



Advancing God's Kingdom by Preparing Competent Christian
Leaders for Spirit-Empowered Life and Ministry

G330 Reason and Christian Belief

3 credits. Prerequisites: G143 Worldviews and Contemporary Culture

This course transfers to the University of Saskatchewan

 On Campus **'A'**  Live-Stream  Video on Demand

November 7 - December 8, 2022

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Term B

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Monday-Thursday, 9-10:30 AM

"A genuine and robust faith will not shrink from the process of testing, for it is confident that it will indeed pass the test." – C. Stephen Evans and R. Zachary Manis

Course Goals

Course Description

A study of philosophical issues arising from religious belief and practice, such as: the relation between faith and reason, arguments for the existence of God, the problem of evil, the relation between religion and science, and religious pluralism.

Relationship to Horizon's Mission

As part of Horizon's mission to prepare leaders for Christian life and ministry, this course helps students evaluate philosophical reasons for or objections to having faith in God. Therefore, the primary area of competency development that applies to this course is:

- Contextual Awareness: demonstrated by a maturing orthodox Christian worldview, a healthy self-understanding, and engagement of people and cultures with wisdom and discernment.

Core Competencies and Learning Outcomes



To demonstrate competency in *Contextual Awareness* students will:

1. Compare and contrast an evangelical Christian worldview with that of postmodernism.
 - *Assessment:* Postmodernism Assignment.
2. Analyze, interpret, and critique texts related to religious belief.
 - *Assessment:* Response to Objections papers.

3. Respond to philosophical objections to belief in God.
 - *Assessment*: Response to Objections papers.
4. Explain his or her level of confidence for believing in God using philosophical resources.
 - *Assessment*: Belief in God Paper.

In addition, students will gain an introductory understanding of the primary issues in philosophy of religion.

Course Work

Required Readings Textbooks

Evans, C. Stephan, and R. Zachary Manis. *Philosophy of Religion: Thinking about Faith*. 2nd edition. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009. (ISBN: 978-0830838769)

Peterson, Michael L., and Raymond J. VanArragon, ed. *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Religion*. 2nd edition. Oxford: Blackwell, 2020. (ISBN: 978-1119028451).

**While students have the benefit of accessing their textbooks online through the Digital Theological Library, they will not have access to the Digital Theological Library upon graduation. Therefore, we encourage students to purchase select textbooks to build their personal library. For your convenience, Horizon has partnered with Kennedy's Parable to provide textbooks.

Course Assignments and Activities

Portfolio Component. *Response to Objections.* **One** of these assignments must be edited for inclusion in your e-portfolio. It will be added to the Contextual Awareness *e-Project* when you enroll in a Portfolio lab. See the [Portfolio Guide](#) for further information.

- Note regarding readings/viewing
 - PR* = *Philosophy of Religion* by Evans and Manis
 - CD* = *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Religion* edited by Peterson and VanArragon
 - PM* = Links (posted on Populi) to blogs and videos about Postmodernism

All assignments are expected to be submitted in proper format - Times New Roman (12 point)

1. Postmodernism Assignment

In a short assignment, you will compare and contrast an evangelical Christian worldview with that of postmodernism. To complete the assignment, you will:

- a) Write a maximum of one page double spaced.
- b) Begin by defining and describing postmodernism (1/2 page).
- c) Note how postmodernism is both consistent with and inconsistent with an evangelical Christian worldview (1/2 page).

d) Explicitly draw on and cite both the class lecture material and your *PM* reading/viewing (links will be listed on Populi). I am *not* looking for you to report on what other authors have said, but rather for you to draw on their material and synthesize it (where it has influenced your view) into your own evaluation of postmodernism.

- Related learning outcome(s): #1.
- **Assignment length:** 1 page.
- **Due date:** November 16.

2. *Responses to Objections*

In three papers you will respond to philosophical objections that are sometimes made regarding Christianity and sometimes even belief in a divine being in general. The three papers are based on the following material:

- Evil (due Nov 22)
 - *PR* ch 7.
 - Class lecture material.
 - *CD* ch 6 “Is Evil Evidence Against Belief in God?” pp. 139-164.
- Science (due Nov 28)
 - *PR* ch 6.
 - Class lecture material.
 - *CD* ch 8 “Does Science Discredit Religion?” pp. 193-218.
- Pluralism (due Dec 1)
 - *PR* ch 8.
 - Class lecture material.
 - *CD* ch 10. “Is it Reasonable to Believe That Only One Religion is True?” pp. 243- 266. *Note that the objection you are responding to is the second essay in this chapter, “It is Not Reasonable to Believe That Only One Religion is True,” by Peter Byrne.

After completing the required reading, you will write a 900-word paper (max 3 pages) where you will:

- a) Summarize the objection as it is described by the author in *CD* (1 page).
- b) Defend your belief or unbelief in the God of Christianity by responding to the objection (1.5-2 pages). In this section of your paper, I’m not looking for you to provide a summary of what various authors have said. Rather, I expect you to draw on their material and synthesize it (where it has influenced you [as above]) into your own evaluation of the objections.
- c) Draw on and cite via footnotes *CD*, *PR*, and the lesson material.

Don’t include a paragraph of introduction or conclusion. Instead, save the space for more substantial content. No bibliography is required.

- Related learning outcome(s): #2, 3.
- **Assignment length:** 900 words each.
- **Due date:** November 22, 28, December 1.

3. *Belief in God Paper*

Using philosophical resources, write a 1300-word paper (4 pages max) explaining your level of confidence for believing in God. For this paper you are expected to draw on and cite:

- Class lecture material.
- *PR* ch 2-4 and 8.
- *CD* ch 1-5 as it impacts your rationale for believing in God.

No bibliography is required. You are welcome to draw on your other course readings as you wish. In your paper:

- a) Explain how confident you are regarding the existence of God in light of what you have studied in this course.
- b) Note what philosophical ideas/arguments you found convincing (and why) and what you didn't find convincing (and why) to support your belief in God.
- c) Draw on and cite via footnotes both your class lecture material and the *PR* readings.

- Related learning outcome(s): #4.
- **Assignment length:** 1300 words.
- **Due date:** December 8.

Video-on-Demand (VOD) Student Requirements

As indicated on the course schedule, this class is being offered by VOD. Students taking the course through VOD are required to indicate this during their course registration. While VOD recordings are available for any student who may be absent from class, non-VOD students are expected to attend class live following the class attendance policy.

- For this course, VOD students have *different* assignment due dates from in-class students. VOD student assignments are due as follows:
 1. *Postmodernism Assignment*
 - **Due date:** November 21.
 2. *Responses to Objections*
 - **Due dates:**
 - *Evil:* November 28.
 - *Science:* November 28.
 - *Pluralism:* December 5.
 3. *Belief in God Paper*
 - **Due date:** December 8.
- Each week, VOD students are required to watch and engage with all lecture content and in-class activities from that week's classes.
- Every Monday at a time decided between the student and the instructor, VOD students will meet with the instructor on Zoom to 1) affirm you have watched the required recording for the last seven days, 2) summarize one thing you learned that week that will help you reach the course learning outcomes, and 3) explain at least one question you had after watching the class recording. Zoom calls will take place on the following dates:
 - Monday, November 14.
 - Monday, November 21.
 - Monday, November 28.
 - Monday, December 5.

- Monday, December 12.
- In order to pass the course, VOD students must submit all of their VOD weekly submissions. These submissions are marked pass/fail based on whether or not they demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the lecture content and in-class activities.

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

Assignment	Time	Due Date
Classroom time	30 hrs	
1. Postmodernism Assignment	5 hrs	Nov 16
2. Response to Objections	45 hrs	
a) Evil		Nov 22
b) Science		Nov 28
c) Pluralism		Dec 1
3. Belief in God Paper	20 hrs	Dec 8
Total =	100 hrs	

Assessment Rubrics

For this course, please find assessment rubrics on the Populi course page, in the lesson called "G330 Assessment Rubrics."

Tentative Class Schedule

PR = *Philosophy of Religion* by Evans and Manis

CD = *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Religion* edited by Peterson and VanArragon

PM = Links (posted on Populi) to blogs and videos about Postmodernism

Date	Topics	Reading/Viewing (before class)	Assignments Due
Mon, Nov 7, 2022	Intro		
Tue, Nov 8, 2022			
Wed, Nov 9, 2022	Relationship of Faith & Reason	PR chapter 8	
Thu, Nov 10, 2022			
Mon, Nov 14, 2022	Postmodernism	PM links	
Tue, Nov 15, 2022			
Wed, Nov 16, 2022	Problem of Evil	CD pp. 137-164 PR chapter 7	Postmodernism Assignment
Thu, Nov 17, 2022			

Date	Topics	Reading/Viewing (before class)	Assignments Due
Mon, Nov 21, 2022			
Tue, Nov 22, 2022	Science and Faith	CD pp. 193-218 PR chapter 6	Response to Objection #1 - Evil
Wed, Nov 23, 2022			
Thu, Nov 24, 2022			
Mon, Nov 28, 2022	Religious Pluralism	CD pp. 243-266	Response to Objection #2 - Science
Tue, Nov 29, 2022			
Wed, Nov 30, 2022	The Existence of God	PR chapter 3	
Thu, Dec 1, 2022			Response to Objection #3 - Pluralism
Mon, Dec 5, 2022			
Tue, Dec 6, 2022	Religious Experience	CD pp. 85-112 PR chapter 4	
Wed, Dec 7, 2022			
Thu, Dec 8, 2022	Summary		Belief in God Paper

- First submissions of assignments will not be accepted after December 9, 2022.

Date	Revisions Due
Mon	Resubmission of Postmodernism Assignment (as necessary)
Tues	Resubmission of Response to Objections (as necessary)
Wed	Resubmission of Belief in God Paper (as necessary)
Thurs	Second resubmission of assignments (as necessary)
Fri	Final resubmission of assignments (as necessary)

- No resubmission of assignments will be accepted after December 16, 2022.

Academic Policies

General Assignment Guidelines

Please see the Horizon [Format Guide](#) for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines.

Late Assignments and Extensions

Students are expected to submit work by the assigned due dates, as part of their development of the Leadership and Administration competency. To submit extension requests, students must submit the *Assignment Extension Request Form* online and *before the due date*. Professors may grant extensions in the case of extenuating circumstances, such as significant illness or a family emergency. Furthermore, no extensions will be granted beyond the final day of a term or semester.

Unexcused late submissions will be tracked across each student's program. If one assignment is submitted more than five days late or if a student incurs multiple instances of unexcused late submissions, it will result in academic discipline, such as required tutoring, academic probation, failure of the course, or failure to qualify for graduation. Similar to standard human resource employment practices, students will receive warnings and conditions with increasing severity of academic discipline.

Resubmission of Assignments

Students have until the last day of revision week to submit revisions. Students can generally submit up to two revisions for each assignment, although a professor may accept more revisions if the professor determines the student is addressing all of the professor's instructions and making significant progress toward achieving competency.

Horizon College Assessment of Student Work

The goal of courses is to help students develop the stated competencies, not earn letter grades. Assignments are the means by which instructors evaluate development of those competencies. Consequently, students do not earn overall "grades" on individual assignments. Instead, assessment focuses on measuring students' competency as outlined in the syllabus and assignment rubric. For purposes of transferability to other institutions, the final competency designations will be translated to a comparable letter grade on a traditional transcript. The tables below explain Horizon's approach:

Horizon CBE Scale		Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point	U of S Equivalency
E	Exceeding	Student exceeded competency requirements for more than 40% of the learning outcomes and met requirements for all remaining learning outcomes.	A+	4.0	90-100
			A	4.0	85-89
			A-	3.7	80-84
M	Meeting		B+	3.3	77-79

		Student met competency requirements for all learning outcomes and may have exceeded in 40% or less.	B	3.0	73-76
			B-	2.7	70-72

Students pass a course only after they have demonstrated that they have *met or exceeded all* competency requirements for a course. If the student chooses not to meet all course competency requirements, the course will not be sufficient to fulfill their program requirements at Horizon. Nevertheless, for transferability purposes, the student will receive a letter grade of C+ or below on a traditional transcript.

BTM	Beginning to meet	Student was beginning to meet competency requirements for any one or more learning outcomes, and met or exceeded competency requirements for all other outcomes.	C+	2.3	67-69
			C	2.0	63-66
			C-	1.7	60-62
NYM	Not yet meeting	Student was not yet meeting competency requirements for one or more learning outcomes.	D+	1.3	57-59
			D	1.0	53-56
			D-	0.7	50-52
			F	0.0	0-49

Academic Honesty

Horizon uses the University of Saskatchewan definition of plagiarism described as “the presentation of the work or idea of another in such a way as to give others the impression that it is the work or idea of the presenter. Adequate attribution is required. What is essential is that another person have no doubt which words or research results are the student’s and which are drawn from other sources” (Office of the University Secretary, 2012). Students are expected to give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the College [Student Handbook](#).

Disability Services Information

If you would benefit from learning accommodations due to pre-existing physical or mental health conditions or learning disabilities, contact the Academic or Student Life departments at the beginning of the course. Horizon will work to meet your learning and/or physical needs where possible. If any conditions arise during the course that you wish to disclose, please contact us as soon as possible. In all cases you will need to provide current documentation of the disability or condition you wish to disclose. Horizon takes appropriate care to ensure confidentiality about any such disclosures. For more information, contact Bob Williamson, Dean of Students, at bwilliamson@horizon.edu; Jessie Lysholm, Associate Dean of Students, at jlysholm@horizon.edu; or Leanne Bellamy, Academic Coach, at lbellamy@horizon.edu.

Class Attendance

Students should attend all classes in order to facilitate competency development. Students are expected to be present through the delivery method that they registered for, either on campus or through live-streaming with their camera on. A student must be present for the full duration of a class period in order to be registered as present for the class. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss one day of a module course or three days of class in a term or semester course without academic penalty. Students who are absent for more than the number of classes stated above will automatically fail the course. Students wishing to be exempted from this policy due to extenuating circumstances may make an academic appeal, where they will need to document and verify those circumstances. Students who miss a class are responsible to get missed notes or handouts from another student, rather than from the professor.

Live-Streaming Etiquette

Students taking the course through live-streaming are required to indicate this during their course registration. While live-streaming access is available for on-campus students who are unable to attend class due to illness, on-campus students are expected to attend class in person following the class attendance policy.

If attending class online via live-stream, in order to be marked present for class, you must keep your camera on and stay present and attentive throughout the class session, extending the gift of engagement. Access your class with a computer (preferably) or tablet, not a cell phone. Arrive to class on time, and dress as you would if you were attending class on campus. Join the class from a quiet space with minimal background noise, and mute your microphone until you wish to speak to the class.

Use of Technology

Horizon encourages the use of electronic devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Careful consideration must be given to privacy issues, copyrighted materials, and the general care and concern for others. Please respect the following classroom policies:

- Please use online access for course learning only. This is a matter of respect for the instructor's teaching, your own learning, and fellow students who may be distracted by other uses.
- Students should secure permission from the instructor to record any teaching material. This includes PowerPoint slides, white board illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievance about the instructor or course with the instructor personally, through the Horizon College and Seminary grievance procedures, or the Populi-based course evaluations. It is inappropriate to air classroom grievances on a social media platform.
- When instructors use recording mechanisms in the classroom, recorded materials will be used for the sole purpose of instruction and cannot be released to any social media outlet without the written consent of the students whose images have been recorded.
- In general, it is not acceptable to share photographs or videos of students in the classroom setting without permission from those whose images appear in such media.

Bibliography

*Note: Most of these books contain bibliographies that can lead you to works on specific topics.

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