



G330 Reason and Christian Belief

3 credits. Prerequisites: G143 Worldviews and Contemporary Culture
This course transfers to the University of Saskatchewan for Horizon students.

👤 Mississauga Campus 'A' Livestream 🎥 Video on Demand

September 15 to October 24, 2025
Term A / Fall 2025
Monday* and Wednesday
10AM – 1PM (EST) / 8AM – 11AM (SK)
***No class Oct 13**

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A genuine and robust faith will not shrink from the process of testing, for it is confident that it will indeed pass the test.” – C. Stephen Evans and R. Zachary Manis

Note: This course includes reading and preparation work before the class starts. Please see assignment 1 & 2 requirements and due dates.

Course Goals

Course Description

A study of philosophical issues arising from religious belief and practice, such as: the relation between faith and reason, arguments for the existence of God, the problem of evil, the relation between religion and science, and religious pluralism.

Relationship to Horizon and MCS's Mission

As part of MCS's mission to prepare leaders for Christian life and ministry, this course helps students evaluate philosophical reasons for, or objections to, having faith in God. Therefore, the primary area of competency development that applies to this course is:

- **Contextual Awareness:** demonstrated by a maturing orthodox Christian worldview, a healthy self-understanding, and engagement of people and cultures with wisdom and discernment.



Core Competencies and Learning Outcomes

To demonstrate competency in *Contextual Awareness* students will:

1. Compare and contrast an evangelical Christian worldview with that of postmodernism.
 - *Assessment:* Postmodernism Learnings Summary.

2. Analyze, interpret, and critique texts related to religious belief.
 - *Assessment*: Weekly Reading Quizzes, Response to Objections Papers.
3. Respond to philosophical objections to belief in God.
 - *Assessment*: Response to Objections Papers.
4. Explain his or her level of confidence for believing in God using philosophical resources.
 - *Assessment*: Belief in God Paper.

In addition, students will gain an introductory understanding of the primary issues in philosophy of religion.

Course Work

Required Readings

Evans, C. Stephen, and R. Zachary Manis. *Philosophy of Religion: Thinking about Faith*. 2nd edition. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009. (ISBN: 978-0830838769)
DTL: <https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/932458673>.

Peterson, Michael L., and Raymond J. VanArragon, ed. *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Religion*. 2nd edition. Oxford: Blackwell, 2020. (ISBN: 978-1119028451).
DTL: <https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1098229679>.

There will be a weekly quiz on the readings, to be taken Mondays, on Populi.

**While students have the benefit of accessing many of their textbooks online through the [Digital Theological Library](#), they will not have access to the Digital Theological Library upon graduation. Therefore, we encourage students to purchase select textbooks to build their personal library.

Course Assignments and Activities

1. *Weekly Quizzes on Readings* – 10%.

Students will complete the appropriate quiz on Populi by Monday 11:59 PM ET on the week the readings are due (except for the first and last week of classes). Students may take a second attempt at the quiz before Thursday 11:59 PM ET of that week.

- To complete this assignment, students will follow these guidelines:
 - Complete the appropriate lesson in Populi.
- **Related learning outcome(s)**: #2.
- **Assignment length**: N/A
- **Due dates**: Sept 16, Sept 22, Sept 29, Oct 6, Oct 15

Topic	PR – Evans and Manis	CD - Peterson	Reading & Quiz Dates
Intro, Postmodernism	Chapters 1-2	(all of PM)**	Sept. 16 (note: Tuesday)
Faith & Reason, Problem of Evil	Chapter 7-8	Chapter 6	Sept. 22

Science, Pluralism	Chapters 3 & 6	Chapters 8 & 10	Sept. 29
Existence of God	Chapter 5	Chapter 15 (rec)	Oct. 6
Religious Experience	Chapter 4	Chapter 4 (rec)	Oct. 15 (Wednesday)

* rec = recommended, not mandatory

** PM = Postmodernism Readings/Viewings (links posted on Populi in Lessons Tab)

2. *Postmodernism Learnings Summary – 10%*

In 300 words or less, you will discuss the similarities and differences between an evangelical Christian worldview and that of postmodernism. To complete the assignment, you will:

- a) Begin by defining and describing postmodernism (100-150 words).
 - b) Note how postmodernism is both consistent with and inconsistent with an evangelical Christian worldview (100-150 words).
- For success in this assignment, students will follow these guidelines:
 - Follow the Horizon & MCS Format Guide.
 - Complete the appropriate lesson in Populi.
 - Explicitly draw on and cite both the class lecture material and your *PM* reading/viewing (links will be listed on Populi). I am *not* looking for you to report on what other authors have said, but rather for you to draw on their material and synthesize¹ it (where it has influenced your view) into your own evaluation of postmodernism.
 - Review the rubric for this assignment.
 - Related learning outcome(s): #1.
 - **Assignment length:** no more than 300 words.
 - **Due date:** September 18.

3. *Responses to Objections - 45% (3 x 15%)*

In three papers you will respond to philosophical objections that are sometimes made regarding Christianity and sometimes even belief in a divine being in general. The three papers are based on the following material:

→ **Evil (due Sept. 26)**

- Respond to William Rowe's argument in "Evil Discredits God" by using information from

- *PR* ch 7.

- Class lecture material.

- *CD* ch 6 "Is Evil Evidence Against Belief in God?" pp. 139-164.

→ **Science (due Oct. 2)**

- Respond to Michael Ruse's argument in "Science Discredits Religion" by using information from

- *PR* ch 6.

- Class lecture material.

- *CD* ch 8 "Does Science Discredit Religion?" pp. 193-218.

→ **Pluralism (due Oct. 10)**

- Respond to Peter Byrne's argument in "It is Not Reasonable to Believe That Only One Religion is True" by using information from

¹ Put it together and state it in your own words.

- *PR* ch 8.
- Class lecture material.
- *CD* ch 10. "Is it Reasonable to Believe That Only One Religion is True?" pp. 243- 266.

After reading the material noted above, you will write a 900-word paper where you will:

- a) Summarize the objection in your own words as it is described by the author in *CD* (250 words).
 - b) Defend your belief or unbelief in the God of Christianity by responding to the objection (650 words). In this section of your paper, I'm not looking for you to provide a summary of what various authors have said. Rather, I expect you to draw on their material and synthesize it (where it has influenced you [as above]) into your own evaluation of the objections.
- For success in this assignment, students will follow these guidelines:
 - Follow the Horizon & MCS Format Guide.
 - Complete the appropriate lesson in Populi.
 - Don't include a paragraph of introduction or conclusion. Instead, save the space for more substantial content. No bibliography is required.
 - Draw on and reference via footnotes *CD*, *PR*, and the lesson material. Keep your quotations very brief, focusing more on writing in your own voice and acknowledging the source of your ideas.
 - Review the rubric for this assignment.
 - Related learning outcome(s): #2, 3.
 - **Assignment length:** 900 words each.
 - **Due date:** September 26; October 2, 10.

4. *Belief in God Paper* – 35%

Using philosophical resources, write a 1300-word paper explaining your level of confidence for believing in God. For this paper you are expected to draw on and cite:

- Class lecture material.
- *PR* ch 2-4 and 8.
- *CD* ch 1-5 as it impacts your rationale for believing in God.

In your paper:

- a) Explain how confident you are regarding the existence of God considering what you have studied in this course.
 - b) Discuss each of the four classical philosophical ideas/arguments for God highlighting those you found convincing (and why) and what you didn't find convincing (and why) to support your belief in God.
- For success in this assignment, students will follow these guidelines:
 - Follow the Horizon & MCS Format Guide.
 - Complete the appropriate lesson in Populi.
 - No bibliography is required. You are welcome to draw on your other course readings as you wish.
 - Keep your quotations brief. Draw on and reference via footnotes both your class lecture material and the readings (especially those referred to above).
 - Review the rubric for this assignment.

- Related learning outcome(s): #4.
- **Assignment length:** 1300 words.
- **Due date:** October 17.
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Video-on-Demand (VOD) Student Requirements

As indicated on the course schedule, this class is offered by VOD. Students taking the course through VOD are required to indicate this during their course registration. While VOD recordings are available for any student who may be absent from class, non-VOD students are expected to attend class live following the class attendance policy.

- **For this course, VOD students have the same and different assignment due dates than in-class students.**
 - Weekly Quizzes are the same as in-class students. (Sept 16, Sept 22, Sept 29, Oct 6, Oct 15)
 - Postmodernism Learning Summary – Sept. 23
 - Response to Objections
 - Evil – Sept. 30
 - Science – Oct 7.
 - Pluralism – Oct. 10 (same)
 - Belief in God Paper – Oct 17 (same)
- By Saturday at 11:59 PM each week, VOD students are required to watch and engage with all lecture content and in-class activities from that week's classes.
- By Saturday at 11:59 PM each week, VOD students will submit a report Padlet (2–3-minute video) that:
 - 1) affirms you have watched the required recording for that week's classes,
 - 2) summarizes one thing you learned that week that will help you reach the course learning outcomes, and
 - 3) explain at least one question you had after watching the class recording.
- Students will watch the lectures according to the following schedule:
 - Week 1 Lectures and Report due September 20
 - Week 2 Lectures and Report due September 27
 - Week 3 Lectures and Report due October 4
 - Week 4 Lectures and Report due October 11
 - Week 5 Lectures and Report due October 18
- In order to pass the course, VOD students must submit all of their VOD weekly submissions. These submissions are marked pass/fail based on whether or not they demonstrate thoughtful engagement with the lecture content and in-class activities.
- The Extensions and Late Assignments policies apply to all VOD Report submissions.

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

Assignment	Time	Due Date	Assignment Weighting
Classroom time Reading (included in assignments)	30 hrs	N/A	N/A

1. Reading Quizzes		See chart	10%
1. Postmodernism Assignment	5 hrs	Sept. 18	10%
2. Response to Objections	45 hrs		
a) Evil		Sept. 26	15%
b) Science		Oct. 2	15%
c) Pluralism		Oct. 10	15%
3. Belief in God Paper	20 hrs	Oct. 17	35%
Total =	100 hrs		100%

All assignments are due at 11:59PM ET time, unless otherwise indicated.

Assessment Rubrics

Assignment rubrics can be found on Populi. Click on the name of the assignment to access each rubric.

Class & Reading Schedule

PR = *Philosophy of Religion* by Evans and Manis

CD = *Contemporary Debates in Philosophy of Religion* edited by Peterson and VanArragon

PM = Postmodernism Readings/Viewings (links posted on Populi in Lessons Tab)

Week	Topics	Reading/Viewing (prior to class discussion)	Assignments
Sept 15-19	Introduction Postmodernism	PR – chapters 1-2 PM – all	Sept. 18- Postmodernism Learnings Summary
Sept 22-26	Relationship of Faith and Reason The Problem of Evil	PR – chapter 7, 8 CD – chapter 6	Sept. 26– Response to Objections - Evil
Sept 29 – Oct 3	Science and Faith Religious Pluralism	PR – chapter 3 & 6 CD – chapter 8 & 10	Oct. 2 – Response to Objections – Science
Oct 6-10	The Existence of God	PR – chapters 5 CD – chapter 15 (rec)	Oct. 10 – Response to Objections - Pluralism
Oct 13-17 *No class Oct 13	Religious Experience Summary	PR – chapter 4 CD – chapter 4 (rec)	Oct. 17 - Belief in God Paper
Oct 20-24	Revision Week		

* **rec** = Recommended, not mandatory

- *On the final day of class, 15 minutes at the beginning of class for students to fill out course evaluations (excluding modules).*
- Revision week is October 20-24. Your instructor may also request revisions on some assignment before revision week.
- No assignments will be accepted after October 24.

Academic Policies

General Assignment Guidelines

Please see the [Horizon](#) & [MCS](#) Format Guide for assignment submission, grammar, and formatting guidelines. The length of papers should fall within +/- 10% of the stated length. Papers that fall outside the length guidelines may not be graded. Assignments should be submitted via Populi under *Submissions* (not *Comments*). The resource at this [link](#) explains how to submit assignments on Populi.

Extensions

To submit extension requests, students must submit the *Request Extension Form* on the [MCS](#) or [Horizon](#) website and *before the due date*. Professors reserve the right to deny extensions. Generally, the sooner that a student asks for an extension, the more willing faculty tend to be in granting extensions. Furthermore, no extensions will be granted beyond the final day of a term or semester unless approval is granted by the Associate Academic Dean (MCS) or Assistant Academic Dean (Horizon).

Late Assignments

Students are expected to submit work by the assigned or extended due dates, as part of their development of the Leadership and Administration competency. Late submissions will be tracked across each student's program. Repeated late submissions, including late submissions of revisions, will result in academic discipline, such as warnings, required coaching, or academic probation. Similar to standard human resource employment practices, students will receive warnings and conditions with increasing severity of academic discipline.

If an assignment is submitted more than four calendar days late, the student will receive a failing grade (0%) for that assignment until it is submitted (students must demonstrate competency by submitting and passing all assignments to pass a course). Upon submission, the assignment may not be graded until revision week. In addition, the student will receive the grade for the assignment with minimal feedback (only a brief rationale for the assignment grade) and no opportunity to submit revisions.

Assignment Completion

Professors usually will not accept assignments that have not been completed according to the instructions given in the syllabus. If a professor informs a student that a submitted assignment is incomplete, the student will be given the opportunity to complete and resubmit the assignment quickly. If this is not possible, the assignment will be regarded as submitted late.

Assignment Revisions

Students can generally submit up to two revisions for each assignment, although a professor may accept more revisions if the professor determines the student is addressing all of the professor's instructions and making significant progress toward achieving competency.

Horizon and MCS's College Assessment of Student Work

The goal of courses is to help students develop their competency, not earn letter grades. Assignments are the means by which instructors evaluate development of competency by assessing learning outcomes as outlined in the syllabus and each assignment rubric. Once a student's assignment has met all competency requirements, the professor will assign a grade for that assignment. Assignments that do not meet competency will receive a 0. A final course grade is not calculated until the end of the course. Students pass a course (with a B- or higher) only after they have demonstrated that they have *met or exceeded all competency requirements* for that course and, therefore, only after they have passed all assignments.

Horizon and MCS CBE Scale		Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point	U of S Equivalency
E	Exceeding expectations	Student demonstrated exceptional achievement of the learning outcomes.	A+	4.0	90-100
			A	4.0	85-89
			A-	3.7	80-84
M	Meeting expectations	Student demonstrated good achievement of all learning outcomes.	B+	3.3	77-79
			B	3.0	73-76
			B-	2.7	70-72

If the student does not meet all competency requirements in a course and, therefore, does not pass all the assignments in a course, the course will not be sufficient to fulfill their program requirements at Horizon and MCS. Nevertheless, for transferability purposes, the student will receive a letter grade of C+ or below according to the scale below.

BTM	Beginning to meet expectations	Student was beginning to meet one or more learning outcomes.	C+	2.3	67-69
			C	2.0	63-66
			C-	1.7	60-62
NYM	Not yet meeting expectations	Student made insufficient progress toward meeting learning outcomes.	D+	1.3	57-59
			D	1.0	53-56
			D-	0.7	50-52
			F	0.0	0-49

Academic Integrity

Students learn best when practicing academic integrity. A lack of integrity is displayed in acts such as deception, abuse of confidentiality, cheating, inappropriate collaboration, or plagiarism. Plagiarism occurs when a student presents the words or ideas of another person or an artificial intelligence (AI) tool in such a way as to give others the impression that it is their own words or ideas. In academic writing, there should be no doubt which words or ideas are the student's and which are drawn from other sources or AI. Students are expected to submit their own original work and give due recognition to sources from which all substantial phrases, sentences or even ideas are drawn. Note also that you may not submit work done in one course to satisfy the requirements of another course (unless both instructors agree beforehand to accept such work). See [here](#) for examples of plagiarism and further guidelines in the Student Handbook.

Horizon and MCS have a subscription to software that ensures the originality of academic writing, verifies the proper citation of all sources, and detects AI-generated content. When you submit an assignment, you will automatically receive a summary on Populi that includes your submitted files along with an originality score (a high originality score is positive).

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Usage

In keeping with the Academic Integrity policy above, students must disclose on the title page of all assignments whether or not they have used AI and how they have used it. If the assignment has no title page, the student must disclose this to the instructor by some other means, such as in a comment on Populi. Students are expected to follow the policy for acceptable use of AI that is published in the [Horizon](#) and [MCS](#) Student Handbooks.

Accessible Learning Services Information

Horizon and MCS are committed to provide safe and inclusive learning environments which equalize the opportunity for students with disabilities to meet the requirements of the institutions, programs, and courses. The application for Academic Accommodations begins with a student disclosing a medical diagnosis or professionally documented learning disability during the application process. Enrolled students may contact Accessibility services personnel (at MCS, the Director of Academic Success, Wendy Holmes at wendy.holmes@mcs.edu; at Horizon, the Academic Accommodations Coordinator, Richelle Bekkattla at rbekkattla@horizon.edu). All Academic Accommodations will adhere to the Guiding Principles listed in the Student Handbooks.

Class Attendance (On Campus or Livestreaming)

Students should attend all classes in order to facilitate competency development. Students are expected to be present through the delivery method that they registered for, either on campus or through livestreaming with their camera on. A student must be present for the full duration of a class period in order to be registered as present for the class. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss the equivalent of six hours of class (e.g., one day of a module course or two three-hours classes) without academic penalty. Students who are absent for more than this will automatically fail the course. Students wishing to be exempted from this policy due to extenuating circumstances may make an academic appeal, where they will need to document and verify those circumstances. Students who miss a class are responsible to get missed notes or handouts from another student, rather than from the professor.

Livestreaming Etiquette

Students taking the course through livestreaming are required to indicate this during their course registration. While livestreaming access is available for on-campus students who are unable to attend class due to illness, on-campus students are expected to attend class in person following the class attendance policy.

If attending class online via livestream, in order to be marked present for class, you must keep your camera on and stay present and attentive throughout the class session, extending the gift of engagement. Access your class with a computer (preferably) or tablet, not a cell phone. Arrive to class on time, and dress as you would if you were attending class on campus. Join the class from

a quiet space with minimal background noise and mute your microphone until you wish to speak to the class.

Use of Technology

Horizon and MCS encourage the use of electronic devices in the classroom to enhance learning. Careful consideration must be given to privacy issues, copyrighted materials, and the general care and concern for others. Please respect the following classroom policies:

- Please use online access for course learning only. This is a matter of respect for the instructor's teaching, your own learning, and fellow students who may be distracted by other uses.
- Students should secure permission from the instructor to record any teaching material. This includes PowerPoint slides, white board illustrations, notes, and any form of audio or video.
- Student feedback is a valuable input for course improvements. Please resolve any classroom grievance about the instructor or course with the instructor personally, through the grievance procedures, or the Populi-based course evaluations. It is inappropriate to air classroom grievances on a social media platform.
- When instructors use recording mechanisms in the classroom, recorded materials will be used for the sole purpose of instruction and cannot be released to any social media outlet without the written consent of the students whose images have been recorded.
- In general, it is not acceptable to share photographs or videos of students in the classroom setting without permission from those whose images appear in such media.

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**Note: Most of these books contain bibliographies that can lead you to works on specific topics.*