

CHRIST ABOVE ALL
BRYAN COLLEGE

**PHI 112 UNDERSTANDING THE TIMES:
SURVEY OF COMPETING WORLDVIEWS
Syllabus**

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

An exploration of worldview answers to contemporary questions of origins, revelation, epistemology, applied ethics, and interdisciplinary topics. (This course is offered for credit only through participation in the *Understanding the Times* curriculum available through Summit Ministries of Manitou Springs, Colorado.)

COURSE OVERVIEW:

This course is a survey of six contemporary philosophical worldviews (Christianity, Islam, Marxism, Secularism, New Spirituality, and Postmodernism) in the following areas: theology, philosophy, ethics, science, psychology, sociology, political science, economics, law, and history.

COURSE RATIONALE:

This course promotes the outcomes that are stated in (1) institutional goals #1 (knowledge of Bible), #3 (academic excellence), #4 (wholesome environment), and #6 (spiritual formation); and (2) departmental goals #2 (holistic Christian spirituality), #3 (critical thinking and academic excellence), and #4 (Bible knowledge and skills).

COURSE OBJECTIVES: After completing this course, students should be able to:

1. **Articulate** a factual foundation for their chosen worldview.
2. **Develop** basic skills of disciplined worldview inquiry.
3. **Understand** the similarities and differences between the following worldviews: Christianity, Islam, Marxism, Secularism, New Spirituality, and Postmodernism.
4. **Apply** an understanding of worldviews in the areas of the natural sciences, the social sciences, the humanities, and biblical studies.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. **Attendance:** Attendance at all class periods is required. Unexcused absences or tardies will result in a lower final grade.
2. **Textbook readings:** Each unit has corresponding textbook reading assignments. These assignments are found within the book *Understanding the Times*.
3. **Primary source readings and videos:** Each unit has corresponding essay reading assignments and/or videos.
4. **Classroom discussion:** Participate in all classroom discussions.
5. **Writing assignments:** Each unit has corresponding writing assignments. These essays will be 1–2 page written responses to questions relating to each unit.
6. **Quizzes:** Be prepared for quizzes following any supplemental reading or video assignment.
7. **Unit tests:** On the last day of the each unit, you must pass an exam covering material discussed in each unit.

METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

The course includes in-class lectures, textbook readings, primary source readings, video presentations, classroom activities, quizzes, writing assignments, and unit tests. The course necessitates that *all* participants come to class prepared and ready to engage in class activities.

TEXTBOOK:

Noebel, David A. and Jeff Myers. *Understanding the Times: A Survey of Competing Worldviews*. 3rd ed. Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook Publishing, 2015.

PRIMARY SOURCE READINGS (IN ORDER):

1. Plato's Cave by Plato
2. The Gospel of Mark
3. Sura 3–4 from the Quran
4. The *Humanist Manifesto*
5. Selection from *Communist Manifesto*
6. Bhagavad Gita, chapters 6–9
7. "The Parable of the Madman" by Friedrich Nietzsche
8. "Why I'm Not a Christian" by Bertrand Russell
9. Selection from *Total Truth* by Nancy Pearcey
10. Selection from *On the Origin of the Species* by Charles Darwin
11. Selection from *Pollution and the Death of Man* by Francis Schaeffer
12. "Doing Life Together" by Charles Moore
13. Selection from *The Law* by Frederic Bastiat
14. The U.S. Declaration of Independence
15. Selection from *Animal Farm* by George Orwell
16. "Censoring the Past" by Gary Demar

SUPPLEMENTAL VIDEOS (IN ORDER):

1. "An Introduction to Worldviews" by Eric Smith
2. "The Christian Worldview" by Jeff Myers
3. "A Closer Look at Islam" by Alan Shlemon
4. "The Secular Worldview" by Jeff Myers
5. "The Marxist Worldview" by Jeff Myers
6. "The New Spiritualist Worldview" by Jeff Myers
7. "The Postmodern Worldview" by Jeff Myers
8. "Inside the Mind of the Skeptic" by Alex McFarland
9. "Loving God with Your Mind" by J.P. Moreland
10. "Objective Morality" a debate with Sean McDowell and Michael Shermer
11. "Can We Be Good without God?" by Francis Beckwith
12. "Myths of Evolution" by Sean McDowell
13. "Is Christianity Just a Crutch?" by Abdu Murray
14. "Correct, Not Politically Correct" by Frank Turek
15. "The Philosophy of Law" by Francis Beckwith
16. "Your Constitutional Right to Be Offended" by Mike Adams
17. "Pillars of Economic Wisdom" by Michael Connelly
18. "Restoring All Things" by Waren Smith

GRADED ASSIGNMENTS:

There are 1,800 points possible for this course:

<u>Assignments</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Total Points</u>	<u>Points Earned</u>
Unit Tests	18	100	1,800	

GRADING SCALE:

93–100% = A	87–89% = B+	80–82% = B–	73–76% = C	69% or below = NC
90–92% = A–	83–86% = B	77–79% = C+	70–72% = C–	

MULTICULTURAL OBJECTIVES:

To be aware of considerations necessary to address societal, ethnic, and cultural needs of peers

TECHNOLOGY STATEMENT:

Students will be expected to exhibit skills in electronic communication, word processing, document development, internet use, and electronic library research and will receive access to training through the Academic Support Center, located in the Bryan College Library.

HONOR CODE & PLAGIARISM:

Honor Code: All students are to abide by the Bryan College honor code included in your Student Handbook or College Catalog. All assignments, quizzes and exams will be so pledged.

Plagiarism & Cheating: Given the Honor Code above, students are expected to submit their own work. All cheating is absolutely prohibited. Students caught cheating will be reported to the Vice President of Academics, resulting in disciplinary action up to and including failing the course and academic dismissal. The *Chicago Manual of Style* (2003) states “with all reuse of others’ materials, it is important to identify the original as the source” (p. 136). Even when you use other people’s thoughts or concepts without crediting them as the source you have stolen their intellectual work. It is not plagiarism to quote material from a book, article, or website as long as the author or source of the material is properly cited. Similarly, it is not plagiarism to copy a chart or a diagram from such a source, as long as the source is clearly credited. It is plagiarism to copy verbatim or closely paraphrase a chart or illustration, or material from any book, article, or website without clearly identifying the source from which it was obtained.

The penalties for cheating are outlined in the Bryan College *Catalog* and incidents of plagiarism will be reported to the Office of the Vice President of Academics and will include the following:

The Academic Office will place students who willingly violate the academic honor code on Academic Caution in addition to receiving their classroom discipline. Being placed on Academic Caution will cause the Academic Office to notify those who oversee students that publicly represent the college (see list below) of this status.

Notifications for Academic Cautions will be sent to the following positions:

- Assistant Dean of Students
- Campus Visit Coordinator
- Chair, Department of Fine & Performing Arts
- Coordinator of Athletic Operations
- Dean of Students
- Director of Admissions
- Director of Advancement
- Director of Athletics
- Director of Campus Worship
- Director of Outreach Ministries
- Director of Theatre Program
- Executive Assistant to the President
- Vice President of Student Services & Ministries
- World View Coordinator

Failure to abide by the Honor Code/Plagiarism Guidelines may result in loss of participation in the above mentioned departmental events or activities.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT STATEMENT:

All requests for accommodations for this course or any school event are welcome from both students and parents. The campus ADA Coordinator is Mrs. Kristi Strode, located in the Library (Academic Success Center). She can be reached at kstrode5346@bryan.edu or 423.775.7173. Accommodations are to be requested within the first ten days of classes and will not be considered after, unless a diagnosis is given after that date. Accommodations must be requested per semester.

ACCREDITATION:

Bryan College is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award the associate and baccalaureate degrees, the Tennessee State Board of Education for teacher education and licensure, the Association of Christian Schools International for teacher education and certification, the Immigration and Naturalization Service for the education of foreign students, and various public laws which have been passed by Congress for the education of veterans and the children of veterans, PL 16, PL 634, PL 361.