

REL 1005:

Introduction to Christianity

High Point University

Fall 2015

Four Credits

Tues/Thurs

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Office Hours: Make appointment via starfish. I am available:

Tuesday and Thursday 11:15-1:15 Slane;

Wednesday 3:30-4; Other times by appointment

Course Description

Designed for beginners, this course introduces students to the Christian religion through a study of its texts, history, and central doctrines. Students should come to appreciate both the beliefs and practices of the Christian churches as well as cultivate an understanding for what theology is and how it develops. Major topics may include (but are not limited to) the notions of canon, trinity, incarnation, Christology, soteriology, creed, prayer, authority and church.

Required Texts

- Bernhard W. Anderson, *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1988).
- Herbert McCabe, *The New Creation* (New York, NY: Continuum, 2010).
- Rowan Williams, *Tokens of Trust: An Introduction to Christian Belief* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007).
- *The Harper Collins Study Bible*. (Harper San Francisco, 2006).

Grade distribution			
<i>10% Professional Participation</i>	<i>30% Quizzes and Journals</i>	<i>30% Prompts</i>	<i>30% Exams</i>
See "Course Policies" Below	Once a week you will be given closed-book, closed-note short-answer quiz to assess basic completion of the assigned materials for that class. The lowest quiz score will be dropped.	Introductory Prompt: In lieu of a quiz, students will write a 500 word response to the readings assigned for 8/27. The paper is due at the beginning of class 9/1. The prompt and rubric are included in an appendix to the syllabus. This assignment will be worth 3% of the total course grade. If you sign up late for the class	Midterm In order to prepare for the exam, be able to answer the following questions for each unit until the midterm: 1. What are the stories? (Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?) 2. What themes emerge from the stories (see study guides)? 3. How are the themes

			and stories related to one another?
	<p>Reading Journal: Students who wish to supplement their quiz grade may keep an ongoing record of reading an video notes under the “Journal” tab on Blackboard. The purpose of the various exercises is to supplement the videos. The journal should consist of informal, possibly bulleted points in response to the questions given. The purpose of this exercise is to track the student’s progress in the material. Full credit is given for satisfactory completion by the date the module is assigned.</p>	<p>Bible and Culture Prompt: Due 10/15, students will write a 1000 word analysis of a movie, painting, song, television show, or other cultural material that makes use of Biblical allusions and themes. The essay will identify the allusions and discuss how knowledge of the Bible further illuminates their understanding of the cultural artifact they are discussing.</p>	<p>Final Exam In order to prepare for the final exam, answer the following questions for each unit of the course after the midterm:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the belief or practiced described? Give a basic explanation of it. 2. What does the belief or practice mean? Try to use analogies to relate the readings to what you know. 3. Which other beliefs and practices are related to this one? How are they related?
		<p>Theology and Practice Prompt: Due 12/1, students will write a 1500 word response comparing two perspectives on the sacrament of marriage. The prompt and rubric are included in an appendix to this syllabus. This assignment will be worth 20% of the total course grade. Drafts turned in a week in advance of the due date will be commented on.</p>	

Grade Scale

A	99-94	A-	93-90	B+	89-87	B	86-84
B-	83-80	C+	79-77	C	76-74	C-	73-70
D	60-69	F	0-59				

How to Use the Course Schedule

Notice that there are three columns. Each column contains the information that you need in order to follow along with the course.

The first column, “Date,” tells you when the reading and assignment are due. It correlates with a module on blackboard. All the materials you will need are located either in the module or in the a textbook.

The second column, “Topic,” always tells you the theme we will be discussing in class that day. All the course materials relate to that theme. For your convenience, I’ve also listed approximately how many pages of reading you should expect to do (I didn’t estimate how many chapters of Bible reading you will have to do, because that is normally listed in either the textbook, in the reading column, or on the study guide), approximately how long you will need to spend on the videos, and what you should include in your journal under the topic. This information is meant to help you plan ahead so that you have enough time to process all the materials. The journal prompt changes for each topic, so read the prompts carefully. This column also indicates **in bold** whether there is an assignment due *by the date listed*. If you would like to turn in a draft, I will read it a week before the assignment is due.

The third column, “Reading,” tells you what you should read or watch for that topic. It also indicates what type of sources you should expect to engage. There are four types of sources: (1) a “textbook” reading will always come from an assigned text, (2) an “online” reading is always posted on Blackboard under the module number and correlated to the appropriate topic, (3) a “Bible” reading is from the Bible, and (4) a “video” will be posted on blackboard under the appropriate module and topic heading.

Course Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading
8/27	Introduction	Read the syllabus if you can. Come with questions.
9/1	<p><i>Why Study Christianity in College?</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u>: 25 pp <u>Video</u>: 6 min</p> <p>Assignment: Introductory Prompt Due</p>	<p>Online: Stephen Prothero, Religious Literacy, Introduction, pp. 1-18.</p> <p>Online: Rowan Williams, “There’s No Fooling About Impact,” <i>Times Higher Education</i>, April 17, 2014 (BB)</p> <p>Online: Tara Isabella Burton, “Study Theology, Even If You Don’t Believe in God,” <i>The Atlantic</i>, October 30, 2013 (BB)</p> <p>Online: Robert J. Sternberg, “Giving Employers What They Don’t Really Want,” <i>The Chronicle of Higher Education</i>, June 17, 2013 (BB)</p> <p>Video: “Why Study Theology?”</p>
9/3	<p><i>Introduction to the Bible</i></p> <p><i>What is the Bible? Who wrote it? How is it divided? How did it develop? How do Christians read it?</i></p>	Textbook : <i>Harper Collins Study Bible</i> , “Introduction,” p. xiii-xix.

	<p><u>Reading</u>: 26pp</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Answer the following questions: What did you learn about the Bible from the readings and video that surprised you? What is the Bible? Who wrote it? What languages was it written in? How is it divided? How did it develop? What are the main ways Christians interpret it?</p>	<p>Textbook: Anderson, pp. 9-15, 99-105</p> <p>Online: Keith Ward, "The Bible, pp. 109-116</p> <p>Recommended Online: Williams, "Bible"</p>
9/8	<p><i>Genesis 1</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u>: 10 pp</p> <p><u>Video</u>: 6 min</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Genesis Part 1 Study Guide questions; Anderson p. 26 questions 1-4.</p>	<p>Textbook: Anderson, pp. 18-25; read the study passages on p. 18</p> <p>Video: Bible project, Genesis Part 1</p>
9/10	<p><i>Introduction to the Covenants</i></p> <p><u>Video</u>: 6 min</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Covenants Study Guide question 1</p>	<p>Video: Bible Project, Covenants</p>
9/15	<p><i>Covenant with Abraham</i></p> <p><u>Video</u>: 6 min</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Genesis Part 2 Study Guide questions</p>	<p>Bible Readings: Genesis 12-13, 15-18, 21-22</p> <p>Video: Bible Project, Genesis Part 2</p> <p><i>Review: Bible Project, Covenants, study guide, p. 5</i></p>
9/17	<p><i>Covenant with Moses</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u>: 10 pp</p> <p><u>Video</u>: 17 min</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Exodus Part 1 Study Guide questions 1-2, Exodus Part 2 Study Guide questions 1-5, Leviticus Study Guide questions 1, 4.</p>	<p>Textbook: Anderson, pp. 28-37</p> <p>Video: Bible Project, Exodus Part 1, Exodus Part 2, Leviticus, Numbers</p> <p><i>Review: Bible Project, Covenants, study guide, p. 6</i></p>
9/22	<p><i>Covenant with David and Split of Kingdoms</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u>: Bible passages</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Covenants Study Guide question 4</p>	<p>Bible Readings: 2 Samuel 7, Psalms 72, 89, 132</p> <p>Reading: Review Covenants Study Guide, p. 7.</p> <p><i>Review Bible Project, Covenants, and study guide, p. 7</i></p>
9/24	<p><i>Prophets and Exile</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u>: 6 pp</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Anderson, p. 45 questions 1, 4</p>	<p>Bible Readings: Amos ch. 1-6, 8 (and, as always study passages for Anderson, chapter).</p> <p>Textbook: Anderson, pp. 39-45</p>

9/29	<p><i>New Covenant</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u>: 15 pp</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Anderson, p. 54 questions 3-4, p. 63 questions 1, 3, 5.</p>	<p>Bible Readings: Jeremiah 31.31-34; Ezekiel 36.24-28 (and, as always study passages for Anderson chapters)</p> <p>Textbook: Anderson, pp. 47-53, 56-63</p> <p><i>Review: Bible Project, Covenants, study guide, p. 8</i></p>
10/1	<p><i>Jesus in the New Testament</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u> 7 pp</p> <p><u>Video</u>: 2:14 min</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Messiah Study Guide questions</p>	<p>Bible Readings: Study passages, Anderson p. 66</p> <p>Textbook: Anderson, pp. 66-72</p> <p>Videos: Bible Project Messiah, Matthew, Jesus to Christ part 1</p> <p><i>Review: Bible Project, Covenants, study guide, p. 9</i></p>
10/6	<p><i>Early Christians</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u>: 14 pp</p> <p><u>Video</u>: 2:25 min</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Anderson, p. 79 questions 1-2, Heaven and Earth Study Guide Questions</p>	<p>Bible Readings: Study Passages, Anderson, p. 74</p> <p>Textbook: Anderson, pp. 74-79, 81-89</p> <p>Video: Bible Project Holiness, Heaven and Earth, Romans parts 1 and 2, Jesus to Christ Part II</p>
10/8	<i>Midterm</i>	
10/13	<p>First Article</p> <p><i>God the Father Almighty:</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u>: 28 pp</p> <p><u>Video</u>: 13 min</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Before you read or watch the videos, answer the question: what do Christians believe God is like? After you read and watch, revisit what you wrote and write what you learned from the reading and the videos. What struck you? What did you learn? What do the course materials say Christians believe about God?</p>	<p>Textbook: Williams, <i>Tokens of Trust</i>, pp. vii-28.</p> <p>Videos: BB links</p>
10/15	<p><i>Maker of Heaven and Earth</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u>: 36 pp</p> <p><u>Video</u>: 1 hour</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Before you read or watch the videos, answer the</p>	<p>Online: Ward, "Creation," pp. 7-17</p> <p>Textbook: Williams, <i>Tokens of Trust</i>, pp. 31-55.</p>

	<p>question: what do Christians believe about the creation of the world? After you read and watch, revisit what you wrote and write what you learned from the reading and the videos. What struck you? What did you learn? What do the course materials say Christians believe about creation? How is it different than you thought? How do the metaphors of the grandfather, the watch-maker, and the light bulb help you understand Christian teaching?</p> <p>Bible and Culture Prompt Due</p>	<p>Video: Conor Cunningham, “Did Darwin Kill God?”</p>
10/27	<p>Second Article <i>Person of Christ:</i> <u>Reading:</u> 33 pp <u>Video:</u> 23 min</p> <p><u>Journal:</u> Before you read or watch the videos, answer the questions: who is Jesus Christ? What do Christians affirm about him? After you read and watch, revisit what you wrote and write what you learned from the reading and the videos. What struck you? What did you learn? What do the course materials say Christians believe about Jesus? What terms and ideas seem most important?</p>	<p>Online: Ward, “Jesus, the Incarnation of God,” pp. 46-58.</p> <p>Textbook: Williams, <i>Tokens of Trust</i>, pp. 57-78.</p> <p>Online: Handout on Heresy (BB)</p> <p>Videos: BB</p>
10/29	<p><i>Work of Christ:</i> <i>Crucified, Dead, and Buried</i> <u>Reading:</u> 17 pp <u>Video:</u> 20 min</p> <p><u>Journal:</u> Before you read or watch the videos, answer the question: why did Jesus die? What difference does his death make? After you read and watch, revisit what you wrote and write what you learned from the reading and the videos. What struck you? What did you learn? What do the course materials say about the reason Jesus died? How do they describe Christian beliefs about atonement?</p>	<p>Bible Reading: Matthew 26.30-27.66; Mark 14.26-15.47</p> <p>Online: Ward, “Atonement,” pp. 59-65.</p> <p>Online: McCabe, <i>God Still Matters</i>, pp. 92-101 (BB)</p> <p>Video: Passion story from “Gospel of John” on Netflix, time markers 2:06-2:25</p> <p>James Cone, “Cross and the Lynching Tree”</p>
11/3	<p><i>On the Third Day He Rose Again</i> <u>Reading:</u> 22 pp <u>Video:</u> 23 min</p> <p><u>Journal:</u> Before you read or watch the videos, answer the question: what does it mean to say that Christ rose from the dead? After you read and watch, revisit what you wrote and write what you learned from the reading and the videos. What struck you? What did you learn? What do the course</p>	<p>Bible Readings: Matthew 28.1-15; Mark 16.1-8; 1 Corinthians 15.1-28</p> <p>Textbook: Williams, <i>Tokens of Trust</i>, pp. 81-102.</p> <p>Videos: BB videos and John’s resurrection account, “Gospel of</p>

	materials say Christians believe about the resurrection? What difference does it make?	John” on Netflix, time markers 2:25-2:32
11/5	<p><i>Trinity:</i> <u>Reading:</u> 34 pp <u>Video:</u> 24 min</p> <p><u>Journal:</u> Before you read or watch the videos, try to summarize your understanding of the doctrine of the trinity. After you read and watch, revisit what you wrote and write what you learned from the reading and the videos. What struck you? What did you learn? What do the course materials say Christians believe about the trinity? What terms and ideas seem most important?</p>	<p>Bible Readings: Matthew 3.13-17; Mark 1.9-11; Luke 3.21-23; John 1.29-34</p> <p>Online: Ward, “Trinity,” pp. 80-94.</p> <p>Online: Bauerschmidt, “Trinity” (BB)</p> <p>Videos: BB</p>
11/10	<p><i>Third Article: The Holy Spirit and the Church</i> <u>Reading:</u> 28 pp</p> <p><u>Journal:</u> Before you read or watch the videos, try to summarize your understanding of the Holy Spirit. What is the Holy Spirit? After you read and watch, revisit what you wrote and write what you learned from the reading and the videos. What struck you? What did you learn? What do the course materials say Christians believe about the Holy Spirit? What does the Spirit do?</p>	<p>Bible Readings: Acts 1.6-2.47; Galatians 3.1-8, 5.13-25</p> <p>Textbook: Williams, <i>Tokens of Trust</i>, p. 105-133</p> <p>Video: “The Butterfly Circus” (BB)</p>
11/12	<p><i>Sacraments and Salvation</i> <u>Reading:</u> 32 pp</p> <p><u>Journal:</u> Before you read or watch the videos, try to summarize your understanding of God’s Word and the sacraments. What is God’s Word? What are Sacraments? Why are they important? After you read and watch, revisit what you wrote and write what you learned from the reading and the videos. What struck you? What did you learn? What do the course materials say Christians believe about Word and Sacraments? What does McCabe mean by matter and form? What is natural, biblical, and sacramental symbolism?</p>	<p>Textbook: McCabe, <i>New Creation</i>, pp. 1-32</p> <p>Recommended: Lysaught, “Love and Liturgy,” pp. 23-41 (BB)</p>
11/17	<p><i>Communion of Saints, Forgiveness of Sins: Baptism and the Church</i> <u>Reading:</u> 33 pp <u>Video:</u> 21 min</p> <p><u>Journal:</u> Before you read or watch the videos, try to summarize your understanding of baptism, confirmation, and ordination. What are they? Why are they important? After you read and watch, revisit what you wrote and write what you learned from the reading and the videos. What struck you? What did you learn? For each sacrament, write down the</p>	<p>Bible Readings: Romans 6; Colossians 3; Romans 15.7-13; 1 Corinthians 12.12-13.13</p> <p>Textbook: McCabe, <i>New Creation</i>, pp. 33-50, 139-154</p> <p>Videos: Sacraments 101: “Baptism,” “Confirmation,” “Holy Orders”</p>

	matter, the primary form, any secondary forms, and the natural, biblical, and sacramental symbolism.	
11/19	<p><i>Eucharist and the Church</i> <u>Reading</u>: 26 pp <u>Video</u>: 5 min</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Before you read or watch the videos, try to summarize your understanding of the eucharist or communion. What is it? How is it related to baptism? To the church? After you read and watch, revisit what you wrote and write what you learned from the reading and the videos. What struck you? What did you learn? Write down the matter, the primary form, any secondary forms, and the natural, biblical, and sacramental symbolism.</p>	<p>Bible Reading: Exodus 12.1-32; Matthew 26.17-30; Mark 14.12-26; 1 Corinthians 11.17-34</p> <p>Online: Ward, "The Church," pp. 95-109</p> <p>Textbook: McCabe, <i>New Creation</i>, pp. 51-62</p> <p>Video: Sacraments 101: "Eucharist"</p>
11/24	Thanksgiving Week: Workshop Papers, Use the Writing Center	
12/1	<p><i>Sacraments of Return</i> <u>Reading</u>: 35 pp <u>Video</u>: 12 min</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Before you read or watch the videos, try to summarize your understanding of Penance and Anointing. What are they? Why are they important? After you read and watch, revisit what you wrote and write what you learned from the reading and the videos. What struck you? What did you learn? For each sacrament, write down the matter, the primary form, any secondary forms, and the natural, biblical, and sacramental symbolism. Look carefully at the beginning of each chapter: how are these two sacraments related to the eucharist?</p> <p>Assignment: Theology Prompt Due</p>	<p>Textbook: McCabe, <i>New Creation</i>, pp. 63-92</p> <p>Online: McCabe, "Forgiveness," pp. 155-159</p> <p>Videos: Sacraments 101: "Penance" and "Anointing of the Sick"</p>
12/3	<p><i>Life Everlasting</i> <u>Reading</u>: 42 pp <u>Video</u>: 18 min</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Before you read or watch the videos, answer the question: what do Christians believe about death, heaven, and hell? How have you understood them? After you read and watch, revisit what you wrote and write what you learned from the reading and the videos. What struck you? What did you learn? What do Christians believe about death? Heaven? Hell?</p>	<p>Textbook: Williams, <i>Tokens of Trust</i>, pp. 135-159</p> <p>Textbook: McCabe, <i>New Creation</i>, pp. 121-138</p> <p>Recommended: Ward, <i>Eternal Life</i>, pp. 176-189</p> <p>Videos: BB</p>

12/8	<p><i>The End</i></p> <p><u>Reading</u>: 30 pp <u>Video</u>: 15 min</p> <p><u>Journal</u>: Before you read or watch the videos, answer the question: what do Christians believe about the final judgment/end times? After you read and watch, revisit what you wrote and write what you learned from the reading and the videos. What struck you? What did you learn? What do Christians believe about the last things? What are the main positions that Grenz describes?</p>	<p>Online: Grenz, “When Do Christians Think the End Times Will Happen?”</p> <p>Videos: BB</p>
Final Exam		

Reading Journals

9/1-10/6	10/13-12/8
<p>These are intended to help you take notes on the readings, prepare for your quizzes and exams, and reflect on the materials for the course. I’ve designed them to complement class discussion. They will be given a credit/no credit grade at the midterm and the end of the semester.</p> <p>I’ve specified for each class which questions you should answer. In order to do the assigned questions well, you should (1) read the entire study guide carefully, perhaps during and after the video and (2) read the bible passages listed next to each question carefully. You should read all the scripture passages listed in the assigned Anderson chapters.</p>	<p>In order to prepare for the exam, each journal entry should help you answer the following questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the belief or practiced described? Give a basic explanation of it. 2. What does the belief or practice mean? Try to use analogies to relate the readings to what you know. 3. Which other beliefs and practices are related to this one? How are they related?

Course Policies

1. Professional Participation

<p>Attendance</p> <p><i>Just as with work, attendance is</i></p>	<p>If you know you will be absent for any reason, inform me as soon as you know. This may not result in an excused absence, but it can make it more likely for you to succeed in the course.</p>
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<i>mandatory and the only way to succeed.</i>	Two absences are allowed without penalty or question.	
	A “tardy” is any arrival after class has started. A tardy counts as ½ an absence.	
	An attendance probation warning will be issued on the second absence. A third absence may result in withdrawal.	
	If you arrive after attendance has been taken, it is your responsibility to contact the instructor to make sure your presence has been noted.	
	Absences will be excused <i>only</i> in the following cases: (1) an official email from student life or academic services. Such emails are usually sent in the case of family emergency or serious health concerns. (2) Student may also present a note from a doctor specifying the date of one’s illness.	
	Students may choose to leave class early. Missing a significant portion of class may be counted as an absence.	
Preparation	<i>Complete</i> the assigned reading/video/audio and writing for that day	
	<i>Digest</i> the assigned reading, etc. Just doing the reading isn’t enough. You must be ready to talk intelligently about it. I recommend coming to every class with at least one good question about the reading.	
	<i>Bring</i> hard copies of that day’s reading and writing assignments with you to class. <i>Note: Failure to bring a reading to class may result in a tardy.</i>	
	<i>Engage</i> in large and small group discussions.	
	<i>Actively listen</i> to lecture. If you don’t understand something, please ask for clarification.	
Respectful and Professional Conduct <i>You should conduct yourself in a professional manner in your email correspondence, timeliness for office hour appointments, and in all ways treat yourself, your classmates, and your professor with professional respect.</i>	<i>Due diligence</i> involves doing your best to <i>understand instructions that are given in written and verbal form</i> . Failing to do due diligence, i.e., asking questions of the professor that are addressed clearly on the syllabus or in other written form, can adversely affect this grade.	<i>I suggest the following procedure when you have a question:</i> Step one: consult the syllabus and course emails or announcements.
		Step two: ask a classmate if you missed an announcement in class.

		Step three: after steps one and two, it is appropriate (encouraged even!) to ask the professor during class or over email. Often, I will address the question in class if it might help other students.
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2. Coursework Expectations

Late work	Only timely work will be given full credit. Late work will lose one letter grade for each day that it is late. No late work will be accepted for credit after 5 days.
	In general, breakdown of a computer, printer, etc. are not valid excuses for late work.
Makeup work	In general, no makeup opportunities will be given.
Extra credit	As a rule, the only form of extra credit available will be excellent performance on assigned work.
Citations	See the University Honor Code. Ideas and quotes from sources must be cited on any written work submitted for credit.
	Citations must include the author, text, and page number.
	Chicago Style (Turabian) or MLA format must be used on written work.
	See the library website for help with citation techniques.
Writing Center	Professor may require student to use the writing center, which is an excellent resource. If the professor does so, the student should leave enough time to make the appointment and suggested corrections.

3. Technology Policies

Electronics	No computers, cell phones, tablets, e-readers, smart watches of any kind will be permitted without the direction or permission of the instructors.
	In the event that a student is found using such a device without the instructor's permission, student's participation grade will be reduced by 10%.
Email	Please allow 24 hours for a response to emails, excluding weekends.
Technology problems	High Point University provides students with very helpful information technology support.
	In the event of problems with Blackboard or any technological matter, the most effective support will come from the Office of Information Technology.

	The number for the OIT is (336) 841-9147 .
Turnitin	Some work will be uploaded on Turnitin. If you cannot upload work for whatever reason, email it to me as an attachment and then upload it when the system allows you. Turnitin has trouble with Safari. Try using a different computer or contacting IT if the problem repeats. No excuses for late work due to computer problems will be accepted, so make sure you don't forget to attach a readable copy of the file.

4. Self Advocacy and Personal Responsibility

Self advocate <i>by seeking help from instructor or SI in office hours or over email as soon as you think you need it.</i>	This is an extremely important life skill. Avoidance is not a constructive response to a problem. When you think you need help, seek it ASAP.
	Seek help from a tutor, student instructor, classmate, professor, or coach any time you feel it would benefit your performance.
	If you don't understand a reading, come talk to me
	If you are worried about performance on quizzes, writing assignments, exams, etc., take advantage of office hours or make an appointment.
	Give yourself enough time before an assignment, quiz, paper, or exam. Do not wait until it is too late to change your performance.
Take responsibility <i>for your work and college career.</i>	It is your responsibility to manage, plan, and appropriately prioritize for extra-curricular activities, commitments, and obligations.
	"Introduction to Christianity" <i>does not</i> mean "Easy A" or "low expectations." This course is designed to fit the expectations of time and rigor outlined by the university. All classes ought to be equally rigorous. The course number and title indicate how much knowledge the class presupposes. This class is designed for those who have little or no background knowledge of Christian thought and practice.
	You should plan to spend 8-12 hours per week on work outside of class. All classes should be equally rigorous.
	Professor is willing advise on difficult situations.
	Responsibility for communication style.
Dynamic grading	I am enthusiastic about helping you comprehend the material and perform well in my class. The grade is meant to reflect that performance as a whole. This means that improvement in the course will be taken into account in assigning the grade. Cannot grade effort.

Summary of Course Policies (in case you're overwhelmed):

- **Come to class fully prepared. Actively listen when you're there.**
- **Contact me ahead of time if you know you'll be gone.**
- **Get an official note to me if you're absent in case of an emergency.**

- **Submit work on time (no late work accepted, no makeup work given)**
- **Cite sources on all written work—even for ideas, especially for quotes. Give a page number, and use a standard style.**
- **Read the syllabus, emails, and announcements, and listen in class. If you don't know something, check those sources first before asking me. It may be easiest to ask a classmate for their impression if you're not sure.**
- **Use the writing center.**
- **Give me a day to respond to emails. Sometimes I'll just talk to you in class.**
- **Give yourself enough time to get help before work is due.**
- **Give your full attention in class (no distracting electronics).**
- **Contact IT in case of technology problems (I won't be helpful).**
- **Self advocate.**
- **Plan.**
- **The course is setup to reward diligence and improvement.**

Grading Standards

A	A grade of A or A- indicates that the assignment is excellent, going above and beyond the requirements and demonstrating the highest level interaction with the texts and concepts possible for undergraduates.	demonstrates clear understanding by helpfully interacting with the texts and arguments of a broader conversation
		demonstrates an original, helpful, insightful thesis that makes connections that are not immediately apparent on the surface
		makes that thesis discipline the entire assignment, especially the conclusion
		anticipates criticisms and, insofar as possible, accounts for alternative positions;
		uses an effective rhetorical structure, including an accountable method of argument and a clear flow of ideas
		and writes and presents enjoyably well. There are no significant grammatical mistakes, syntactical inelegancies, or typos
B+	A grade of B+ indicates that you have successfully and competently done the work.	You demonstrate accurate understanding of texts and arguments. The readings of others may be slightly distorted at points, but they are mostly accurate
		You have a clear thesis. To develop into A-level work, may need a more original thesis. Or you may have an excellent thesis that is not completely realized in the subsequent argument.

		The thesis disciplines the argument, but there are loose ends or assumptions that remain unaddressed.
		The assignment is well-written or presented. There are no significant grammatical mistakes or typos.
B	A grade of B indicates acceptable completion of the assignment, with room for improvement in argument, and/or in understanding of other texts	This may be the grade for a reasonable essay or presentation that remains descriptive rather than critical
		or that seems rushed in its consideration.
		It may be the grade for an exciting idea that suffers from sloppy writing and argumentation.
B-	A grade of B- indicates inadequate completion of the assignment but good faith effort in approaching it.	The assignment probably suffers from lack of a clear thesis and disorganized argument
		It may incorrectly understand other arguments.
		This may also be the grade for work with a good thesis but confusing flow, undefended assumptions, or inappropriate reading of other arguments.
C	A grade of C acknowledges that something was submitted, and that it begins to approximate the level of writing expected for a liberal arts education.	It meets minimal requirements for completion of the assignment.
D	A grade of D acknowledges that something was submitted, and that it fails to approximate the level of writing expected for a liberal arts education.	It does not meet the minimal requirements for completion of the assignment because it lacks a thesis, argument, or intelligible writing. Nevertheless it bears some relationship to the assigned work.
F	A grade of F means either that nothing was submitted or that what was submitted does not in any way complete the assignment.	

Inclusive Language

Believe it or not, sexism is embedded in the very fabric of our language. It is part of my ethical commitment as a teacher to help students recognize, reflect on, and then eliminate sexism in their use of language. This includes, but is not limited to, avoiding the use of the gender specific personal pronoun “he” in cases where

the gender of the antecedent is unknown (e.g., I use the phrase “he or she” when referring to a student in this syllabus because a particular student could be either male or female). It also means being intentional about the kinds of examples one uses. Many of our authors wrote before the presence and danger of sexism in language was understood. While you must use these sources in your work, you must not continue their sexist use of language.

The presence of gendered language is especially prevalent in how people refer to God. It is perfectly understandable for you to refer to God by using gendered pronouns (he or she) as such use is deep in the Christian tradition, but I do ask that you include (at the very least) a footnote or a parenthetical note that says you realize you are using a gendered term for God. You are encouraged, but not required, to use inclusive language for God (as well as human beings). Use of exclusive language ought to be accompanied by a recognition of the fact, because I want to see that you recognize what you are doing. If you have questions on how to write properly with gender-inclusive language, please ask.

Learning outcomes

1. Bible: To demonstrate basic competence in reading the central texts of Christian faith (Old and New Testaments) with attention to their historical and theological significance.
2. Doctrine: To articulate the central beliefs and practices of Christian faith with intellectual charity by critically engaging Christian theology, ethics, and practices.
3. History: To demonstrate how Christian beliefs, practices, and social formations have been shaped by, and have in turn shaped, the historical and cultural contexts of human communities.
4. Critical analysis: To demonstrate knowledge of the disputes and internal differentiations of Christian communities and critically evaluate one’s own views on Christian thought and practice through constructive dialogue within the Christian tradition.
5. Synthesis: Bring together skills in reading the bible, charitable and critical articulation of Christian thought and practice, and familiarity with church history to study Christianity’s development and present forms.

Religious General Education Objectives

Upon completion of one general education course in Religion, students will be able to do the following:

1. Knowledge of Human Cultures: Demonstrate how religious convictions, practices, and social formations have been shaped by, and have in turn shaped, the historical and cultural contexts of human communities.
2. Intellectual and Practical Skills: Evaluate one’s own views on religion through constructive dialogue with the views of others in one’s own or another religious tradition.
3. Personal and Social Responsibility: Employ intellectual charity as one critically engages questions of religious faith, practice, and value.
4. Integrative and Applied Learning: Synthesize multiple disciplinary perspectives in the study of complex religious phenomena.

The High Point University Honor Code asserts that:

- Every student is honor-bound to refrain from conduct which is unbecoming of a High Point University student and which brings discredit to the student and/or to the University;
- Every student is honor-bound to refrain from cheating;
- Every student is honor-bound to refrain from collusion;
- Every student is honor-bound to refrain from plagiarism;

- Every student is honor-bound to confront a violation of the University Honor Code;
- Every student is encouraged to report a violation of the University Honor Code.

Cheating includes, but is not limited to:

- the use of unauthorized information during testing or examination;
- the submission, in whole or in part, of the ideas or work of another as one's own;
- the completion of academic work for another student who later submits said work, in whole or in part, as her/his own;
- submission of the same or similar work in two or more classes without the approval of the instructor(s) involved.

Collusion includes, but is not limited to:

- agreements or conspiracies entered into for fraudulent or illegal purposes;
- discussing or otherwise describing the content of a test or examination with a student who will take a similar examination in the same course at a later period;
- forgery for purposes of deception. Property violations. Property violations include, but are not limited to:
- the misappropriation of patents, copyrights, trademarks, or computer software;
- securing information from the Internet or similar sources without paying the required fees or royalties, where prescribed;
- the destruction or corruption of information technologies intended for common use;
- the misappropriation of library resources intended for common use;
- the destruction or corruption of library resources;
- forgery for purposes of theft.

Plagiarism involves quoting or paraphrasing sources without proper acknowledgment. Plagiarism occurs when students submit, without appropriate documentation or quotation marks:

- part or all of written or spoken statements derived from sources, such as books, the Internet, magazines, pamphlets, speeches, or oral statements;
- part or all of written or spoken statements derived from files maintained by individuals, groups, or campus organizations;
- the sequence of ideas, arrangement of material, or pattern of thought of someone else, even though you express such processes in Acknowledgment. Proper acknowledgment includes identifying the author and source of a quoted or paraphrased passage and indicating clearly (by the appropriate use/omission of quotation marks or indention's) whether the passage is being quoted or paraphrased.

Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism are grounds for immediate failure of the course.

Commitment to Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

High Point University considers a strong commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion as a core component of our mission and an essential ingredient to a holistic education in the liberal arts tradition. A liberal arts education develops critical thinkers, moving students from a fixed-mindset to a growth-mindset.

This approach to learning prepares students for reflective action in an interdependent and diverse world. We not only understand and respect the unique talents and perspectives of all individuals but we also embrace and utilize their contributions. Our breadth of inclusiveness creates a path by which all individuals can achieve their highest potential in an increasingly complex and pluralistic society.

We welcome and respect all students, faculty, and staff of all races, ethnicities, religions, genders, sexual orientations, sexual identities and gender expressions, abilities, classes, ages, and political ideas. We recognize that diversity also includes a range of geographic locations, communication styles, family makeup, educational background, military service, and other unique life experiences. To encourage diversity and inclusion we endorse dynamic curricula and research agendas—through the university's core education as well as all fields of study, programming, and community engagement—that include a multiplicity of views and perspectives.

Diversity, equity, and inclusion are not merely moral imperatives or societal goals, they can be a competitive advantage. Our continued success as a university rests in our collective ability to embrace a multitude of opinions, ideas, and beliefs so that we can effectively educate the next generation of leaders who are culturally responsive, knowledgeable, and globally engaged. Our commitment to diversity, equity, and inclusion cultivates students' desire for citizenship in complex global communities.

Disability Statement

Students who require classroom accommodations due to a diagnosed disability must submit the appropriate documentation to Disability Support in the Office of Academic Development, 4th Floor Smith Library. Student's need for accommodations must be made at the beginning of a course. Accommodations are not retroactive.

Writing Center Statement

The Writing Center provides writing assistance for students at any level of study – from freshman to graduate – at any stage in the writing process, from invention through revision. The Writing Center staff will be available in a variety of locations around campus during various hours throughout the day, Monday through Friday. Go to <https://highpoint.mywconline.com/> to make an appointment. Appointments can only be made through the online portal. Appointments will be available starting September 1, 2015 for the Fall 2015 semester.

Writing Center tutors do not proofread or edit students' papers for them, but they do work with students to help them develop strategies for improving their writing in light of their respective assignments, instructors, and writing styles. For more information, contact Writing Center Director, Dr. Leah Schweitzer at lschweit@highpoint.edu or 336-841-9106.

Appendix 1:

Introductory Prompt: Due by class 9/1

1. Rowan Williams, "There's No Fooling About Impact," *Times Higher Education*, April 17, 2014, <http://www.timeshighereducation.co.uk/comment/opinion/rowan-williams-theres-no-fooling-about-impact/2012699.article>. (BB)
2. Stephen Prothero, "Introduction," *Religious Literacy* pp. 1-18. (BB)
3. Tara Isabella Burton, "Study Theology, Even If You Don't Believe in God," *The Atlantic*, October 30, 2013, <http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2013/10/study-theology-even-if-you-dont-believe-in-god/280999/>. (BB)
4. Robert J. Sternberg, "Giving Employers What They Don't Really Want," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 17, 2013, <http://chronicle.com/article/Giving-Employers-What-They/139877/>. (BB)

The purpose of this assignment is for you to think about how a course like this can be an important piece of your academic experience. Using these articles, I'd like each of you to engage the articles and write a 500 word answer to the question, "Why take Introduction to Christianity as part of a liberal arts education?"

Suggested structure: in the first paragraph, use articles 1-3 to talk about the purpose of a liberal arts education and why studying religion can be helpful. Then discuss your own reasons for pursuing a *liberal arts* education (as opposed to vocational training) in dialogue with article 4. In a third paragraph, after reviewing the syllabus, describe what you would like to get out of the course. **Remember:** cite sources using a standard citation technique. The library website is a good source for information about this.

Note: I'm not looking for an account of how you think this course might help you personally or spiritually. I want you to account for how you plan to approach it as an important piece of your academic experience.

After completing the essay, please include a short biography, including your (1) year, (2) major, and (3) background in the study of Christianity (either academically or any study you've done personally). If you feel comfortable, you may also share with me your own church/denominational/religious background. Feel free to share anything else that is relevant for me to know as your instructor in this course.

Post the completed essay to the TurnItIn Link.

Appendix 2: Bible and Culture Prompt

A poorly written answer will not be eligible for an A. Poor writing, spelling errors, or grammar errors will significantly take away from your ability to do well. The paper should be clear, readable, and elegantly written.

Failure to cite sources will lead to an automatic reduction in grade by a whole level. So if you had a B but didn't cite sources, you will automatically be reduced to a B- or a C, depending on the nature of the infraction.

This 1000 word paper is supposed to be fun. Its purpose is to relate the course materials to the cultural air you breathe every day. Because a goal of this course is to help you develop biblical literacy, this assignment is a chance to practice recognizing allusions to scriptural themes in cultural artifacts.

Choose something “non-religious” like a movie, painting, song, television show, political speech, or advertisement. It is best if it *alludes* to scripture or Christian themes. The more overt or straightforward the reference, the less you will have to say. After choosing a cultural item, (1) identify the allusions, (2) use course materials further illuminate the themes, and (3) then show how understanding the Bible helps to make better sense of the cultural material you are discussing.

It will help you if you are creative and choose something that interests you. That way, you will be more interested in paying attention to it. Choose something that isn't so direct or straightforward. A more textured example will give you more to discuss and more interpreting to do, so a Christian song or an evangelistic or straightforwardly biblical movie is not a good choice.

Material	Good example	Bad example
Movie	Pulp Fiction, The Big Kahuna, Magnolia, Lord of the Rings	Noah, Moses, Prince of Egypt, Passion of the Christ
Music	Mumford and Sons, Sufjan Stevens	Contemporary Christian Music
TV Show	Breaking Bad	Davey and Goliath, Touched by an Angel
Political speech	Barack Obama's Charleston Eulogy, Ronald Reagan's "City on a Hill" speech	An address at a prayer breakfast
Painting or sculpture	The Ceiling of the Sistine Chapel	Michelangelo's David
Novel or story	C. S. Lewis, The Magician's Nephew; Flannery O'Connor's short stories	Left Behind Novels, etc.

Appendix 3: Theology and Practice Prompt

A poorly written answer will not be eligible for an A. Poor writing, spelling errors, or grammar errors will significantly take away from your ability to do well. The paper should be clear, readable, and elegantly written.

Failure to cite sources will lead to an automatic reduction in grade by a whole level. So if you had a B but didn't cite sources, you will automatically be reduced to a B- or a C, depending on the nature of the infraction.

Answer the following question:

Drawing on the following readings, provide an interpretation of sex and marriage in Christianity in 1500 words (double spaced, 12pt font). Specifically compare the perspectives on sex, marriage, and gay marriage by **McCabe** on the one hand and **Rogers** on the other. This will help you to articulate the central issues at stake in Christian debates about same-sex marriage *in the church* (I'm not primarily concerned about the question of civil same-sex marriages). What important points do the two agree on? What are the most important issues that divide them?

- Herbert McCabe, *The New Creation* (New York, NY: Continuum, 2010), chap. 7–8.
- Eugene F. Rogers, "Same-Sex Complementarity: A Theology of Marriage," *The Christian Century* 128, no. 10 (May 17, 2011): 26+.
- Eugene F. Rogers, "Sanctified Unions," *The Christian Century*, June 15, 2004.

The following article provides helpful background information. You do not need to engage them, but you may:

- Mark D. Jordan and Luke Timothy Johnson, "Christianity," in *Sex, Marriage, and Family in World Religions*, ed. Don S. Browning, M. Christian Green, and John Witte (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 2006). (Gives a history and explanation of themes about sex and marriage)
- Sam Wells, *Wholly Holy: What Does the Identity of Being LGBT Add to the Identity of Being Christian?*, Lecture, accessed January 15, 2014, <http://www.stmartin-in-the-fields.org/podcasts/wholly-holy-what-the-identity-of-being-lgbt-adds-to-the-identity-of-being-christian>.
- "The Two Shall Become One Flesh: Reclaiming Marriage," *First Things*, accessed April 11, 2015, <http://www.firstthings.com/article/2015/03/the-two-shall-become-one-flesh-reclaiming-marriage-2>. (You don't have to engage this, but you may.)

As you read the McCabe and Rogers articles, try to answer the following:

According to McCabe, what is sex? What is sex for? What is the relationship between sex, procreation, and marriage? (Hint: try to define sex and marriage for McCabe)

According to Eugene Rogers, what is marriage? Why does Rogers think same-sex partners need marriage?

Review the grading standards in the syllabus for assessment of written work.

Appendix 4: General Essay Grading Criteria

	Textual Features		
Textual Qualities	Above expectations	At expectations	Below expectations
Purpose/Context	Essay accurately responds to the assignment; creates a context and purpose for analysis.	Essay generally responds to the assignment and creates a context.	Essay may not accurately respond to the assignment; context may be unclear; reader may feel “thrown in.”
Analysis/Engagement	Writer demonstrates openness as well as broad and deep understanding of readings; pays attention to form as well as content to identify strategies, assumptions, implications, audience; evidence from text consistently supports analysis; clearly distinguishes between voices (the writer’s own and the authors’).	Demonstrates strengths of an “above expectations” essay but does so inconsistently.	May offer little or no evidence from text to support claims; may read like a reaction or opinion piece; origin/identity of ideas, facts, and voices may be hard to distinguish.
Organization	Overview and context are established to set up analysis; paragraphs are logically connected; reader experiences essay as flow.	Some paragraphs or ideas may seem out of sequence, but reasoning is easy to follow; organization reflects complexity of thought.	Paragraphs read as a list of points rather than complex reasoning; organization may leave reader confused.
Development	Engagement with the article consistently stretches the writer’s own thinking; questions, implications, and research directions lend complexity and depth.	Demonstrates strengths of an “above expectations” essay but does so inconsistently	Ideas stop at the level of the claim; conclusions do not follow from evidence and analysis; writer may demonstrate a fixed position.
Audience Awareness	Writer takes on the role of thoughtful and generous reader; tone is thoughtful and reasonable throughout; writer leaves his or her own reader with something to think about.	Writer’s tone is thoughtful and reasonable.	Writer’s tone or treatment may be reactive or in other ways inappropriate for a formal analytical essay.
Academic Conventions	Errors are minimal so as not to detract from the writer’s credibility; attributions are clear; use of Turabian or MLA citation style lends to the writer’s credibility.	Errors may be present but reader can “figure out” meaning; essay uses a standard citation style.	Errors impede reading process and damage writer’s credibility; no attribution; no standard citation style.