Course: PHIL496 Senior Seminar: Worldviews 3 units
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Office Hours: M and W, 2:00-4:00 PM

Mission Statements:

**University Mission Statement:** Azusa Pacific University is an evangelical Christian community of disciples and scholars who seek to advance the work of God in the world through academic excellence in liberal arts and professional programs of higher education that encourage students to develop a Christian perspective of truth and life.

**Philosophy Mission Statement:** The philosophy program exists to help undergraduate students become complete people who reason and think reflectively about responses to the world, liberated from inadequate concepts and actions. In specific, the program equips its majors to become effective and faithful philosophers, well prepared for further philosophical education as well as for a range of professional careers, by exposing them to the history and methods of philosophy, inspiring them to see philosophy as a tool for the discipleship of the mind, motivating them to explore philosophy further, and training them in advanced philosophical topics and analytical, reflective, and expressive skills.

Course Description: This senior level class prepares the student to understand and express a Christian perspective in the contemporary world. *Meets general studies requirement of a Senior Seminar*

We act according to our values and the ideas that we hold about our worlds. Examining the common systems of ideas, feelings, and attitudes about reality in contemporary culture leads to a clearer understanding of the events around us. This clearer understanding will enable Christians to respond more creatively to their culture.
Relationship to General Studies: As a General Studies course, this is a liberal arts course meaning that the course content encourages each student’s development as a person of wide and clear vision as well as the master of a body of information. “Liberal” means freeing from prejudice and ignorance as preparation for whole, self-reliant, purposeful living. This course emphasizes a Christian World View and is both integrative and intercultural. The professor will make specific, deliberate references to the way subject matter is informed by a Christian world view, explain the relationship between the specific subject and other academic disciplines, and draw comparisons, suggest parallels, cite examples that increase awareness and appreciation of different cultures.

Purposes of the Senior Seminar, “Faith and Life,” requirement:
1. apply Christian precepts to practices in contemporary society
2. integrate general studies courses and courses from the major
3. help construct a bridge between theory and practice
4. assist in the transition from the academic realm to general society

Student Learning Outcomes:
1. identify the major concepts about the physical world, human existence, and Ultimate Reality that are expressed in contemporary culture in the U.S.
2. compare basic Christian convictions to the major concepts about the physical world, human existence, and Ultimate Reality.
3. evaluate the adequacy of the major concepts expressed in a contemporary cultural phenomenon.

The following table identifies assignments that will be used to assess student mastery of these learning outcomes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Learning Outcome</th>
<th>IDEA Objective</th>
<th>Assignments Used to Assess</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify the major concepts about the physical world, human existence, and Ultimate Reality that are expressed in contemporary culture in the U.S.</td>
<td>Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, or theories.</td>
<td>Class activities with specific cultural events, assigned readings, Tests 1 and 2, components 3 and 4 of the seminar paper, and responses to seminar papers.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Compare basic Christian convictions to the major concepts about the physical world, human existence, and Ultimate Reality.</td>
<td>Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.</td>
<td>Class discussions of basic concepts, evaluation section of the final seminar paper, and responses to seminar papers.</td>
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<td>Evaluate the adequacy of the major concepts</td>
<td>Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas,</td>
<td>Seminar paper</td>
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expressed in a contemporary cultural phenomenon.

Course Outline:

I. What are worldviews? Sept. 9-14
II. Worldview assumptions about Non-ultimate Reality Sept. 16-28
III. Worldview assumptions about Human Existence Sept. 30-Oct. 19
   Exam I Oct. 9
IV. Worldview assumptions about Salvation Oct. 21- Nov. 2
V. Worldview assumptions about Ultimate Reality Nov. 4-30
   Exam II Nov. 23
VI. Paper Presentations and Defenses Dec. 2-14

Final Class Period: Mon., Dec. 14, 7:30-9:30 AM

Requirements:
1. Complete assigned readings for class discussion(see pp. 6 ff).
2. Attend class and participate in discussions.
3. Take two examinations worth 100 pts. each and given on Oct. 9 and Nov. 23.
4. Write an abstract of your paper summarizing the thesis of our paper and how you demonstrate that thesis. The abstract is worth 25 pts.
5. Write a seminar paper identifying and evaluating the worldview expressed in a cultural event. The paper will be worth a total of 225 pts.
6. Present and defend the seminar paper for 25 pts.
7. Read and discuss all student papers in class.
8. Write a response to each student’s seminar paper worth a total of 100 pts. A copy of each response will be given to the instructor and the author of each paper.
9. Participate in lectures outside of class, other activities, or additional readings as assigned.

Policies:
1. Attendance:
   A. When an unavoidable absence occurs, the instructor must be notified before the absence. Any work that will be missed must be turned in before the absence if possible. Failure to notify the instructor prior to the absence will mean the absence was unexcused even in the case of University activities. No work, including exams, may be made up in the case of an unexcused absence.
   B. Students are responsible for any announcements, assignments, or activities during an absence.
   C. Because this course involves a great deal of student participation, more than 3 unexcused absences indicates that the student is not benefiting fully from, nor contributing to, the course. The fourth unexcused absence requires making an appointment with the instructor prior to the next class session. Failure to meet with the instructor may result in a deduction of 25 pts. from the student's total points.
D. Arriving late or leaving early will count as 1/2 an absence.

2. Azusa Pacific University Academic Integrity Policy which is followed in this course:
The mission of Azusa Pacific University includes cultivating in each student not only the academic skills that are required for a university degree, but also the characteristics of academic integrity that are integral to a sound Christian education. It is therefore part of the mission of the university to nurture in each student a sense of moral responsibility consistent with the biblical teachings of honesty and accountability. Furthermore, a breach of academic integrity is viewed not merely as a private matter between the student and an instructor, but rather as an act that is fundamentally inconsistent with the purpose and mission of the entire university. A complete copy of the Academic Integrity Policy is available in the Office of Student Life, the Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Programs, and online.

3. Students with disabilities:
Any student in this course who has a disability that might prevent him/her from fully demonstrating his/her abilities should meet with an advisor in the Learning Enrichment Center as soon as possible to initiate disability verification and discuss accommodations that may be necessary to ensure one’s full participation in the successful completion of course requirements.

4. Seminar Paper:
A. Nature of the assignment is a research paper presented in the proper format.
   1. The paper will be composed of:
      a. a description of a cultural event or phenomenon
      b. an identification and analysis of the assumptions present in the event or phenomenon and defense of that identification and analysis
      c. a comprehensive statement of the worldview present in the cultural event
      d. an evaluation of the adequacy of the worldview expressed by that event or phenomenon
   2. The audience for the paper is readers of journals about popular culture.
   3. The length of the paper will be between 5,000 to 7,500 words or approximately 20 to 25 pp.
   4. The paper will be evaluated in terms of the accuracy of the description, the insight of the analysis and evaluation, and the support for the analysis and evaluation.
   5. Expectations for all Senior Seminar papers:
      a. Cogent analysis of a complex topic while defending a clear thesis. This includes:
         1. an obvious thesis on a debatable position.
         2. convincing and well-supported arguments in defense of the thesis.
         3. full and fair consideration of opposing positions.
         4. wise use of primary and secondary source material.
5. good organization with an effective introduction, clear divisions, smooth transitions, and a strong conclusion.
6. stylistic finesse.
7. correct use of a standard citation form.
8. mastery of standard grammar.

b. Contains a mature expression of a Christian world view. This may be done in a variety of ways such as:
   1. explaining how the issue is important to the Christian faith.
   2. utilizing theological doctrines, church traditions, biblical materials, or Christian experience.
   3. identifying a variety of Christian positions.
   4. studying a particular Christian thinker, tradition, or school of thought.
   5. attempting to define a Christian world view.
   6. comparing a Christian position with an alternative position.
   7. examining the experience and/or behavior of Christians, Christian tradition, or Christian practice.

c. Includes an integrative and cross-disciplinary approach. This may be demonstrated in a number of ways such as:
   1. using theories, concepts, and/or arguments from multiple disciplines.
   2. demonstrating how different disciplines could benefit from the analysis in the paper.
   3. discussing the various contexts in which an issue is debated.
   4. illustrating the social, political, religious, or economic implications of the topic.

B. The schedule of assignments in relation to the paper is:
   1. list of possible topics for paper. **Due Sept. 14** (10 pts).
   2. paper identifying the cultural event that will be researched, listing the materials to be examined, identifying the insight or central point of cultural event, a thesis statement about the adequacy of the world view being expressed, and the name of second reader for your paper. **Due Sept. 21** (15 pts).
   3. paper identifying the assumptions about non-ultimate reality manifested in your cultural event and ideas about the evaluation of those assumptions. **Due Sept. 28** (25 pts).
   4. paper identifying the assumptions about human existence and justifying your identification of those assumptions. **Due Oct. 19** (25 pts).
5. submit an abstract of your paper that would be suitable for submission to a conference and identify the conference to which you might submit your abstract. An abstract should be a ½ to one page summary giving information about the purpose, argument, and conclusions of your paper. **Due Nov. 30** (25 pts). Evaluated according to clarity, unity, and accuracy in communicating the major points of your paper.

6. submit a copy of the completed paper (50 pts) to the professor and each member of the class by email or paper copy **Dec. 4** at the start of class. Submission after that time will lose 10 pts. for that day and an additional 10 pts. for each 24 hour period after that.

7. presentations (25 pts) and discussion. **Dec. 4-14.**

8. final paper **Due by Dec. 18 at 3:00 PM** (100 pts). Reports submitted after that time will be penalized 10 points per 24 hour period.

5. Presentation and defense of your paper to the class and professor
   A. the presentation and defense will involve a 10-15 min. presentation. That presentation should give the audience a crucial experience of your cultural event and a summary of your evaluation of the worldview present in that event. The presentation should assume that the paper has been read by the class.
   B. the date for the defense will be assigned in class.
   C. the value of the defense is 25 pts. Evaluated according to conciseness and interest of your presentation and the accuracy of your responses to discussion.

6. A written response to each seminar paper.
   A. the response will include
      1. at least one comment on how the author did/did not justify the presence of the worldview the author claimed was present.
      2. at least one comment offering additional evaluation of the worldview that was present.
   B. the response may be emailed, typewritten or handwritten.
   C. a copy will be given to the author of each paper and to the professor on the day the paper is presented. **Late responses will not be accepted.**
   D. the total value of all responses is 100 pts.
   E. the individual’s score for these responses will be determined by the percentage of responses accepted.

Reading Assignments may be accessed through [http://groups.apu.edu/theophil](http://groups.apu.edu/theophil) (**R** means on reserve in the Theological Library).

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<th>Assignment</th>
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**Optional:** Charles Hartshorne and William Reese, *Philosophers Speak of God* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1953), 15-25(R) for an attempt to classify different concepts of God in order to argue that one type of concept is the most adequate.