04ST622 : Biblical World and Life View

Instructor: Bill Davis
Adjunct Professor of Systematic Theology (RTS),
Professor of Philosophy (Covenant College)

Reformed Theological Seminary, Atlanta, GA
Summer 2015 : Course Syllabus
June 13-17, 2016

Please send questions to Prof. Davis at davis@covenant.edu

Objectives:

- Students will be able to discuss knowledgably the major contributors to worldviews in general and to his or her worldview in particular. This will be demonstrated on the Final Exam.
- Students will refine or create a peer-reviewed statement of personal worldview that is founded in Biblical and theological truth. This will be developed in workshops during the week of class meetings.
- Students will build upon worldview statements by either revising a course to integrate a Biblical worldview or by creating a Biblical worldview course of his or her own.

Texts (Required):


- Distributed in class on June 10 for the cost of production:
  - Davis, William, *In All Things Christ Preeminent* (Covenant College, 2014) - $6
  - Kaufmann, Stephen, *First the Foundations: A Primer for Christian School Education* (ACSI Europe, 2009 [out of print, but photocopied with the permission of the author and publisher])

Exam: Final Exam distributed electronically on the Monday following the last class meeting.

Open Bibles, texts, and notes. Due two weeks after the last day of class meetings.
Writing Assignments:

Due at the first Class Meeting:

Reading Response (one): 500 word (target) answer to one of the following questions. Due on the first day of class meetings. [Note: students who have responsibilities that prevent them from meeting this deadline should ask Dr. Davis for an extension by email. It will be granted. All sorts of things are more important than meeting this deadline.]

- (Concerning Lewis) Taking for granted that Lewis correctly describes what the medieval world took from granted, identify one unbiblical feature of the medieval worldview and explain how Bible-believing Christians could have accepted that feature as biblical.
- (Concerning Sire) Explain which of the worldviews other than Christian Theism is most evident/influential in the thinking and choices of your current (or recent) students. [Note: this is the most accessible and immediate relevant of the four books for the course. Writing a response will require reflection about what you are seeing in your students; but the text itself will be easy to follow.]
- (Concerning Smith) Explain what Smith means by “liturgy.” Then describe one liturgy (in Smith’s sense) practiced by the school where you teach (or have attended) and the likely worldview fruit of that practice.
- (Concerning Wolters) Explain what Wolters means by “structure” and “direction.” The give one (or more) implications of that distinction for your subject area that you hope your students “get” from your teaching.

After the week of Class meetings:

- Personal Worldview Statement: 1000 word maximum. Aspects and elements to be developed during the week of class time. Final draft due one week after the end of class meetings.

- Curriculum Proposal: 2500 word maximum plan for revising an existing course in the light of a biblical worldview or for establishing a Biblical Worldview course. Due four weeks after the last day of class meetings. (The structure and design elements for this plan will be agreed upon the week of class meetings to conform to the curriculum development guidelines for specific schools.)

Attendance: Attendance is expected. Students who miss a significant portion of class meeting time will have their Participation grade adversely affected. Some class time will be devoted to group problem solving activities; some of these activities will be graded (very mildly).
Grading: Grades will be calculated using the following percentages:

- Final Exam……………………………….. 35%
- Reading Response …………………………… 10%
- Personal Worldview Statement……………… 10%
- Curriculum Proposal………………………… 30%
- Participation……………………………… 15%

Schedule of Topics & Summary of Due Dates:

June 13 (Monday): What worldviews do (and thus what they are)
  • Drawing on Sire (chapters 1&2), Wolters (chapter 1), and Smith (chapters 1&2)
  • Reading Response due.

June 14 (Tuesday): A brief history of Christian worldviews
  • Drawing on Lewis (all) and Smith (remainder)

June 15 (Wednesday): Worldview alternatives in our surrounding culture
  • Drawing on Sire (remainder)

June 16 (Thursday) A scaffolding for a Christian Worldview (course or course revision)
  • Drawing on Wolters (chapters 2, 3, and conclusion) and Davis (all)

June 17 (Friday) Biblical Worldview and Curriculum
  • Drawing Wolters (chapter 5)

June 20 (Monday) : Final Exam distributed electronically

June 24 (Friday, midnight) : Personal Worldview Statement final draft due

July 1 (Friday, midnight) : Final Exam due

July 15 (Friday, midnight) : Curriculum Proposal due

Extension Policy:

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class.

Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed.
Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an Extension Request Form from the Student Services Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 42 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 14)

Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 42)