



G143 Worldviews and Contemporary Culture

3 credits. Prerequisites: *none*.

👤 Mississauga Campus 'A' Livestream 📺 Video on Demand

Sept 7-11, 2026
Module A
Mon-Fri 10:00am-5:00pm ET
(8:00am-3:00pm SK)

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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 and MCS's Mission

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; Worldview Interview

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](#)

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](#)

**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 a positive outcome of the hidden worldview.
- c) Explain how you see the hidden worldview influencing your life. Give a few concrete examples of its influence in your life.
- d) Suggest a few 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 a few 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:** September 25, by 8pm ET time

Suggested Reading Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>
Complete by Sept 11	<i>Hidden Worldviews</i> , Chapters 1 and 2
Complete by Sept 17	<i>Hidden Worldviews</i> , Chapters 3 - 11
Complete by Sept 21	One chapter of <i>The Universe Next Door</i> (Naturalism OR The New Age)
Due Sept 25	Textbook Reflection due

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 some factors / influences that have shaped your worldview up to this point. How have these factors / influences shaped your worldview?
- b) Share a few 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 a few 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 some 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, etc.) and the link to the completed video submitted on Populi. Do not submit the video directly on Populi. Do not share this video publicly.

- Related learning outcome(s): #4.
- **Assignment length:** 10-15 minutes.
- **Due date:** by October 2, by 8pm **ET time**

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:

- INTRODUCTION:** Establish a connection with your friend. Use your imagination!
- 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.
- CRITIQUE:** As a disciple of Christ, what are some 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?
- 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:** October 8, by 8pm **ET time**

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 video 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.

Record your presentation as a video. The video should be uploaded to a cloud service of your choice (e.g., YouTube, OneDrive, Dropbox, Loom, etc.) and the link submitted on Populi by October 16 at 8pm **ET time**. Upload the photo or screenshot as well.

- Related learning outcome(s): #2 and #3.
- **Assignment length:** 4–6-minute presentation.
- **Presentation date:** October 16 by 8pmET time

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.

- According to the schedule below, VOD students are required to watch and engage with all lecture content and in-class activities. VOD students will submit a 2–3-minute video report that 1) affirms you have watched the required recording, 2) summarizes one thing you learned that will help you reach the course learning outcomes, and 3) explains at least one question you had after watching the class recording.
 - Day 1 Lectures and Report: Sept 12 at 11:59PM
 - Day 2 Lectures and Report: Sept 12 at 11:59PM
 - Day 3 Lectures and Report: Sept 19 at 11:59PM
 - Day 4 Lectures and Report: Sept 26 at 11:59PM
 - Day 5 Lectures and Report: Oct 3 at 11:59PM
- Students registered to attend by VOD will fulfill the course attendance requirements through their video report submissions. They must submit their VOD reports on time to be registered as present for class.

Estimate of Time Investment (individual time investments may vary)

Classroom time	30 hrs	N/A	Assignment Weighting
1. Textbook Reflection	40 hrs	Sept 25	30%
<i>Reading: 28 hours</i>			
<i>Writing: 12 hours</i>			
2. Worldview Interview	7 hrs	Oct 2	20%
3. Letter of Response to a Friend's Worldview	8 hrs	Oct 8	25%
4. Worldviews in Shopping Presentation	7 hrs	Oct 16	25%
Total =	92 hrs		

All assignments are due at **8pm 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.

Course Outline *subject to change; approximate

Sept 7-11	Unit I: Why Worldview?
	Unit II: Understanding Our Story
	Unit III: Diagnosing Dominant Worldviews
	Unit IV: Responding as Disciples

- There will be chapel on September 9, 12:15pm – 1:30pm ET (10:15am – 11:30am SK).
- Revision week is October 19-23. Students are encouraged to submit revised assignments soon after they receive their marked assignments.
- No assignments will be accepted after the course end date: October 23, 2026.

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. A late penalty will be assessed for all overdue assignments: 1-3 calendar days late, penalty of 10%; 4-6 calendar days late, penalty of 20%; after 6 calendar days late, an assignment receives a grade of 0 and no opportunity for revision. Any late penalty incurred on a first submission will be applied regardless of if the student chooses to continue learning through the revision process.

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.

Competency Assignment Revisions

After each assignment has been marked, students have the opportunity to continue learning in response to feedback they receive on assignments. Students can submit one revision 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 demonstrating competency. Revised assignments may be submitted up to the course end date, although students are encouraged to submit them soon after they receive their marked assignments. Assignments submitted later than one week before the course end date are ineligible for revisions.

Horizon and MCS's College Assessment of Student Work

The goal of courses is to help students develop their competency, rather than solely 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. Once a student's assignment has met all assignment completion requirements, the professor will assign a grade for

that assignment. The opportunity for revisions exists according to the “Assignment Revisions” policy.

Horizon and MCS Competency 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
		Student demonstrated excellent achievement of the learning outcomes.	A	4.0	85-89
			A-	3.7	80-84
M	Meeting expectations	Student demonstrated good achievement of the learning outcomes.	B+	3.3	77-79
			B	3.0	73-76
			B-	2.7	70-72
BTM	Beginning to meet expectations	Student demonstrated satisfactory progress in achieving the learning outcomes.	C+	2.3	67-69
			C	2.0	63-66
			C-	1.7	60-62
		Student demonstrated minimal progress in achieving the learning outcomes.	D+	1.3	57-59
			D	1.0	53-56
			D-	0.7	50-52
NYM	Not yet meeting expectations	Student made insufficient progress toward meeting learning outcomes.	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. Students with documented accommodations on file pertaining to accessing course readings in alternate formats are encouraged to contact the librarian for assistance with as much advanced notice as possible.

Class Attendance

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. Students registered to attend on-campus or via livestream must be present for the full duration of a class period to be marked as present for the class. Students registered to attend by VOD must submit their VOD reports on time to be marked as present for class. In the case of illness or other unforeseen circumstances, students may miss up to twenty percent of the total class time (e.g., one day of a module course, two 3-hour classes, etc.) 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 (potentially including future online video courses) 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.

Library Support and Research Assistance

Library staff are available to meet with students (online or in person) who need assistance with

- citing sources and identifying credible resources;
- developing research and information literacy skills;
- searching DTL and other library resources.

Bibliography

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_____. *Who's Afraid of Postmodernism? Taking Derrida, Lyotard, and Foucault to Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2006.

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Appendix A: Suggested Reading Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Reading</u>
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 21, 2025	Textbook Reflection