



G143 Worldviews and Contemporary Culture

3 credits. Prerequisites: *none*.

👤 Saskatoon Campus 'A' Livestream 📺 Video on Demand

November 10-December 19, 2025
Term B
Monday & Wednesday, 9am-noon SK (10am-1pm ET)

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*“Life and love and why/Child, adult, and die/All of us hoping and all of us searching for what?”
-Switchfoot (“Life and Love and Why”)*

Course Goals

Course Description

An introductory exploration of worldviews as intellectual and value systems, especially in relation to culture. These powerful forces shape the lives and beliefs of people; they are often absorbed without clear reflection on the part of the holder. This course will help students identify worldviews in everyday life and develop their own worldview.

Relationship to Horizon’s Mission

Horizon’s mission is to “advance God’s Kingdom by preparing competent Christian leaders for Spirit-empowered life and ministry.” Inevitably, this Spirit-empowered life and ministry will occur within the myriad of worldviews present in the 21st century. Thus, to cultivate contextual awareness, this course will ask students to critically examine and evaluate what is going on around them. They will also be given the opportunity to discern how they should live as Christ-followers in light of the worldviews and cultural trends that surround them.

Core Competencies and Learning Outcomes



To demonstrate competency in **Contextual Awareness**, students will:

1. Explain the major beliefs, values, and implications of a worldview.
 - *Assessment:* Textbook Reflection
2. Reflect critically on how worldviews are present in one’s own life and the world at large.
 - *Assessment:* Textbook Reflection; Letter of Response to a Friend’s Worldview; Worldviews in Shopping Presentation
3. Observe the indicators of worldviews and cultural influences within a variety of contexts.
 - *Assessment:* Letter of Response to a Friend’s Worldview; Worldviews in Shopping Presentation



To demonstrate competency in **Contextual Awareness** and **Spiritual Maturity**, students will:

4. Recognize the influences that shape their own worldview and implement practices that continue to develop a mature Christian worldview.
 - *Assessment*: Textbook Reflection; “My Worldview” Video

Course Work

Required Readings

Sire, James W. *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*. 6th edition. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2020. ISBN: 978-0830849383.

DTL: <https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/1196820748>

Wilkins, Steve, and Sanford, Mark L. *Hidden Worldviews: Eight Cultural Stories That Shape Our Lives*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009. ISBN: 978-0830838547.

DTL: <https://thedtl.on.worldcat.org/oclc/850912247>

**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. *Textbook Reflection* (30%).

This two-part assignment is meant to give you a broad introduction to some of the worldviews/cultural stories present in our culture so you can begin the process of engaging critically and in a Christ-like manner.

Read *Hidden Worldviews* in its entirety. See a suggested reading schedule in Appendix A. From *Hidden Worldviews*, for both Consumerism **AND** Individualism, answer the following questions:

- a) Describe the hidden worldview.
- b) Explain one positive outcome of the hidden worldview.
- c) Explain how you see the hidden worldview influencing your life. Give two or more concrete examples of its influence in your life.
- d) Suggest two or more practices you can do which will combat the hidden worldview’s influence in your life.

You **DO NOT** have to read *The Universe Next Door* in its entirety. From *The Universe Next Door*, select either Naturalism **OR** the New Age. Read the chosen chapter carefully. For the chosen worldview:

- a) Describe the worldview.
- b) Explain how this worldview differs from your current understanding of a Christian worldview.

- c) Give two or more concrete examples of this worldview's presence in broader Canadian culture.

Be sure to indicate that you have completed the required reading on the title page of your assignment.

- In addition to the above, students will follow these guidelines:
 - Follow the Horizon & MCS Format Guide.
 - Include citations in footnotes when paraphrasing, summarizing, or quoting from other sources.
 - Cite *Hidden Worldviews* by Wilkens & Sanford when discussing Consumerism and Individualism.
 - Cite *The Universe Next Door* by Sire when discussing Naturalism or the New Age.
- Related learning outcome(s): #1, #2, and #4.
- **Assignment length:** 4 ½ -6 pages (approximately 1 ½ -2 pages per worldview or hidden worldview).
- **Due date:** November 20, 2025.

2. "My Worldview" Video (20%).

In order to reflect on his or her worldview and grow in spiritual maturity, students will answer the following questions in a video:

- a) Describe 3 or more factors / influences that have shaped your worldview up to this point. How have these factors / influences shaped your worldview?
- b) Share 2 or more examples of values / commitments that you hold, explaining how they are a direct result of your answer to one of Sire's 8 Worldview Questions. A value / commitment is something that is important to you — something you hold to be true always and no matter what.
- c) Share 2 or more examples of decisions you have made, explaining how these were a direct result of your answer to one of Sire's 8 Worldview Questions. These decisions should be specific, concrete scenarios from your life.
- d) Explain 3 or more steps you will take to continue to develop your worldview. Make sure your explanations are specific—make an action plan!

The video should be uploaded to a cloud service of the student's choice (e.g., OneDrive, Dropbox, Loom, YouTube, etc.) and the link to the completed video submitted on Populi. Do not share this video publicly.

- Related learning outcome(s): #4.
- **Assignment length:** 10-15 minutes.
- **Due date:** November 27, 2025.

3. Letter of Response to a Friend's Worldview (25%).

For this assignment, use the "Letter" found under "Lessons" on Populi. Imagine you received this letter from a friend. Your task is to write a letter of response to your friend using first-person language. You must diagnose what worldview(s) is present in your friend's letter, communicate

how your convictions differ as a disciple of Christ from those of your friend, and show your love and care for your friend in the tone and content of your letter. This imagined correspondence will give you the opportunity to learn how to dialogue with others who have different worldviews and convictions than you.

Follow this outline:

- a) **INTRODUCTION:** Establish a connection with your friend. Use your imagination!
- b) **EVALUATION:** Based on the course material and textbook reading, tell your friend what worldview(s) you think is at play in her letter. Explain to your friend **why** you think this worldview(s) is present in her letter, specifically referring to the letter she wrote to you. Make sure to cite the textbooks or the class notes at least 2 times in this section of the letter to aid in your evaluation.
- c) **CRITIQUE:** As a disciple of Christ, what are 3 correctives or changes you would offer to your friend in response to what she has shared with you in the letter? What Christian worldview commitments are important to communicate in your letter of response?
- d) **SIGN-OFF:** End your letter in a way that signals you are open for more communication and conversation with your friend about these matters.

Throughout the letter, include the important element of **CARE**. Ask yourself: “How will I communicate my thoughts to my friend in a Christ-like manner?” Demonstrate Christ-like care, concern, and the ability to engage with your friend and her worldview.

- In addition to the above, students will follow these guidelines:
 - Follow the Horizon & MCS Format Guide.
 - Include citations in footnotes when paraphrasing, summarizing, or quoting from other sources.
 - Include a bibliography.
- Related learning outcome(s): #2 and #3.
- **Assignment length:** 2-3 pages, double-spaced.
- **Due date:** December 8, 2025.

4. *Worldviews in Shopping Presentation (25%).*

There are two options for this assignment.

Option A: For an hour, browse through some popular online shopping destinations, looking for different worldviews, “ism’s,” and cultural stories in the products available:

- amazon.ca (see the Bestsellers section especially)
- bookstores
- clothing stores (pay attention to t-shirts with text on them)
- etsy.com

Option B: Visit a mall. For one hour, walk around and observe the different worldviews, “ism’s,” and cultural stories at play in this setting. Pay attention to advertisements, products available, etc.

From this experience, prepare a 4–6-minute presentation for the class that will aid in the class’s corporate discovery of the variety of worldviews that are present in our daily lives. Follow these steps:

- a) Introduce yourself to the audience and give a thesis statement for your presentation. (E.g., My name is [fill in the blank] and I am going to show you an example of [fill in the blank] that I found while I was shopping.)
- b) Identify and define one worldview, “ism,” or cultural story that you found in your online shopping or at the mall. Your definition should be clear and provide a good amount of detail. **DO NOT** skip this step, as it provides the foundation for your presentation.
- c) Relate the definition you gave in Part B to the screenshot or photo of the worldview, “ism,” or cultural story you found during online shopping or at the mall. Make sure to specifically articulate how this screenshot or photo is an example of the worldview, “ism” or cultural story you defined in Part B.
- d) Explain the consequences of the worldview, “ism,” or cultural story you saw during online shopping or at the mall. How do these things affect our society? How could these things affect us personally?
- e) Conclude your presentation by briefly reminding your audience of what you have said.

Include **one screenshot** of the worldview, “ism,” or cultural story you found in your online shopping, or **one photo** of the worldview, “ism,” or cultural story you found at the mall. Upload this screenshot or photo by December 10 at 8am SK to the assignment “Worldviews in Shopping Presentation” on Populi. Be prepared to ask your classmates questions about their observations and to have your classmates ask you questions about your observations.

- Related learning outcome(s): #2 and #3.
- **Assignment length:** 4–6-minute presentation.
- **Presentation date:** December 10, 2025.

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 assignment due dates as in-class students.
 - **NOTE:** For the *Worldviews in Shopping Presentation*, VOD students will **make a video of their presentation and upload it to Padlet before December 10, 2025 at 8AM SK**. Post your presentation on Padlet under the column “Worldviews in Shopping Presentation.”
 - Note that if you do not film your presentation directly in Padlet, you will need to upload your video file as a comment. (Padlet does not allow file uploads in the original post.) To upload a video file, create an initial post with only the title of your presentation in the textbox. After publishing the post, upload your video file as a comment.
 - Upload the photo or screenshot as a comment under your video on Padlet.

- By Saturday at 11:59PM SK each week, VOD students are required to watch and engage with all lecture content and in-class activities from the previous week's classes.
- Additionally, by Saturday at 11:59PM SK each week, VOD students will submit a 2–3-minute video report on Padlet that
 - 1) affirms he/she has watched the required recording for the last seven days,
 - 2) summarizes one thing he/she learned that week that will help him/her reach the course learning outcomes,
 - 3) explains at least one question he/she had after watching the class recording.
- 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)

Classroom time	30 hrs	N/A	Assignment Weighting 30%
1. Textbook Reflection <i>Reading: 28 hours</i> <i>Writing: 12 hours</i>	40 hrs	Nov 20	
2. "My Worldview" Video	7 hrs	Nov 27	20%
3. Letter of Response to a Friend's Worldview	8 hrs	Dec 8	25%
4. Worldviews in Shopping Presentation	7 hrs	Dec 10	25%
Total =	92 hrs		

All assignments are due at 11:59pm **SK time**, unless otherwise indicated.

Assessment Rubrics

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

Course Outline *subject to change; approximate

Nov 10	Introduction Christian Cultural Engagement
Nov 12	An Introduction to Worldview What Makes Up a Worldview?
Nov 17	Intro to Western History The Premodern Story The Modern Story
Nov 19	The Modern Story cont'd The Postmodern Story
Nov 24	The Postmodern Story cont'd Christian Theism
Nov 26	Deism Naturalism

	Nihilism
Dec 1	Nihilism cont'd Existentialism
	Eastern Pantheistic Monism
Dec 3	Eastern Pantheistic Monism cont'd New Age
Dec 8	Tolerance, Pluralism, Relativism Case Studies
Dec 10	<i>Worldviews in Shopping Presentations</i> Conclusion: Living as Disciples

- Revision Week is December 15-19. Your instructor may also request revisions on some assignments before Revision Week.
- No assignments will be accepted after December 19, 2025.

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
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.

Bibliography

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Appendix A: Suggested Reading Schedule

Date	Reading
November 10, 2025	<i>Hidden Worldviews</i> , Chapters 1 and 2
November 11, 2025	<i>Hidden Worldviews</i> , Chapters 3 and 4
November 12, 2025	<i>Hidden Worldviews</i> , Chapters 5 and 6
November 13, 2025	<i>Hidden Worldviews</i> , Chapters 7 and 8
November 14, 2025	<i>Hidden Worldviews</i> , Chapters 9 and 10
November 15, 2025	<i>Hidden Worldviews</i> , Chapter 11 One chapter of <i>The Universe Next Door</i> (Naturalism OR The New Age)
November 20, 2025	Textbook Reflection