

Syllabus for  
**GEN 377—Christian Worldview, Culture, and Apologetic**  
3.0 Credit Hours  
Fall 2021

Coronavirus: All faculty members and students are expected to be face-to-face in the classroom except under conditions provided in the ORU Fall 2020 Coronavirus Response Plan, which can be found at <https://oru.edu/campus-health/>.

**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

An examination of the history, nature, and function of belief structures and their effect on culture, specifically the distinctly Christian worldview based on foundational biblical themes such as creation, humanity in God's image, sin and the fall of man, evil, redemption, and restoration. Compares and contrasts various worldviews using the philosophical categories of metaphysics and epistemology. Surveys shift in worldviews over time and teaches practical Christian apologetics as a response to these changes.

Prerequisites: 2 hrs. Biblical Literacy, 2 hrs. Spiritual Formation, and 3 hrs. Humanities

**II. COURSE GOALS**

The purpose of this course is to enable the student to do the following:

- A. Understand the concept of worldview, the key components of the Christian worldview, and the similarities and differences among the Christian and various other competing worldviews.
- B. Understand the vital factors that inform a worldview and challenge him or her to examine currently held worldviews with the purpose of consciously determining what worldview he or she will articulate and effectively demonstrate in the real world to effect change upon the culture.

**III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THIS COURSE**

Terminal Objectives

As a result of successfully completing this course, the student will be able to do the following:

- A. Define and explain differing definitions of worldview and topics by which one may delineate distinct worldviews.
- B. Summarize the biblical plot that expresses the Christian worldview through divine and human action, emphasizing creation, fall, redemption, and restoration.
- C. Inventory presuppositions and beliefs that inform a worldview.
- D. Analyze worldviews in various philosophical and theological categories, especially those of the world's major religions, atheism, and agnosticism.
- E. Identify and explain key differences between the Christian worldview and competing or

contradictory non-Christian worldviews.

- F. Understand ancient, medieval, modern, and postmodern trends in the Christian Worldview.
- G. Summarize how new forms of Christian expression both shape and are shaped by various other worldviews and cultural factors.
- H. Discuss persuasive and compelling reasons for acceptance of the Christian worldview and engage in practical apologetics in defense of Christianity.

#### IV. TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER LEARNING RESOURCES

##### A. Required Materials

Textbooks:

Lewis, C. S. *Mere Christianity*. New York: Harper Collins, 2001.  
ISBN: 978-0-801-021151-0

Sire, James. *The Universe Next Door*. Intervarsity Press, 2004.  
ISBN: 978-0-830-83850-9

#### V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

##### A. University Policies and Procedures

1. Students and faculty at Oral Roberts University must adhere to all laws addressing the ethical use of others' materials, whether it is in the form of print, electronic, video, multimedia, or computer software. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating involve both lying and stealing and are violations of ORU's Honor Code: "I will not cheat or plagiarize; I will do my own academic work and will not inappropriately collaborate with other students on assignments." Plagiarism is usually defined as copying someone else's ideas, words, or sentence structure and submitting them as one's own. Other forms of academic dishonesty include (but are not limited to) the following:
  - a. Submitting another's work as one's own or colluding with someone else and submitting that work as though it were his or hers;
  - b. Failing to meet group assignment or project requirements while claiming to have done so;
  - c. Failing to cite sources used in a paper;
  - d. Creating results for experiments, observations, interviews, or projects that were not done;
  - e. Receiving or giving unauthorized help on assignments.
  - f. By submitting an assignment in any form, the student gives permission for the assignment to be checked for plagiarism, either by submitting the work for electronic verification or by other means. Penalties for any of the above infractions may result in disciplinary action including failing the assignment or failing the course or expulsion from the University, as determined by department and University guidelines.

2. Final exams cannot be given before their scheduled times. Students need to check the final exam schedule before planning return flights or other events at the end of the semester.
3. Students are to be in compliance with University, school, and departmental policies regarding the Whole Person Assessment requirements. Students should consult the Whole Person Assessment handbooks for requirements regarding general education and the students' majors.
  - a. The penalty for not submitting electronically or for incorrectly submitting an artifact is a zero for that assignment.
  - b. By submitting an assignment, the student gives permission for the assignment to be assessed electronically.

B. Department Policies and Procedures

1. **Tardies**—Tardies are an inconvenience to the other class members and the professor, and they prevent the late student from obtaining maximum value from the class. Therefore, excessive tardies may adversely affect the semester grade. It is to the student's advantage to make sure that the professor is informed immediately following the close of the class that the student was tardy and not absent. It is not the professor's responsibility to stop the class to mark the tardy; the student is the one responsible for conveying that information immediately following that class, not at a later time.
2. **Incompletes**—As stated in the University catalog, incompletes are granted only for "good cause," such as extended hospitalization, long-term illness, or a death in the family. Students must petition for an incomplete using the form available in the English and Modern Languages Department. Very few incompletes are granted.
3. **Late Work**
  - a. The student is responsible for obtaining class assignments and material covered during an absence. All work must be completed as scheduled. Late work may result in a lower grade. An absence is not an excuse for turning in late work or for being unprepared with assignments for the class following the absence. Computer or printer malfunction does not constitute an excuse for late work; students should have their work prepared in time to ensure that they can get it proofread, edited, and printed prior to the instructor's due date. The instructor maintains the right to deduct up to 20% from assignments, projects, and tests missed or completed late due to unexcused absences. These responsibilities assist the student in professional development.
  - b. Each instructor has his or her own late-work policy that is given to students at the beginning of a course. Instructors use their own judgment in accepting late work resulting from all other absences. In cases where these absences can be anticipated, such as for non-University sponsored mission trips, the work should normally be submitted prior to the absence. In unanticipated absences, such as sickness or family crises, the

instructor should be notified as soon as possible and agreement reached on due dates and possible penalties.

4. **Attendance**—Because unavoidable circumstances can prevent perfect attendance, each student is allowed to miss class the number of times per week a class meets. This allowance is for absences such as illness, personal business, and emergency. The student may consider this "sick leave." If a student has absences in excess of this number, the earned grade for the course may be affected. Attendance at each class or laboratory is mandatory. Excessive absences can reduce a student's grade or deny credit for the course. A student who leaves class before dismissal may be marked absent. Extended illnesses are handled on an individual basis and require verification from a doctor.
5. **Administratively Excused Absences**—Only absences that are required by approved University activities are given administrative excuses. Students who must miss class for University-sponsored activities must follow these procedures:
  - a. Inform the professor before the event and make arrangement for the work to be submitted prior to the absence or at a mutually agreed upon deadline.
  - b. Present an administrative excuse form with appropriate signatures when he or she returns to class. Doctors' or nurses' notes, or letters from groups sponsoring mission trips or activities do not qualify a student for an administratively excused absence.
  - c. Obtain information covered during an absence. All work must be completed as scheduled.
  - d. Not commit to class presentation (oral reports, speeches, group presentations, etc.) on a date that the student will be gone. Makeup work is not permitted if the student voluntarily committed to a performance on the date of an administratively excused absence.
6. **Extra Credit**—Students should not expect extra credit to help raise a grade.
7. **Plagiarism** – Each student attending Oral Roberts University is required to do his or her own academic work and must not inappropriately collaborate with other students on assignments. Students must document all sources and ideas that are not their own original information by following correct MLA (Modern Language Association) documentation procedures. Failure to do this produces a plagiarized paper, which results in an F for the paper. Photocopies of sources must be turned in with research papers. Flagrant cheating results in an F for the course.
8. **Whole Person Assessment**
  - a. Compliance - To be listed as "compliant" the student must correctly submit electronically the artifact for assessment. "Noncompliant" means the student has either not submitted or incorrectly submitted the artifact electronically. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that he or she is in compliance. Compliance is verified by checking for the assessment results in the student's ePortfolio. If there is a problem, the student may receive notification by the professor/assessor through the student's ORU

- email address.
- b. Requirements - The WPA requirements for this class are listed in the General Education Whole Person Assessment Handbook.

C. Course Policies and Procedures

1. Evaluation Procedures

- a. ***Worldview Reflection Journal*** 20%

Students are to keep a weekly journal reflecting on what s/he learned throughout the week in the course. Journal entries should be no less than one full page (double-spaced) and the dates for each weekly entry are to be clearly stated at the top of the page. No fewer than 10 total weekly reflections are to be made. **Submit this journal by October 31, 2020.**

- b. ***Midterm*** Exam 25%

The Midterm (**September 24**) covers lecture material for weeks 1-7.

**\*Note:** There will be a 20% penalty assessed for not taking the exam during the assigned time (Academic, Athletic or Medical exceptions excluded) and this is at the Instructor's discretion.

- e. ***"This I Believe" Worldview Paper: WPA*** 30%

This essay will be 8-10 pages. In this assignment, students will articulate their viewpoint in regard to worldview questions discussed in the course. Two unique sources will be required per page, making 16 total sources. The format commonly used in the students' discipline will be the accepted format for this paper. For example, theology students will use Turabian and English students MLA. Please include a cover page, page numbers, and a Works Cited (or bibliography) page. **This assignment is due on November 7, 2020.**

**\* Note:** There will be a 2% reduction per missing source

**\* Note:** There will be a 10% reduction if the student does not deal with the assigned Ethical Dilemma portion of the paper.

- f. ***Final*** Exam 25%

The final will be comprehensive. A review will be given in class the week before.

**\*Note:** There will be a 20% penalty assessed for not taking the exam during the assigned time (Academic, Athletic or Medical exceptions excluded) and this is at the Instructor's discretion.

2. Electronics Policy

- a. **Appropriate Use** - The appropriate in-class use of electronics is highly encouraged. The use of computers, tablets, and other electronic devices

to take notes, conduct course activities, and engage lecture materials are allowed. Otherwise, non-course related uses of electronics are strictly prohibited. Exceptions may only be acquired with instructor approval. Examples of prohibited uses include completing other course work, surfing the web, texting, instant messaging, listening to music, using headphones, playing games, watching videos etc.

- b. Inappropriate electronics use during class will result in the student being asked to leave class or whichever disciplinary action is deemed appropriate by the instructor.

#### Whole Person Assessment Requirements

1. **“This I Believe” Paper**
2. Other Policies and/or Procedures
  - a. Examinations must be taken on the date and time assigned. It is the student’s responsibility to contact the professor concerning missed work or examinations due to absences and to do so promptly if possible. Late work or missed examinations, if excused, normally must be made up within one week.
  - b. Submitting someone else’s work as one’s own is the worst type of plagiarism and will result in a failing grade for the assignment. Failure to acknowledge where paraphrased or summarized information came from is a second type of plagiarism. Using a source for information and acknowledging that source incorrectly is a third type of plagiarism. Incorrectly paraphrasing an author (even though it was footnoted) is the most common type of plagiarism. For example, many students simply change a word here or there from a sentence in the textbook or change the word order of a statement by an author. This is not paraphrasing; it is plagiarism and may result in an F for the assignment. A true paraphrase is done by using your own words and sentence structure.
  - c. No more than two unexcused absences are allowed per semester. Additional unexcused absences may result in reduction of grade at the instructor’s discretion. If a student is late to class three times, it shall count as one absence. If a student is more than five minutes late for class, he or she may be counted absent for the day. Students leaving class early without permission may be counted absent.

#### VI. COURSE CALENDAR