



## WC 19 WORLDVIEW AND ETHICS Spring 2018

### INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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**Instructor:** Dr. Thor Madsen  
**E-mail:** tmadsen@mbts.edu  
**Dates:** March 12-April 27

**MWI Office Phone:** (816) 414-3780  
**MWI E-mail:** mwi@mbts.edu  
**Class Meetings:** Thursdays 6:45pm-8:15pm  
**Location:** Trustee Classroom Building,  
Room 152

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

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The purpose of this course is to provide an overview of the major questions arising in the study of worldviews, with special reference to Christian Theism. This set of questions would address the nature of a worldview, the criteria needed to evaluate worldviews, the nature of Christianity (understood as a worldview), the rationality of religious belief, the existence of God, the phenomenon of suffering, and historical evidence for the occurrence of miracles.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

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Upon successful completion of this course, each student will be able to:

1. The student will acquire a basic understanding of the five elements of worldviews in general and the Christian worldview in particular.
2. The student will acquire a basic familiarity with the criteria used to evaluate various worldviews.
3. The student will learn to apply these criteria for assessing worldviews to specific cases—e.g., Christianity, naturalism, Buddhism, Islam, and Communism.

### COURSE TEXT

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*The Universe Next Door*, 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, by James Sire [IVP, 2009].

The text is available through the campus bookstore, *Sword and Trowel*.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

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In this course, the student will be measured against three standards of assessment described in greater detail below:

### *1. Capstone Examination [40%]*

The primary assessment tool in this course will be a capstone examination that the student will complete on a ‘take-home’ proctored basis at the end of the course. That is, the student will need to complete the examination in the presence of someone who can certify that she has taken the examination without the aid of notes and other study helps. This examination will cover the essentials of the course given in the assigned readings and the course lectures.

### *2. Submitted Lecture Notes [40%]*

The student will submit a copy of her notes taken during the course lectures. These notes will then become a resource for her later use in various forms of ministry and personal interaction. The question asked in reviewing these notes will simply be whether they give evidence of careful attention to the course content delivered in lecture form. These notes can be handwritten and need not be presented in any formal way. They just need to be (mostly) legible.

### *3. Class Participation [20%]*

One of the essential benefits of meeting together for a course like this is the experience of interacting with other students and with the course instructor in dialogue. Therefore, the assessment process in this course will include some attention to each student’s class participation. What the instructor will be looking for here is evidence of her having read the assigned readings and having given some further thought to their contents.

## **GRADING SCALE**

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The student whose own work compares to the average student’s work in the course will receive grades in the B to B+ range. Students who fall noticeably below the average in the course will receive grades in the C range, if not lower. Students whose work is noticeably superior to the others will receive grades in the A range. It follows, then, that in order to receive a grade in either the C or A range, the student must stand out from the crowd in one way or the other for each assignment that the whole class completes. Sometimes, however, the whole class is populated by students who, in the instructor’s experience, would stand out in any crowd as better than ordinary; and that circumstance is allowed for here.

<b>Grading Scale</b>	
<b>A</b>	90 and up
<b>B</b>	89-80
<b>C</b>	79-70
<b>D</b>	69-60
<b>F</b>	59 or below

## COURSE SCHEDULE

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Date	Class
March 15	Meet in Class
March 22	Online Discussion Board
April 5	Meet in Class
April 12	Online Discussion Board
April 19	Meet in Class
April 26	Online Discussion Board

## GENERAL INFORMATION

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1. Midwestern is committed to facilitating students with disabilities. Students seeking effective auxiliary aids for a current documented disability need to conform to college policies and procedures as listed in the Midwestern Students with Disabilities Information Brochure available on the website at <http://www.mbts.edu/consumer-information/>. Students are responsible for contacting the Student Development Office at (816) 414-3733 for verification and recommendations for any disability case. The Student Development Committee will then recommend to the professor any necessary effective auxiliary aids.
2. Since this modular class only meets for three classes, attendance is crucial. Each student is allowed one *excused* absence. If the need should arise to miss a class, she should contact the professor for permission in advance. The student will not receive course credit if more than one absence occurs. Participating in all three weeks of online discussion is required to receive credit for the class.
3. The student must work strenuously to get her assignments in on time. There can be valid reasons for turning in work past its due date, of course, but they will involve unforeseeable circumstances. Just having a lot of other assignments to complete at that time is not a valid excuse for turning in late work, mostly because final grades have to be submitted by a certain time as an institutional matter; so we have to be fastidious about this issue as much as needed.