




G143 DE Worldviews and Contemporary Culture

3 credits. Prerequisites: *none*.

 Online Video

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Spring Semester

Stephanie Christianson, MA
schristianson@horizon.edu

*“Life and love and why/Child, adult, and die/All of us hoping and all of us searching for what?”
-Switchfoot (“Life and Love and Why”)*

Course Goals

Course Description

An introductory exploration of worldviews as intellectual and value systems, especially in relation to culture. These powerful forces shape the lives and beliefs of people; they are often absorbed without clear reflection on the part of the holder. This course will help students identify worldviews in everyday life and develop their own worldview.

Relationship to MCS-Horizon’s Missions

Horizon’s mission is to “advance God’s Kingdom by preparing competent Christian leaders for Spirit-empowered life and ministry.” Inevitably, this Spirit-empowered life and ministry will occur within the myriad of worldviews present in the 21st century. Thus, in order to cultivate contextual awareness, this course will ask students to critically examine and evaluate what is going on around them. They will also be given the opportunity to discern how they should live as Christ-followers in light of the worldviews and cultural trends that surround them.

Core Competencies and Learning Outcomes



To demonstrate competency in **Contextual Awareness**, students will:

1. Explain the major beliefs, values, and implications of a worldview.
 - *Assessment:* Textbook Reflection
2. Reflect critically on how worldviews are present in one’s own life and the world at large.
 - *Assessment:* Textbook Reflection, Letter of Response to a Friend’s Worldview, Worldviews in Shopping Presentation
3. Observe the indicators of worldviews and cultural influences within a variety of contexts.
 - *Assessment:* Letter of Response to a Friend’s Worldview, Worldviews in Shopping Presentation

4. Recognize the influences that shape their own worldview and implement practices that continue to develop a mature Christian worldview.
 - *Assessment:* Textbook Reflection, Worldview Interview

Course Work

Required Readings

Sire, James W. *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*. 6th edition. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2020. ISBN: 978-0830849383.

DTL: <https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1196820748>

Wilkins, Steve, and Sanford, Mark L. *Hidden Worldviews: Eight Cultural Stories That Shape Our Lives*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009. ISBN: 978-0830838547.

DTL: <https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/850912247>

**While students have the benefit of accessing many of 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.

Course Assignments and Activities

1. *Lesson Engagement* (pass/fail).

Students can access the lecture videos through Populi under the “Syllabus” tab, in the “Links” section.

Students are required to watch lectures according to the due dates in the Course Outline below and then record a 3-4-minute video on Padlet that 1) affirms they have watched the required lectures for that time period; 2) summarizes one thing they learned that will influence how they live, think, and/or minister; and 3) explains at least one question or critical analysis they had after watching the class videos. Students are welcome to add an additional comment or two. In addition to their own videos, students are also expected to respond to at least one other student’s Padlet for each group of lectures due. This assignment will be marked as complete or incomplete.

The learning activities included in the lectures are an important element of this class. When you come to an in-class learning experience in the lectures, please complete it using the time the in-class students were given.

- **Assignment length:** 30 hours total.
- **Due dates:** May 9, 23; June 6, 27.

2. *Textbook Reflection* (30%).

This two-part assignment is meant to give you a broad introduction to some of the worldviews/cultural stories present in our culture so you can begin the process of engaging critically and in a Christ-like manner.

Read *Hidden Worldviews* in its entirety according to the schedule in the Course Outline below. From *Hidden Worldviews*, for both Consumerism **AND** Individualism, answer the following questions:

- a) Describe the hidden worldview.
- b) Explain one positive outcome of the hidden worldview.
- c) Explain how you see the hidden worldview influencing your life. Give two or more concrete examples of its influence in your life.
- d) Suggest two or more practices you can do which will combat the hidden worldview's influence in your life.

You **DO NOT** have to read *The Universe Next Door* in its entirety. From *The Universe Next Door*, select either Naturalism **OR** the New Age. Read the chosen chapter carefully according to the Course Outline below. For the chosen worldview:

- a) Describe the worldview.
- b) Explain how this worldview differs from your current understanding of a Christian worldview.
- c) Give two or more concrete examples of this worldview's presence in broader Canadian culture.

- To ensure success in this assignment, follow these guidelines:
 - Follow the MCS-Horizon Format Guide.
 - Include citations in footnotes when paraphrasing, summarizing, or quoting from other sources.
 - Cite *Hidden Worldviews* by Wilkens & Sanford when discussing Consumerism and Individualism.
 - Cite *The Universe Next Door* by Sire when discussing Naturalism or the New Age.
 - Confirm that the Required Reading has been completed on the Title Page.
- Related learning outcome(s): #1, #2, and #4.
- **Assignment length:** 4.5-6 pages double-spaced (approximately 1.5-2 pages per worldview or hidden worldview).
- **Due date:** June 13, 2025.

2. *Worldview Interview* (20%).

Students will have the opportunity to dialogue with their professor about the following items, in order to support the ongoing development of his or her worldview:

- a) What factors or influences have shaped your worldview up to this point? How have these factors or influences shaped your worldview?
- b) Share some values/commitments you hold, explaining how they are a direct result of your answer to one of Sire's 8 Worldview Questions.

- c) Share some examples of decisions (concrete actions) you have made, explaining how these were a direct result of your answer to one of Sire's 8 Worldview Questions.
- d) Explain how you intend to further develop your worldview.

The interviews will take place on Zoom. It is recommended that the student takes notes into this interview in relation to the 4 questions above but is also familiar enough with his or her answers so that a flowing conversation can be had between the student and the professor. You can sign up for a slot on Populi, under the "Syllabus" tab, in the "Links" section.

- Related learning outcome(s): #4.
- **Assignment length:** 12-15 minutes.
- **Interview date:** June 24, 2025. *More interview dates will be made available if necessary.

3. *Letter of Response to a Friend's Worldview (25%).*

For this assignment, use the "Letter Template" found under "Lessons" on Populi. Imagine you received this letter from a friend. Your task is to write a letter of response to your friend using first-person language. You must diagnose what worldview(s) is present in your friend's letter, communicate how your convictions differ as a disciple of Christ from those of your friend, and show your love and care for your friend in the tone and content of your letter. This imagined correspondence will give you the opportunity to learn how to dialogue with others who have different worldviews and convictions than you.

Include the follow elements:

- a) **INTRODUCTION:** Establish a connection with your friend.
- b) **EVALUATION:** Based on the course material and textbook reading, tell your friend what worldview(s) you think is at play in her letter. Explain to your friend **why** you think this worldview(s) is present in her letter, specifically referring to the letter she wrote to you. Make sure to cite the textbooks or the class notes at least 2 times in this section of the letter to aid in your evaluation.
- c) **CRITIQUE:** As a disciple of Christ, what are 3 correctives or changes you would offer to your friend in response to what she has shared with you in the letter? What Christian worldview commitments are important to communicate in your letter of response?
- d) **SIGN-OFF:** End your letter in a way that signals you are open for more communication and conversation with your friend about these matters.

Throughout the letter include the important element of **CARE**. Ask yourself: "How will I communicate my thoughts to my friend in a Christ-like manner?" Demonstrate Christ-like care, concern, and the ability to engage with your friend and her worldview.

- To ensure success in this assignment, follow these guidelines:
 - Follow the MCS-Horizon Format Guide.
 - Include citations in footnotes when paraphrasing, summarizing, or quoting from other sources.
 - Include a bibliography.

- Related learning outcome(s): #2 and #3.
- **Assignment length:** 2-3 pages double-spaced.
- **Due date:** July 11, 2025.

4. *Worldviews in Shopping Presentation* (25%).

There are two options for this assignment.

Option A: For an hour, browse through some popular online shopping destinations, looking for different worldviews, “ism’s,” and cultural stories in the products available:

- amazon.ca (see the Bestsellers section especially)
- book stores
- clothing stores (pay attention to t-shirts with text on them)
- etsy.com

Option B: Visit a mall. For one hour, walk around and observe the different worldviews, “ism’s,” and cultural stories at play in this setting. Pay attention to advertisements, products available, etc.

From this experience, prepare a 4–6-minute presentation for the class that will aid in the class’s corporate discovery of the variety of worldviews that are present in our daily lives. Follow these steps:

- a) Introduce yourself to the audience and give a thesis statement for your presentation. (E.g., My name is [fill in the blank] and I am going to show you an example of [fill in the blank] that I found while I was shopping.)
- b) Identify and define one worldview, “ism,” or cultural story that you found in your online shopping or at the mall. Your definition should be clear and provide a good amount of detail. **DO NOT** skip this step, as it provides the foundation for your presentation.
- c) Relate the definition you gave in Part B to the screen shot or photo of the worldview, “ism,” or cultural story you found in your online shopping or at the mall. Make sure to specifically articulate how this screen shot or photo is an example of the worldview, “ism” or cultural story you defined in Part B.
- d) Explain the consequences of the worldview, “ism,” or cultural story you saw in your online shopping or at the mall. How do these things affect our society? How could these things affect us personally?
- e) Conclude your presentation by briefly reminding your audience of what you have said.

Include one screen shot of the worldview, “ism,” or cultural story you found in your online shopping, or one photo of the worldview, “ism,” or cultural story you found at the mall. You can upload the photo or screen shot as a comment under your video on Padlet.

Post your presentation on Padlet under the column “Worldviews in Shopping Presentation.” Note that if you do not film your presentation directly in Padlet, you will need to upload your video file as a comment. (Padlet does not allow file uploads in the original post.) To upload a video

file, create an initial post with only the title of your presentation in the textbox. After publishing the post, upload your video file as a comment.

In lieu of watching previous students' presentation on the Day 17 Video Lecture, you will watch all of your fellow students' Worldviews in Shopping Presentations on Padlet and provide a clarifying comment or insightful question to at least two other students' presentations. This part of the assignment will be marked as pass/fail, and will be required to complete the course.

- Related learning outcome(s): #2 and #3.
- **Assignment length:** 4–6-minute presentation.
- **Due date:** July 22, 2025 (presentation) and July 29, 2025 (at least two comments to other students' presentations).

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

1. Lesson Engagement	30 hrs	May 9, 23; June 6, 27	Assignment Weighting 30%
2. Textbook Reflection <i>Reading: 28 hours</i> <i>Writing: 12 hours</i>	40 hrs	June 13	
3. Worldview Interview	7 hrs	June 24	20%
4. Letter of Response to a Friend's Worldview	8 hrs	July 11	25%
5. Worldviews in Shopping Presentation <i>Presentation: 7 hours</i> <i>Watching and Comments: 1 hour</i>	8 hrs	July 22 July 29	25%
Total =	93 hrs		

All assignments are due at 11:59pm **SK time**, unless otherwise indicated.

Assessment Rubrics

Assignment rubrics can be found on Populi. Click on the name of the assignment to access each rubric.

Lecture Outline

Day 1	Introduction
Day 2	Christian Cultural Engagement
Day 3	Christian Cultural Engagement cont'd; An Introduction to Worldview
Day 4	What Makes Up a Worldview?
Day 5	What Makes Up a Worldview? cont'd; Intro to Western History
Day 6	The Premodern Story; The Modern Story
Day 7	The Modern Story cont'd
Day 8	The Postmodern Story
Day 9	The Postmodern Story cont'd
Day 10	Christian Theism; Deism
Day 11	Deism cont'd; Naturalism
Day 12	Naturalism cont'd; Nihilism
Day 13	Nihilism cont'd; Existentialism; Eastern Pantheistic Monism

Day 14	Eastern Pantheistic Monism cont'd; New Age
Day 15	New Age cont'd
Day 16	Tolerance, Pluralism, Relativism; Case Studies
Day 17	*do not watch* (in lieu, watch Worldviews in Shopping Presentations on Padlet)
Day 18	Conclusion: Living as Disciples

Course Outline

Week 1-2	Read <i>Hidden Worldviews</i> Chapter 1-5 Lectures from Days 1-5 & Padlet Report due May 9
Week 3-4	Read <i>Hidden Worldviews</i> Chapters 6-11 Lectures from Days 6-9 & Padlet Report due May 23
Week 5-6	Read Naturalism or the New Age from <i>The Universe Next Door</i> Lectures from Days 10-15 & Padlet Report due June 6
Week 7	Textbook Reflection due June 13
Week 8-9	Worldview Interview due June 24 Lectures from Days 16, 18 & Padlet Report due June 27 (skip Day 17)
Week 10-11	Letter of Response to a Friend's Worldview due July 11
Week 12-14	Worldviews in Shopping Presentation due July 22 Watch all Worldviews in Shopping Presentations and Comment due July 29

- Since this is a DE course, revisions will be requested throughout the semester.
- No resubmission of assignments will be accepted after August 1, 2025.

Academic Policies

General Assignment Guidelines

Please see the [MCS-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* on Populi 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 unless approval is granted by the Associate Academic Dean (MCS) or Assistant Academic Dean (Horizon).

Late submissions will be tracked across each student's program. If a student incurs multiple instances of 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. If one assignment is submitted more than five days late, the student will fail the course.

Assignment Completion

Professors usually will not accept assignments that have not been completed according to the instructions given in the syllabus. If a professor informs a student that a submitted assignment is incomplete, the student will be given the opportunity to complete and resubmit the assignment quickly. If this is not possible, the assignment will be regarded as submitted late.

Assignment 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.

MCS-Horizon College Assessment of Student Work

The goal of courses is to help students develop their competency, not earn letter grades. Assignments are the means by which instructors evaluate development of competency by assessing learning outcomes as outlined in the syllabus and each assignment rubric. Once a student's assignment has met all competency requirements, the professor will assign a grade for that assignment. Likewise, a final course grade is not calculated until the end of the course. Students pass a course (with a B- or higher) only after they have demonstrated that they have *met or exceeded all competency requirements* for that course and, therefore, only after they have passed all assignments.

MCS-Horizon CBE Scale		Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point	U of S Equivalency
E	Exceeding expectations	Student demonstrated exceptional achievement of the learning outcomes.	A+	4.0	90-100
		Student demonstrated excellent achievement of the learning outcomes.	A	4.0	85-89
			A-	3.7	80-84
M	Meeting expectations	Student demonstrated good achievement of all learning outcomes.	B+	3.3	77-79
			B	3.0	73-76
			B-	2.7	70-72

If the student does not meet all competency requirements in a course and, therefore, does not pass all the assignments in a course, the course will not be sufficient to fulfill their program requirements at MCS-Horizon. Nevertheless, for transferability purposes, the student will receive a letter grade of C+ or below according to the scale below.

BTM	Beginning to meet expectations	Student was beginning to meet one or more learning outcomes.	C+	2.3	67-69
			C	2.0	63-66

			C-	1.7	60-62
NYM	Not yet meeting expectations	Student made insufficient progress toward meeting learning outcomes.	D+	1.3	57-59
			D	1.0	53-56
			D-	0.7	50-52
			F	0.0	0-49

Academic Integrity

Students learn best when practicing academic integrity. A lack of integrity is displayed in acts such as deception, abuse of confidentiality, cheating, inappropriate collaboration, or plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the words or ideas of another person or an artificial intelligence (AI) tool in such a way as to give others the impression that it is their own words or ideas. In academic writing, there should be no doubt which words or ideas are the student's and which are drawn from other sources or AI. Students are expected to submit their own original work and 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 Student Handbook.

Accessible Learning Services Information

MCS-Horizon aims to provide an accessible learning environment for all our students. If you would benefit from learning accommodations due to temporary or ongoing physical or mental health conditions or learning disabilities, please contact us as soon as possible to schedule a conversation. In all cases we ask that you provide current documentation of the disability or condition you wish to disclose. MCS-Horizon takes appropriate care to ensure confidentiality about any such disclosures. For more information, contact Wendy Holmes, MCS's Director of Academic Success (wendy.holmes@mcs.edu), or Richelle Bekkattla, Horizon's Library Technician and Academic Accommodations Coordinator (library@horizon.edu).

Class Attendance (On Campus or Livestreaming)

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 livestreaming 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 the equivalent of six hours of class (e.g., one day of a module course or two three-hours classes) without academic penalty. Students who are absent for more than this 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.

Livestreaming Etiquette

Students taking the course through livestreaming are required to indicate this during their course registration. While livestreaming 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 livestream, 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

MCS-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 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.

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