

History-Bible Syllabus

Ancient and Roman History Syllabus
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Required Books:

- *English Standard Version of the Bible: ESV Study Bible.*
- Peter Leithart, *The Four: A Survey of the Gospels*
- A three ring binder with dividers devoted to this

Handouts (provided)

- Western Civilization; 8th Edition, Spielvogel
- Other handouts provided

Course Description:

This course will seek to produce students who are keen observers of history and careful studiers of the Holy Scriptures. By developing these skills together, students can expect to gain a better appreciation for the ongoing dialog of Holy Scripture and God's narrative throughout history.

This year we will be studying the History of Rome and its impact on Western Civilization up through the Middle Ages. Integrated with this historical endeavor, we will examine the New Testament and its historical context, paying particularly close attention to the Life of Jesus and the birth and growth of His body, the Church.

Humanities is a discipline based upon the manipulation of abstract ideas more than the learning of concrete facts. The goal is formation of good thought patterns and excellent character, rather than mastery of a body of technical knowledge. As a result, Humanities coursework involves reading and discussion more than anything else. Humanities homework, when assigned, will generally involve reading and note-taking, but most of our work actually takes place in the classroom.

Learning Goals:

- To become familiar with the contours of western history
- To understand the complexity of the causes of major historical events
- To understand, test, and defend the Christian worldview.

- To become more virtuous, thoughtful, and wise human beings in the pursuit of goodness, truth, and beauty.

Scope, Sequence, and Grades:

This course is divided into four Blocks of about 8 weeks each and each block is divided into 4 Units of about 2 weeks. The 16 resulting units cover the following topics:

Student work in each unit consists of reading, discussion, and assessments. Therefore, the best way to earn an 'A' is to read carefully, participate, and write.

You will be graded primarily on reading, participation, and tests, plus applicable extra credit.

Assessment category	%
Participation	25%
Readings/Notes	25%
Quizzes	25%
Exams/Projects	25%
Extra Credit	3% max

Reading tips

Read ahead. There is a lot of reading but read carefully and slowly as need be; you will get faster, but start slow and careful. Try to read *and understand* the book or essay. Ask yourself: What is the main thesis? Is it true? Take notes. Talk with each other before class. Ask yourselves and each other: What is the main point? What confused me? Come to class with objections, questions, and arguments. More are tips available online.

Quizzes

Short reading quizzes assess that you read the day's text. These are easy points, so be diligent in doing every quiz.

Attendance & Participation

Participation Rubric: Daily, students will be assessed on their participation in class. Though outstanding participation may appear in a variety of ways, it is always marked by preparation, diligence, attentiveness, articulateness, insight, and respect. Daily participation will be scored on a scale of 1-10, according to the following criteria:

9-10: Students always take a voluntary, thoughtful, and active role in their own learning, challenging themselves on a daily basis. They consistently demonstrate a genuine desire to learn and share ideas with the teacher and their classmates. They listen actively to others, initiate discussions, ask significant questions, provide creative and thoughtful insight and ideas, and act as leaders within the group. These students are always well prepared to contribute to the class as a result of having thoughtfully completed assignments, and the thoroughness of their work demonstrates the high

regard they hold for learning. In class, they demonstrate a superior work ethic and focus on the tasks at hand.

8: Students consistently take an active role in their own learning. They participate satisfactorily in class discussions and work. They demonstrate preparation and thoughtfulness when prompted to respond with an answer, and are ready to ask questions and offer insight relevant to the work at hand. They listen respectfully and display attentiveness towards others.

7: Students inconsistently take an active role in their own learning, sharing relevant ideas, asking appropriate questions, and answering thoughtfully. They contribute sparingly to class discussions and work. They may need occasional reminders to stay on task make the most of our class time, and to increase their level of commitment to the course. In class, the work ethic and focus demonstrated generally needs improvement.

6: Students rarely take an active role in their own learning. They often do not participate and rarely share ideas or ask questions. As a result of being unprepared for or disengaged from class, these students are unable to offer ideas even when called upon. In class, their work ethic and focus is significantly lacking.

0-5: Students are absent, unprepared, disrespectful, inattentive, or otherwise posing a significant behavioral and/or academic concern in class.

Attendance is strongly encouraged. The primary competency of this class is philosophical dialog. Class time is primarily focused on discussion of the material for which I expect you to be fully engaged. We dialog so much because: (1) You must take responsibility for your own learning. (2) We can actually get to know each other. (3) Most people learn (and retain) best in discussion. (4) Philosophy is dialogical.

To earn participation points, you will voluntarily share your thoughts in discussion at least once per week, and/or respond when called upon. If you do not talk in class, you must post reflections online every week. By default, everyone is an “external processor”. *“Internal processors”*: Some may wish to opt out of speaking in class and emphasize writing. To earn participation points, you will post class reflections online every week. You may elect to speak in class as well, and may be called upon.

You are responsible to talk in class. Even if you are confused, tired, or unmotivated, I expect you to make yourself participate and engage. Get out of your comfort zone into your growth zone. Come *prepared*. Read, take notes, reflect, and come ready to share your viewpoint, defend it, listen to others’ viewpoints, and critique theirs.

Everyone starts at an 80% (B-) for the participation grade. You will move up or down depending on whether you pay attention and speak at least once per week. Other discussion ground rules are posted online.

Extra Credit

Those who opt for extra credit may do so. You may do extra reading, extra writing, extra class preparation, for up to 3% of the semester grade. The normal amount of extra credit awarded is

1-2%. The only way to earn all 3% is to do multiple types of extra credit and do them well. Full instructions are posted online.

Miscellany:

1. **Bring your textbook** to every class. Reference it in the discussion. Be specific.
2. **Participate.** Participation is your responsibility; I may or may not call on you. Challenge yourself!
3. **Stay focused.** Do not distract yourself with side conversations, texting, Facebook, or doing anything else in class. Take a short mental break or bathroom break if you need to, but come back.
4. **Be respectful of others:** Pay attention when a neighbor is talking. No teasing. Don't pack up too early – 1 minute before the end of class is fine.
5. **Contact me.** The best method is to chat is a Canvas message; I read every message but may not respond to every email. If you need a response but I haven't responded within three (3) days, send a message again with the subject "nudge".
6. **Email.** You are expected to have an active account that you check regularly, and to check "news" or "announcements" section on Canvas (or Discovery, etc.). Section related announcements will be made on this platform and/or via e-mail (e.g. if I am sick, pointers for home work, change in due dates).
7. **Plagiarism.** Do not plagiarize. If I detect plagiarism, I will contact you. The assignment will receive a zero, and disciplinary action may follow. It may jeopardize your standing in the class. If you forget to quote a source, that's still plagiarism. Also, if you intentionally take anyone else's work or offer your work to anyone else (under whatever auspices). You'll submit your papers to SafeAssign to help avoid accidental plagiarism. Don't even think about stealing someone else's thought/work. For more information, refer to academic integrity documents like this one.
8. **Enjoy yourself.** We are not merely solving abstract puzzles here, but digging deeply into human thinking in a way that could change your life forever. The more you and your fellows allow yourselves to acquire a "taste" for the material, the more inclined you will be to give it the real effort required to master it.

I. Quality Work Guidelines:

Only quality work from students will be accepted. Quality work is clean, clear, properly titled, formatted, and stapled according to the assignment's specifications. Unless otherwise stated, assignments are to be hand-written and completed in pencil. When the use of pens is allowed, only black ink will be acceptable.

Late work will not be accepted. In the case of emergencies or absences known ahead of time, contact Dr. Buhler to develop a plan for satisfactory completion of required work. Assignments will be considered on time when they are ready to be turned in at the beginning of class.

II. Outline:

The outline tells you the reading due each day, the topic. The outline is *subject to minor changes* for weather, sicknesses, travel, etc. The online version is always up to date.

Unit 1 Origins

Week 1 – Faith and Reason

Jan-24 T Syllabus Day

Jan-26 R JP Moreland, “Love your God with all your mind”

Week 2 – Myth

Jan-31 T *Sophie’s World*, “Garden of Eden, Top Hat, The Myths”

Feb-2 R Genesis (Chps. 1-3); *Sophie’s World*, “Natural Philosophers, Democritus, and Fate”

Week 3 – Holiness

Feb-7 T *Sophie’s World*, “Socrates, Athens, Plato”; Plato, Euthyphro

Feb-9 R Euthyphro Discussion; Kreeft, *Philosophy 101*, (Chapter II, pp. 87-114) “Philosophy Exemplified”

Unit 2 Socrates

Week 4 Philosophy

(Unit Paper 1 due Tuesday at 10:00pm CT)

Feb-14 T Plato, Apology - Is Socrates guilty? What is he being accused of?

Feb-16 R Apology Discussion

Week 5 – Dialectic

Feb-21 T Kreeft, *Philosophy 101* (13-49) - Why is philosophy misunderstood?

Feb-23 R Kreeft, *Philosophy 101* (50-86) - Why is philosophy happy and death-defying?

Week 6 – Death

Feb-28 T Plato, *Phaedo* (116-143) - Was Socrates true to his principles, even in death?

Mar-2 R Plato, *Phaedo* II (116-143) The soul is immortal because opposites come from opposites, and because we remember Equality itself.

Unit 3 The Soul

Week 7 – The Soul

Unit Paper 2, Due Tuesday at 10:00pm CT

Mar-7 T Plato, *Phaedo* (143-199) The soul is immortal if it is philosophical because it is more like

the Forms than it is like material things.

Mar-9 R *Phaedo* Discussion, Kreeft *Philosophy 101* (131-148)

Week 8 – Forms

Mar-14 T Kreeft, “Forms” handout

Mar-16 R Forms Discussion (Optional: Read *Sophie’s World* “Major’s Cabin”, “Aristotle,” “Hellenism”, “Postcards”)

Unit 4 Logic

Week 9 – Three Acts of the Mind

Unit Paper 3, Due Tuesday by 10:00pm CT

Mar-21 T Kreeft, *Socratic Logic*, Introduction, sections 1, 4, and 5; and Chapter I, “Understanding”

Mar-23 R Kreeft, *Socratic Logic* III, “Material Fallacies”

Week 10 – Reasoning

Mar-28 T Kreeft, *Socratic Logic*, V, “Judgment”, Section 1 and 2 “Judgments, Propositions, and Sentences” and “What is truth?”

Mar-30 R Kreeft, *Socratic Logic* VIII, “Reasoning”; Willard, “Jesus the Logician”

Unit 5 Medieval Philosophy

Week 11 – Augustine

Unit Paper 4, Due Tuesday by 10:00pm CT

Apr-4 T *Confessions* 1 - Augustine and longing for God’s presence. *Sophie’s World* “Two Cultures”

Apr-6 R *Confessions*, 2-3 - Why did Augustine steal the pears? How bad was this sin?

Week 12 – Evil

Apr-11 T *Confessions* 4-6 - Why does Augustine leave the Manicheans?

Apr-13 R *Confessions* 7 - Does evil exist?

Apr 17-21 Easter Break

Week 13 – God

Apr-25 T *Confessions* 8-9 Why does Augustine become a Christian?

Apr-27 R *Confessions* 10-12 How does Augustine interpret Genesis?

Week 14 – Proving God

Unit Paper 5, Due Tuesday by 10:00pm CT

May-2 Aquinas, “Five Ways of Proving God’s Existence” - Can it be proven that God exists?
The First Way; (*Sophie’s World* “The Middle Ages”)

May-4 R Aquinas “Five Ways” - The Second, Fourth, and Fifth Ways.

Unit 6

Week 15 – Empiricism

May-9 T Hume, Enquiry, Section II – Ideas and Impressions

May-11 R Hume, Enquiry, Section IV – Cause and Effect

Week 16 – Atheism

May-16 T Dawkins, Why there is almost certainly no god

May-18 R Sam Harris, There is no God and you know it; Peter Kreeft, The Problem of Evil

Week 17 – Consciousness

Term Paper Due Tuesday by 10:00pm CT

May-23 T Chalmers, How do you explain consciousness?

May-25 R Ed Feser, Can we make sense of the world?

Week 18 – Tree of Life

May-30 T Gospel of John

Jun-1 R Gospel of John