

Atheism and Faith Course Information

Spring 2021

Instructor: Lina Schoendorf

“To be fully human is to seek. We seek not just for food or facts, not just for lay of the land or hints of danger but also for meaning.” (God, The Oldest Question—William J. O’Malley, S.J.)

Welcome to class! I am very eager and excited to be teaching you this semester. This class is one that allows you to bring a lot of your own thoughts, questions, insights and ideas as we learn. You will be expected to share your reflective and well examined thoughts throughout the course as well as learn what your classmates have to offer. We will learn about scholars from all aspects of the spectrum—from atheism, agnosticism, Judeo-Christian and other faith perspectives. You will be expected to share what you have learned. The goal of this class is to encourage you to reflect on your own faith perspective and challenge yourself to grow! Faith is truly a journey—we ALL go through this journey in different ways whether you are a “believer or non believer.”

Textbooks: *God, The Oldest Question* by William J. O’Malley (Loyola Press 2000) and *Atheism: A Reader* (edited by S. T Joshi 2007) and other supplementary material will be handed out. We will also be using the Bible so be sure to have *your Bible* available when necessary.

Objectives: This course in Atheism and Faith is a demanding course in theology and philosophy. The primary objective of this class is to provide grounding in the philosophical and theological foundations necessary to reflect thoughtfully and critically on questions concerning the existence and non existence of God. A second objective of the course is for students to examine their own personal position on questions of faith. Students will be expected do an extensive amount of reading and writing for this course.

Teaching Methods and Requirements:

Our classes will be **REMOTE VIA ZOOM. Attendance counts. Your camera MUST be on during class. I will take attendance during the first five minutes of class, then we will zoom for a portion of our class time. If a problem arises, you must contact me individually and let me know so I can do my best to accommodate but in order to get full credit you must be able to have your camera on. In order to be fair to all students, it is a requirement. And as we only have this method to engage in dialogue during remote learning.**

Discussions, lectures, films, writing assignments, individual and group projects, presentations, quizzes and tests. A mixture of synchronous and asynchronous learning. **Class attendance is CORE to doing well.** If you know you will be absent, please let me know via email. Have your parent(s) email the attendance office and cc me as well. I will inform parents of absences that occur.

Procedures: Each class begins with all of us being present to go over the daily topic. At times it will be a short presentation by me followed by a short class discussion with all of you. That will sometimes lead to break out groups where you will be with other students discussing and presenting your responses to the class as well. There will be times when you will be working on your own as well. MOST of your work will be **submitted for points.**

Grading:

Quests 40% - Tests and quests (hybrid of quiz and test) will be given at the end of a unit. Most tests are multiple choice and half short answer/short essay. Tests provide the most objective measurement of your learning. Approximately every two weeks there will be a test or quest. Sometimes there will be a pop quiz regarding your homework or reading.

Essays and Projects 30% - Essays and projects will be assigned as opportunities to go deeper into the material presented in class through research, critical thinking, reflection and creative expression.

Homework and Quizzes- 20% - Homework will be checked or turned in for a grade while all quizzes will be graded. Checking your work allows us an opportunity to find out how you are learning the material. Homework will be used to facilitate a lesson. Quizzes will be based on material from homework assignments and material from class. All work must be TYPED and PRINTED BEFORE CLASS STARTS

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an opportunity to find out how you are learning the material. Homework will be used to facilitate a lesson. Quizzes will be based on material from homework assignments and material from class. All work must be TYPED and PRINTED BEFORE CLASS STARTS UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED. If not printed, it will be considered late and will lower your grade by several points. Be sure to put the heading with your full name, class and class period, date and assignment on upper left hand of page.

Class Participation 10%- Getting involved in conversation with your peers and with me is the best way to learn in class: be open, be honest, be respectful ask questions make comments and share your experience. Stay engaged and involved—even if just listening. Class participation will be assessed by self assessment, by my assessment according to the class participation rubric and my overall impression of your involvement and attitude in the class over the marking period. Generally, your success in class participation depends on how well you contribute to discussions, follow instructions and adhere to these procedures. All of this WILL impact your grade.

Late Work:

Late work will ONLY be accepted if it is ONE day late. Work not turned in when asked for is late. If you are absent from school, work must be submitted the day you return. All work is expected to be TYPED UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED.

Absence:

If you are absent YOU are still responsible to do your homework and submit as soon as you can or the day of your return. You are expected to look at schoology to find out what we did in class that day and what is due. If there is an exam or quest the day you return, you are expected to take it during your flex period OR after school. **BE SURE TO LET ME KNOW WHEN THAT IS SO I CAN OPEN THE TEST FOLDER FOR YOU IN TIME.** It should be taken within the same week it was given.

Early Dismissal Or Planned Absences: Please be sure to submit your work on schoology before you leave for your event.

Class Rules:

Be respectful of one another and of the instructor. Everyone has a right to share their thoughts and insights without being interrupted. One huge aspect of this course is that we (me, included!) learn from one another. We must always speak politely. Stay on task (do not work on other things or distract others please). No use of cell phones or other devices during class time.

Be prepared and prompt. Students are expected to zoom in class on time. Have all materials (books) with you during class and have your homework submitted as well as your laptop ready.

Be responsible and find out what you have missed when you are absent. Check schoology and feel free to contact me via email if you have any questions. I try to return emails the same day during the weekday but on the weekend I may not check it as often. My email is lschoendorf@bishopodowd.org. I will be available on Weds mornings during office hours from 10am- 11:30am.

I put the UTMOST VALUE IN INTEGRITY AND HONESTY. Students caught cheating or plagiarizing, as defined in the Student Handbook, will be given an “F” for the assignment and it will be documented in your records.

Contacting Me: I will have regular office hours every Wednesday from 9:30-10:15 am. My link will be on schoology. Feel free to email me at lschoendorf@bishopodowd.org. I try to reply the same day or the next day on weekdays. If you send it later in the evening, you may not get a response until the next day. I am also happy to talk to parents if there are any concerns as well.

Please sign below after you have read this and are aware of the requirements of this course.

Print Name: **Ben Hammond** Date: **10/1/21**

Signature: **Ben Hammond** Date: **10/1/21**

Parent Signature: _____ Date:

Lina Schoendorf, M.T.S

Religious Studies