



WBUonline
School of Christian Studies

UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused and distinctively Christian environment for professional success and service to God and humankind.

COURSE NUMBER & NAME:

THST/PHIL 4331 Christian Faith in a Post-Christian World

TERM:

Fall 2 2020 October 9-Dec 19, 2020

INSTRUCTOR:

Dr. J. M. Givens Jr.

Professor of Theological Studies, Director of Online Christian Studies Programs

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Office phone: 806.291.1166 (assistant 806.291.1160)

WBU Email: jgivens@wbu.edu

Mobile phone: 806.292.3957 (use during pandemic when working from home)

OFFICE HOURS, BUILDING & LOCATION:

Flores Bible Building office suite

Posted in Blackboard under instructor information

COURSE MEETING TIME & LOCATION:

Asynchronous interaction with specific deadlines managed through [Blackboard](#)

CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

Introduction to contemporary intellectual challenges and concerns, such as the existence of God, the relation of faith and science, the problem of evil and suffering, miracles and the historicity of the resurrection of Jesus, and religious pluralism; consideration of ways Christians can responsibly engage such issues in a biblically and theologically responsible manner.

PREREQUISITE:

RLGN 1301 or RLGN 1303, and RLGN 1302 or RLGN 1304.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND RESOURCE MATERIAL:

Title	Editor/Author	Publisher	Year	ISBN
<i>Confronting Christianity: 12 Hard Questions for the World's Largest Religion</i>	Rebecca McLaughlin	Crossway	2019	9781433564239
<i>Narrative Apologetics: Sharing the Relevance, Joy, and Wonder of the Christian Faith</i>	Alister E. McGrath	Baker	2019	9780801075773
Bible	Any modern translation recognized by mainstream Christianity			

These textbooks are Automatic eBooks already in the classroom – click on the menu link for information. Should you wish to purchase a print copy remember to opt out by the date listed in Blackboard.

- **INTERNET EQUIPPED COMPUTER**

1. Must conform to [minimum recommended settings](#) identified by WBUonline
2. Should use compatible browser and have [correct settings](#) as recommended by Blackboard
3. Must utilize WBU [student email account](#) for official university communications

- **WBU BLACKBOARD COURSE MANAGEMENT SOFTWARE**

1. All assignments and other class issues will be available through [Blackboard](#).
2. WBUonline technical support can assist you with log in issues, such as username and password.
3. Contact to technical support is available on the login page of Blackboard. Support is 24/7 support by phone and available also by chat or creating a case.

- **WBU MABEE LEARNING RESOURCES CENTER**

1. Use the [LRC website](#) to search for book (sent via priority mail), articles, online articles and e-books, and other resources.
2. The website also has tutorials for using their services.
3. [Email](#) the Distance Learning Librarian with questions on LRC and assistance identifying/securing resources for papers.

OPTIONAL MATERIALS

Suggested Title for Further Study	Editor/Author	Publisher	Year	ISBN
<i>Cultural Apologetics: Renewing the Christian Voice, Conscience, and Imagination in a Disenchanted World</i>	Paul M. Gould	Zondervan	2019	9780310530497
<i>The End of Apologetics: Christian Witness in a Postmodern Context</i>	Myron Bradley Penner	Baker Academic	2013	9780801035982
<i>Exiles: Living Missionally in a Post-Christian Culture</i>	Michael Frost	Baker	2006	9781921202841
<i>Exiles on Mission: How Christians Can Thrive in a Post-Christian World</i>	Paul S. Williams	Brazos	2020	9781587434358

<i>The Gospel Comes with a House Key: Practicing Radically Ordinary Hospitality in Our Post-Christian World</i>	Rosaria Butterfield	Crossway	2018	9781433557866
<i>Meet Generation Z: Understanding and Reaching the New Post-Christian World</i>	James Emery White	Baker	2017	9780801017018
<i>Mere Apologetics: How to Help Seekers & Skeptics Find Faith</i>	Alister E. McGrath	Baker	2012	9780801014161
<i>A Missional Orthodoxy: Theology and Ministry in a Post-Christian Context</i>	Gary Tyra	IVP Academic	2013	9780830828210
<i>Pilgrims and Priests: Christian Mission in a Post-Christian Society</i>	Stefan Paas	SCM Press	2019	9780334058779
<i>Rebirth of the Church: Applying Paul's Vision for Ministry in Our Post-Christian World</i>	Eddie Gibbs	Baker Academic	2013	9780801039584
<i>Strangers and Pilgrims Once More: Being Disciples of Jesus in a Post-Christendom World</i>	Addison Hodges Hart	Eerdmans	2014	9780802869746
<i>When Anything Goes: Being Christian in a Post-Christian World</i>	Leslie Williams	Abingdon	2016	9781501800634
<i>Winsome Persuasion: Christian Influence in a Post-Christian World</i>	Tim Muehlhoff and Richard Langer	IVP Academic	2017	9780830851775

Blackboard Mobile App

Bb Student by Blackboard—Apple App Store or Google Play

COURSE OUTCOMES AND COMPETENCIES:

Students will:

1. Identify contemporary intellectual challenges to Christianity.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of cultural apologetics.
3. Reason, weigh evidence, present and critique arguments for and against the Christian faith.

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS:

- Attendance for online courses is defined fully in the [university catalog](#).
- Students are expected to participate in all required instructional activities in their courses.
- Student “attendance” in an online course is defined as active participation in the course as described in the course syllabus (completing weekly assignments).
- Students aware of necessary absences must inform the professor with as much advance notice as possible in order to make appropriate arrangements.
- Any student absent 25 percent or more of the online course, i.e., non-participatory during 2 or more weeks of an 8 week term, may receive an F for that course.
- Any student who has not actively participated in an online class prior to the census date for any given session is considered a “no-show” and will be administratively withdrawn from the class without record. To be counted as actively participating, it is not sufficient to log in and view the course. The student must be submitting work as described in the course syllabus.

- A student with excessive non-participation may also have a Predict Report filed with student's WBU email and appropriate administrative personnel.

STATEMENT ON PLAGIARISM & ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Wayland Baptist University observes a zero tolerance policy regarding academic dishonesty. Per university policy as described in the academic catalog, all cases of academic dishonesty will be reported and second offenses will result in suspension from the university.

DISABILITY STATEMENT:

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university. The Coordinator of Counseling Services serves as the coordinator of students with a disability and should be contacted concerning accommodation requests at (806) 291-3765. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS and GRADING CRITERIA:

1. *Blackboard Scavenger Hunt.* The hunt is designed to help familiarize you with the essential features of Blackboard. **Complete by Wednesday of Week 1 (3rd day of class). 1 point** will be deducted each day for **late submissions**.
2. *Weekly Discussion.* Student interaction through class discussion enhances learning and understanding. Discussion will be over assigned readings. Initial posts should be substantive, informative, and should enhance the learning experience for the student and colleagues, drawing on all assigned readings. Interaction is expected, so subsequent responses to student posts or to instructor inquiries, and questions to others about their posts to gain clarity or deeper understanding will be part of the evaluation. See weekly grading rubric and the Course Info section of the course in Blackboard for detailed description of expectations.
3. *Case Study Participation.* Students will discuss theoretical situations and the appropriate Christian witness in each situation. The intent of these studies is to allow students opportunities to think through critical yet hospitable engagement of post-Christian questions and challenges to Christian faith and to evaluate and encourage one another's responses. See weekly grading rubric and the Course Info section of the course in Blackboard for detailed description of expectations.
4. *Debate Reviews.* Students will watch four or more video debates on topics related to Christian Faith in a Post-Christian World. The debates will be normally be between a Christian and non-Christian. For **each** debate, students will write a 2-3 page reflection on what the student learned about that debate's topic (both from a Christian and non-Christian perspective), and critically evaluate the positive and negative elements as to the Christian witness demonstrated in the debate. The intent of the assignment is to better understand intellectual challenges to Christian faith, and to demonstrate the ability to

critique arguments for and against the Christian faith. Detailed instructions for the assignment will be available in the Course Info section of the course in Blackboard.

5. *Reflective Paper*. Students will write a 5-8 page reflection on the topic of Christian Faith in a Post-Christian World read in place of a final examination. The goal of the assignment is to help students reflect on lessons learned through the session. Detailed instructions for the assignment will be available in the Course Info section of the course in Blackboard.

GRADING CRITERIA

1. Scavenger Hunt.....	5%
2. Weekly Discussion	20%
3. Case Studies	20%
4. Debate Reviews	30%
5. Reflective Paper	25%

Grade Appeal Statement: Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using the student grade appeal process described in the Academic Catalog. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must be submitted through the Vice President of Academic Affairs/Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised, or lowered to a more proper evaluation.

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE

Week 1 – Introduction Narrative Apologetics

- McGrath ch 1

Week 2 – Theological Foundations of Narrative Apologetics

- McGrath ch 2
- (Graduate student presentation and) case study from McLaughlin

Week 3 – Practical Application of Narrative Apologetics

- McGrath ch 3
- (Graduate student presentation and) case study from McLaughlin

Week 4 – Biblical Narratives: Opening Windows of Perception

- McGrath ch 4
- (Graduate student presentation and) case study from McLaughlin

Week 5 – Strategies and Criteria for Narrative Apologetics

- McGrath, ch 5

- (Graduate student presentation and) case study from McLaughlin

Week 6 – The Christian Story and the Meaning of Life

- McGrath ch 6
- (Graduate student presentation and) case study from McLaughlin

Week 7 – Handing Over: Developing Narrative Approaches

- McGrath ch 7
- (Graduate student presentation and) case study from McLaughlin

Week 8 – Concluding Thoughts

- Debate Reviews due
- Reflective Paper due

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

I'm a Chap who always liked to know the worst and then put the best face I can on it. So I won't deny any of what you said. But there's one thing more to be said, even so. Suppose we have only dreamed, or made up, all those things – trees and grass and sun and moon and stars and Aslan himself. Suppose we have. Then all I can say is that, in that case, the made-up things seem a good deal more important than the real ones. Suppose this black pit of a kingdom of yours is the only world. Well, it strikes me as a pretty poor one. And that's a funny thing, when you come to think of it. We're just babies making up a game, if you're right. But four babies playing a game can make a play-world which licks your real world hollow. That's why I'm going to stand by the play-world. I'm on Aslan's side even if there isn't any Aslan to lead it. I'm going to live as like a Narnian as I can even if there isn't any Narnia. So, thanking you kindly for our supper, . . . we're leaving your court at once and setting out in the dark to spend our lives looking for the Overland. Not that our lives will be very long, I should think; but that's a small loss if the world's as dull a place as you say.

– Puddleglum to the Queen of Underland, *The Silver Chair* by C.S. Lewis

I believe in Christianity as I believe that the Sun has risen, not only because I see it but because by it, I see everything else.

– C.S. Lewis, "Is Theology Poetry?" in *The Weight of Glory*