



Missio Seminary
Advanced Cultural Studies
Introduction to Philosophy and Christian Worldview
ACS 204 / 3 Credits / Fall 2019

Missio Seminary exists to produce missional Christian leaders – men and women who incarnate the story of Jesus with humility and authenticity and who communicate the story with fidelity to Scripture, appreciation of the Christian tradition, and sensitivity to the needs and aspirations of postmodern culture.

Class Dates: Thursday afternoons, August 29 through December 12, 2019

Class Time: 1:30 pm – 4:30 pm

Classroom: Room 28 at Missio Seminary (Hatfield, PA)
200 N. Main Street, Hatfield, PA 19440
Main Office: 1.800.235.4021

Instructor: Dr. Bob Hepburn
Phone: 267.252.1230
Email: bob.hepburn@gmail.com / The class e-Campus site: <http://ecampus.missio.edu/>

Office Hours: As requested

Course Description: A hybrid course that seeks to 1) explore and examine some of the fundamental questions raised in philosophy (How does one know? What is reality? What is goodness?), considering their historical development in the Western (and hopefully, Eastern) tradition, and 2) develop a more fully-orbed Christian worldview, enabling us to respond to (and pursue!) the philosophical quest from a Christian perspective. This course is designed to help us develop our thinking as Christians to be able to better respond apologetically to a world that is increasingly post-Christian.

Personal Note from the Professor: As this is an ESL course, we want it to be highly interactive – which means we will all (hopefully) be doing a lot of talking. Dialoguing. Both you and I. We want to purposefully steer away from settling into lecture mode and get everybody in on the conversation (which is one of those “American” ways of doing things you may have heard about). I am aware that this is not the usual Korean way in the classroom (but that’s changing), but let’s work together to make language interactivity the norm – not the exception.

Course Goals: This course is designed to help students acquire a basic set of facts regarding the subject of philosophy (often vilified in Christian circles) and a better understanding of what a Christian worldview is and how that worldview matches up against other competing worldviews. The other main goal of the course is to become more familiar with – and conversant in – English (speaking, reading, writing and thinking).

Course Objectives: Upon successful completion of the course, students will be able to:

- understand why and how divine revelation and sound theology ultimately have priority over philosophy
- identify and describe the major philosophers, philosophical issues and problems (Western & Eastern)

- understand, access, assess and address his or her own world view / presuppositional set / faith system, as well as those of others, whether their world views are Christian, Non-Christian, Pre-Christian, Sub-Christian, Hyper-Christian, Extra-Christian, Dualistic, Syncretistic, Pseudo-Christian, Post-Christian or Anti-Christian
- identify the influences that philosophies have on everyday life (self and society)
- respond to and pursue the philosophical quest from a Christian perspective
- cultivate, integrate and incarnate the mind of Christ, fostering thinking that is Christocentric, cross-wise (cruciform), careful, critical, contingent, creative, clear, cogent, correlative, culture-contextual, constructive, courageous, counterpoised and compassionate

Required Textbook (get the book and go through it *before* the first class):

Sire, James W. *Discipleship of the Mind*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1990.
<http://www.amazon.com/Discipleship-Mind-James-W-Sire/dp/0877849854>

Suggested Supplemental Textbook:

Hepburn, Robert C. *TGTS 2.0: The Gospel / The Street: What Does the Gospel of Christ Look Like in Street Contexts?* Philadelphia, PA: TGTS 2.0 / YUBM Ministries, 2017.
<https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/171720791X>.

Course topics and session in which the topics will be covered:

Aug 29	Meet as a group in Room 28 and then each join Zoom Meeting via https://zoom.us/j/891929126 Introductions / Syllabus / Course Structure and Schedule / Why the Apologetic Emphasis?
Sep 5	Defining Philosophy: Good or Bad? Why Do Christians Steer Clear of It?
Sep 12	Epistemology: How Is It that We Know?
Sep 19	Theological Foundations Undergirding the Philosophical Quest: Creation Order (3 Phases)
Sep 26	Theological Foundations Undergirding the Philosophical Quest: Exegeting John 1:1-4, 14
Oct 3	Theological Foundations Undergirding the Philosophical Quest: Viewing Reality's Totality
Oct 10	Defining a Worldview / Exploring 6 Worldviews and Their Narrativial Tie-ins
Oct 17	Ultimate Philosophical Questions a Worldview Needs to Answer
Oct 24	Pre-Socratic Philosophers and Philosophies / Athenian Philosophers and Philosophies
Oct 31	1 st C. Christianity amidst Pagan Religions and Philosophies / Clement, Augustine & Aquinas
Nov 7	The Renaissance / The Reformation / The Enlightenment / New World Exploration
Nov 14	18 th & 19 th Century Western Philosophers (and their "-phies")
Nov 21	Eastern Philosophical Traditions in American Popular Culture
Nov 28	Thanksgiving Break (no classes this week)
Dec 5	20 th & 21 st Century Western Philosophers (and their "-phies"): Postmodern, Post-Truth World
Dec 12	<i>The Truman Show</i> Discussion

Devotional Sharing: Bear in mind the text the topic title listed as you prepare. Think of the best way to communicate the truth of the text; be creative; involve the class as much as possible (10-15 minutes maximum).

The topics and texts below all deal with the development of our mind as Christians.

Topic Title	Text	Date	Name
1 st Class Meeting (Zoom)		Aug 29	

Loving God with all your mind	Mark 12:30	_____	_____
The beginning of wisdom	Proverbs 9:10	_____	_____
The devolution of the mind	Romans 1:18-32	_____	_____
The importance of truth	2 Corinthians 4:1-6	_____	_____
The repentant mind	Matthew 21:28-32	_____	_____
Two contrasting mindsets	Romans 8:5-8	_____	_____
The mind of Christ	Philippians 2:5-11	_____	_____
The renewing of the mind	Romans 12:2	_____	_____
The cleansed conscience	Hebrews 9:14	_____	_____
Balanced thinking	Romans 12:3	_____	_____
The mind prepared for action	1 Peter 1:13	_____	_____
Think on these things	Philippians 4:8-9	_____	_____
Spiritual warfare & the mind	2 Corinthians 10:3-5	_____	_____
Come, let us reason	Isaiah 1:18	_____	_____

Available Dates: Sep 5, 12, 19, 26; Oct 3, 10, 17, 24, 31; Nov 7, 14, 28; Dec 5

Assignments and methods of evaluation:

Aug 29	Introductions / Course Structure and Schedule / Introductory Material Read / underline / highlight chapters 1-2 of <i>Discipleship of the Mind</i>
Sep 5	Using the chapter's headlines, do an outline of chapters 1-2 of <i>Discipleship of the Mind</i>
Sep 12	Submit Homework #1 (chapters 1-2) for <i>Discipleship of the Mind</i>
Sep 19	Read / underline / highlight chapters 3-4 of <i>Discipleship of the Mind</i>
Sep 26	Using the chapter's headlines, do an outline of chapters 3-4 of <i>Discipleship of the Mind</i>
Oct 3	Submit Homework #2 (chapters 3-4) for <i>Discipleship of the Mind</i>
Oct 10	Read / underline / highlight chapters 5-6 of <i>Discipleship of the Mind</i>
Oct 17	Using the chapter's headlines, do an outline of chapters 5-6 of <i>Discipleship of the Mind</i>
Oct 24	Submit Homework #3 (chapters 5-6) for <i>Discipleship of the Mind</i>
Oct 31	Read / underline / highlight chapters 7-8 of <i>Discipleship of the Mind</i>
Nov 7	Using the chapter's headlines, do an outline of chapters 7-8 of <i>Discipleship of the Mind</i>
Nov 14	Submit Homework #4 (chapters 7-8) for <i>Discipleship of the Mind</i>
Nov 21	Read / underline / highlight chapters 9-10 and Appendix of <i>Discipleship of the Mind</i>
Nov 28	Thanksgiving Break (no class this week) – perhaps lay out your <i>Truman Show</i> paper!
Dec 5	Using the chapter's headlines, do an outline of chapters 9-10 and Appendix of <i>Discipleship of the Mind</i>
Dec 12	Submit Homework #5 (chapters 9-10 and Appendix) for <i>Discipleship of the Mind</i> and your <i>Truman Show</i> paper

1. Reading, Overviews & Homework Assignments. Read each assignment in *Discipleship of the Mind*. (make notes, underline or highlight as you go along). Develop a creative brief outline for each one of the 5 assigned readings. The questions on each homework assignment are arranged sequentially to the assigned chapters and geared to assess your comprehension. **Answers must be handwritten (not typed).**

2. Devotional Sharing. At some point during the semester each student is asked to lead a 10 to 15-minute devotional (usually at the beginning of the class period). These devotions are to focus on the topic of loving God with our minds, using a text from the list below. Study the text and think of the best way to communicate the truth of the passage. Be creative and involve the class as much as possible. Please prepare a written version to be turned in as well.

3. Final Paper. A typed paper (minimum 4-5 pages of content, 12 pt. font) on the film, *The Truman Show*. Use the worksheet handed out in class for ideas to prompt your thinking and writing.

Grading System: Grading for the will be based on the following:

Outlines of Readings (5)	10 %	2 pts.: Accuracy, Thoroughness
Homework Assignments (5)	50 %	10 pts.: Accuracy, Thoroughness, Comprehension, Creativity
Devotional Presentation	15 %	10% for the Oral Presentation / 5% for the PPT or Written Paper
Final Paper (<i>The Truman Show</i>)	15 %	Accuracy, Clarity, Profundity, Content, Language Mechanics
Class Participation	10 %	E.P.I.C.: Engaged, Prepared, Inquisitive, Contributive

Academic Policies and Student Responsibility: Please note that students are fully responsible to know and follow all seminary rules, regulations, and deadlines published in the catalog and student handbook, and all requirements concerning their degree programs.

Academic and General Integrity: As followers of Jesus Christ, we are called to integrity and Christ-likeness in all areas of life. What this means in the academic realm is that all assignments are to reflect your own work. Those found guilty of cheating or plagiarism will receive a grade of zero on the assignment and will follow the process outlined in the current handbook.

To plagiarize is “To steal or purloin and pass off as one’s own (ideas, writings, etc., of another)” (*Webster’s New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1953). Plagiarism is theft. Not putting the definition above within quotation marks, not crediting Webster’s (via the text citation), or changing a word (e.g., “claim” for “pass off”) and presenting the definition as your own would all be plagiarism. In other words, plagiarism is using someone else’s material without giving that person credit. Other forms of plagiarism include mixing unmarked quotations with your own words and putting a single reference at the end of the paragraph, buying a paper from a term paper service (from any source, including one of those online), turning in a paper written by a student who already took the course, or having someone else write your paper. If in doubt, ask your professor or the library staff before you turn it in.

Completion of Course Work: All course work is to be completed by the last day of classes for the semester. Extensions to this time limit will be made only by the academic administration committee. The individual faculty member does not have the authority to grant any extensions of time beyond the last class of the semester. Requests for extensions must be made in writing to the committee at least one week prior to the last day of classes. Forms for this purpose are available in the academic office. All requests should specify the reasons for the extension and the length of the extension desired. Such requests are not automatically granted.

Grading System: To remain in good academic standing, a student must maintain a 2.00 grade point average. Following is the seminary’s grading system:

MISSIO SEMINARY GRADING SYSTEM			
A	4.00	93.0 -100	Superior
A-	3.67	90.0 – 92.9	
B+	3.33	87.0 – 89.9	
B	3.00	83.0 – 86.9	Good
B-	2.67	80.0 – 82.9	
C+	2.33	77.0 – 79.9	
C	2.00	73.0 – 76.9	Fair
C-	1.70	70.0 – 72.9	
D+	1.30	67.0 – 69.9	Poor
D	1.00	63.0 – 66.9	
D-	.70	60.0 – 62.9	
F	0.00	00. - 59.9	Failing

A word on the use of electronic devices in class: I have no problem with them whatsoever **unless** they are being used for non-class related activities (surfing the Web, checking email, monitoring social media, shopping, doing assignments for other classes [or *for this one!*], etc.). Research indicates we both shortchange and debilitate the learning process when we try to do too many things at the same time. Jesus put it this way: you cannot serve two masters. So, if you wish to use your technological device for purposes other than those that are class-related, then please have the courtesy to leave the room, because you are not really here with us.

Here is what Henry David Thoreau told us: All our inventions are but improved means to an unimproved end. Here is what Goethe told us: One should, each day, try to hear a little song, read a good poem, see a fine picture, and, if it is possible, speak a few reasonable words. And here is what Socrates told us: The unexamined life is not worth living. And here is what the prophet Micah told us: What does the Lord require of thee but to do justly, and to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God? And I can tell you – if I had the time (although you all know it well enough) – what Confucius, Isaiah, Jesus, Mohammed, the Buddha, Spinoza and Shakespeare told us. It is all the same: There is no escaping from ourselves. The human dilemma is as it has always been, and we solve nothing fundamental by cloaking ourselves in technological glory.

Even the humblest cartoon character knows this, and I shall close by quoting the wise old possum named Pogo, created by the cartoonist, Walt Kelley. I commend his words to all the technological utopians and messiahs present. We have met the enemy, Pogo said, and he is us.

Neil Postman [1931-2003], “Informing Ourselves to Death” – Oct 11, 1990 speech given at a German Informatics Society meeting, Stuttgart, Germany. <http://www.mat.upm.es/~jcm/postman-informing.html>

After the term is over the Seminary may ask you to fill out an online evaluation for this course. Thank you in advance for doing so.

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