

Christian Mind

(Introduction to Worldviews)

Course Syllabus

See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy,
which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ.
For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form,
and you have been given fullness in Christ,
who is the head over every power and authority.
—Colossians 2:8-10

Course Description

What do you believe about reality? A worldview provides the foundation on which we view reality and on which we live. What is the Christian worldview and how does it compare with other worldviews—the universe of ideas “next door”? Ideas have consequences, so we must understand and be able to discern the major worldviews and how they affect society today.

In general, this course provides an overview of the following:

- An overview of theism and the Christian worldview.
- A basic understanding of the following additional worldviews:

Deism	Nihilism	New Age
Atheism	Theistic Existentialism	Postmodernism
Agnosticism	Atheistic Existentialism	Relativism
Apatheism	Polytheism	Pragmatism
Naturalism	Pantheism	Hedonism
Secular Humanism	Panentheism	Narcissism

- A comparison of these worldviews with Christianity.

Textbooks

1. Oberbrunner, Kary. 2008 *The Fine Line: Re-envisioning the Gap Between Christ and Culture*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan. ISBN 978-0-310-28545-8
2. Sire, James. 2009 *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press. ISBN 978-0-8308-3850-9

Objectives

The objectives of this worldview introduction are to help the student:

1. Understand and articulate the essential intellectual elements of a complete worldview.
2. Articulate and defend the Christian worldview.
3. Comprehend and critique a variety of worldviews and the presuppositions upon which they are based.
4. Recall key thinkers and events in the history of the sciences, both natural and human.
5. Give a response to a current worldview from a Christian perspective.
6. Recognize and formulate a Christian posture for interacting on moral, ethical, scientific and biblical issues as seen in society.
7. Feel confident in the Christian faith as a viable lens for which to interpret the meaning of life.
8. Be motivated to communicate the Christian worldview as a means for finding purpose and satisfaction in life.

Requirements and Grading

1. Complete all the online assignments and any additional lessons assigned by the course teacher/administrator.
2. Write a two-page book review of Kary Oberbrunner's, *The Fine Line*. Include in your review such things as: a brief summary of the book (e.g. theme, major points, format, etc.), how the book applies to our culture, does the author attain his purpose, and, finally, how this book affected you. This review is to be typed double spaced and include a title page, subtitles, and bibliographic entry for the book.

This requirement constitutes 25% of the course grade.

3. Create a brief definition for each of the above worldviews. For each worldview, also add the following:
 - The answer to the eighth question about worldviews that James Sire included in his fifth edition of *The Universe Next Door* (found on pages 23-24): "What personal, life orienting core commitments are consistent with this worldview?"
 - A one-sentence suggestion on how a Christian could witness to someone who holds that worldview considering that person's core commitments.

This requirement constitutes 25% of the course grade.

4. Write a six page theme paper comparing and contrasting one of the worldviews with the Christian worldview. In preparing your paper, present your comparison/contrast as if you were writing to a friend who holds to the other worldview. The student shall write the theme paper using the course theme paper requirements. The student can find theme paper requirements by clicking the course Resources icon.

The student may want to refer to *Understanding Postmodernism and Christianity: A letter to Jarys* lesson assignment in Lesson Eight as an example of a theme. The student may also want to refer to the *Definition of Philosophical Terms* and *Worldview Questions* lesson assignments in Lesson One, and the *Theme Paper Draft Preparation* lesson assignment in Lesson Eight.

A theme paper draft will need to be completed and uploaded two weeks before the final theme paper is uploaded. The final theme paper is due the end of the last week at midnight.

This requirement constitutes 50% of the course grade.