiences with these interactions will assist me in my ability to interact with congregants in Winneba. Through these experiences, I will have gained, in many elements, "insider access" into the lives of Christians. Through these discussions and observations about Christian faith practices and rituals, I have obtained the skills necessary to successfully remain active in anthropological research in the Christian setting for an extended period.

The official language of Ghana is English, however, the most common indigenous language is Efutu. In order to speak Efutu while conducting my research in Winneba, I will be participating in individual tutoring sessions with a local speaker prior to my research. My studies in French and German up to this point have aided me in my ability to learn and comprehend a new language, and I will utilize those experiences to attain the language proficiency in Efutu to further my research abilities. I will also have an interpreter who speaks Efutu, and can help me along my research. However, being a native English speaker will also assist me in my research.
25. Project Description Question 5: What contribution does your project make to anthropological theory and to the discipline? Please note that the Foundation's mission is to support original and innovative research in anthropology. A successful application will emphasize the contribution its proposed research will make, not only to the specific area of research being addressed, but also to the broader field of anthropology. (Press Ctrl + Tab to use tabs.)

My project will contribute to the anthropological fields of religion and Christianity within the context of the ideology of neoliberalism and Christian conversion. Utilizing neoliberalism as a guide, I will look at how Pentecostalism develops an influence on Christians, ultimately leading to conversion, and seek to understand the reason for these practices.

My project further adds to the understanding of the existing reality of neoliberalism. Previous anthropological study has yet to connect the existence of neoliberalism as an explanation of how the prosperity gospel directs individuals away from traditional forms of Christianity into new forms of ongoing exchange, conflict, and dialogue within African Pentecostal churches (Meyer 2004, 450).

I will also address how governmentality influences the everyday lives of Christians as well as Christian conversion, as used by Michel Foucault. I will address how the prosperity gospel and Christian teachings influences Christian conversion, within the economic system of neoliberalism and through the Christian ideation of governmentality and self-regulation. This is important because understanding how governmentality leads Christians to act in certain ways will assist me in discerning conversion in Winneba. Not only would my project add to the anthropology of Christianity and the anthropology of Africa, but it would also add to the application of Foucault's notion of governmentality, and explore the relation between how neoliberalism influences the daily lives of Christians and how they interact with the world. My research would act as a critique to the ideology of neoliberalism, and the resulting self-regulation and governmentality.

Lastly, this project will make a contribution to anthropology by focusing on a region of Africa that has been widely neglected in previous anthropological research. The relation between Christianity and neoliberalism has not been previously researched in Winneba, despite the currently changing landscape in which traditional forms of Christianity are being left for Pentecostal Christianity. Conducting my research alongside this dynamically reforming field will add immensely to the study of Christian conversion, which is important for understanding Christianity within the human universal of religion. It is essential to investigate the previously neglected areas in anthropological research in order to add to the knowledge of these practices within the discipline of anthropology. If we do not explore new areas, research in this area will not be able to be accessed by future scholars.
Bibliography


Harvey, David. 2007. *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. Oxford University Press.


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**Education:**  
Pacific Lutheran University, Tacoma, WA: 2019  
Bachelor of Arts, Anthropology  
Bachelor of Music, Vocal Performance

**Relevant Work Experience:**  
• Soprano Choral Scholar, St. John’s Episcopal Church Gig Harbor  
  • Provided musical leadership in all elements of Sunday services and Wednesday rehearsals.  
  • Worked closely with members of the congregation to plan liturgical arts, and worked with clergy to establish artistic integrity.

**Relevant Skills:**  
• Research using ethnographic methods (qualitative and quantitative):  
  • Formal Interviewing, Oral History, Surveys.  
  • Camera operation; Word; Excel; Photoshop; Google Suite, etc.

**Relevant Papers:**  
“Urban Languages in Africa & Globalization from the West”  
• Discussed the urbanization of language in Africa and Western influence.  

“City of God”, Neo-Pentecostalism in Guatemala City, Guatemala:  
• Discussed how neo-Pentecostalism influences the everyday lives of Christians in economic inequality in Guatemala City.  
• Discussed conversion patterns and the decreasing number of Catholic Christians.

**Relevant Coursework:**  
*Anthropological Inquiry (Theory)*: anthropological theory and history of the discipline, as well as anthropological methods.  
*The Anthropology of Africa*: Colonial history and a focus on Africa’s global connections, with a discussion of globalization and neoliberalism.  
*People of Latin America*: a course on the anthropological application to Latin America, and multiple opportunities to conduct interviews and oral histories, conforming with AAA ethics as outlined.  
*Language in Society*: an introduction to language and its social use and cultural capital.  
*Human Cultural Diversity*: an introduction to human culture and societal practices.

**Honors/Scholarships:**  

**Languages:**  
French: 1 year of collegiate study (in addition to 2 years of secondary French)  
German: 1 year of collegiate study.