



APOLOGETICS 201 - Course Syllabus

Course Title: *Apologetics 201 - Christian Apologetics (3 credits)*

Course Description

This course introduces the student to Christian apologetics and focuses on the biblical basis for apologetics, biblical apologetic method, presuppositions, worldview, how Christian theology of God, man, and sin impact apologetics, and practically engaging contemporary culture in defending the faith and proclaiming the truth of God. Includes Christian evidences and an overview of various Christian approaches to apologetics, introductory material on epistemology (how we know things), logic, theology, philosophy, the problems of evil, various religions, science, reason, and other topics at the discretion of the instructor.

Assignments include weekly reading and writing assignments, in-class discussion of the readings and videos, role-playing discussions, weekly quizzes, two tests, sharing the Christian message "in the real world," short essays, and comparison of beliefs of world religions.

Required Texts

Farnham, Mark. [Every Believer Confident: Apologetics for the Ordinary Christian](#), P&R Publishing, 2025. (The earlier edition will suffice if you already have it.)
Pratt, Richard L. Jr. [Every Thought Captive: A Study Manual for The Defense of Christian Truth](#), P&R Publishing, 1980.

Supplemental Texts for Further Learning

Anderson, James. N. [What's Your Worldview? An Interactive Approach to Life's Big Questions](#), Crossway, 2014.
Bahnsen, Greg L., and Robert R. Booth. *Always Ready: Directions For Defending the Faith*. Nacogdoches, TX: Covenant Media Press, 1996. The full text is available online at https://archive.org/stream/gregbahnsenalwaysready/Greg%20Bahnsen%20-%20Always%20Ready_djvu.txt.
Gundry, Stanley N., and Steven B. Cowan. *Five Views on Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.
McDowell, Josh. *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict*, Thomas Nelson, 1999.
McDowell, Sean. *Apologetics for an Ever-Changing Culture: A Biblical and Culturally Relevant Approach to Talking About God*, Harvest House Publishers: January 2025.

Sproul, R. C. *Defending Your Faith: An Introduction to Apologetics*, Crossway: 2018.
Van Til, Cornelius. *The Defense of the Faith*. 4th ed. Phillipsburg, NJ: P & R, 2008.
Vlach, Michael. *Philosophy 101: The "BIG IDEA" for the 101 Most Important People and Concepts in Philosophy*. Stone Tower Books, 2016.
Wallace, J. Warner. *Cold Case Christianity: A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels* (updated and expanded ed.) David C. Cook publisher, 2023.

Prerequisites

None

Instructors

- Professor: Pastor Matt Postiff, Ph.D., Th.M.
 - Email (preferred method of communication): pastor@fbcaa.org
 - Phone (for urgent matters): 734-417-0023
- Teaching Staff: Daniel Manwiller
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Class Time

Class will meet once weekly **on Thursdays from 7pm-10pm from August 28 to December 11 except for Thursday November 27, 2025**. Class will take place at Solid Rock Bible Church, 670 Church St, Plymouth, MI 48170. Class time will be broken down into the following approximate schedule:

- Weekly Quiz (7:05 – 7:25)
- Review of reading and homework (7:25 - 8)
- Lecture (8:00 - 8:30)
- Break (8:30 - 8:40)
- Lecture (8:40 - 9:25)
- Break (9:25 - 9:30)
- Chapel: Discussion and application (9:30 - 10:00)

Course Objectives

In this course the student will:

1. Become familiar with various apologetic models used by the Christian church and understand the presuppositions of these models.
2. Learn basic terminology of apologetics and related fields of study.
3. Learn and evaluate the traditional arguments for God's existence as well as the transcendental argument for God's existence.
4. Develop skills in the practical use of Christian apologetics with a focus on the presuppositional method.
5. Gain practice using evidences in apologetic conversations
6. Become familiar with how to address the problems of evil.

Assignments

- **Attendance and Participation** – Students are expected to participate in class discussion which will be based on assigned readings and written homework assignments.
- **Reading** – We will be reading two books this semester. For the first book by Farnham, you will read the assigned section, and write out several questions that you would use as quiz questions or as a tool to evaluate someone else's reading comprehension. For the second book, by Pratt, you will write answers to the study questions provided at the end of each chapter. In both cases, in-class discussion will focus on the questions and answers.
- **Quizzes** - There will be weekly quizzes over the course of the semester. These quizzes will generally take place at the beginning of class time each week and will cover the previous week's study materials including reading and lecture. The quiz format will include multiple-choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short-answer-style questions. The purpose of these quizzes is to provide the students with regular graded feedback on their understanding of the course material and to prepare them for the exams. The quizzes also ensure a student's regular and punctual attendance for the weekly class time. In case of absence, students are to arrange with the instructor to receive a copy of the quiz electronically, fill it out, and return it either electronically or at the start of the next class period. Quizzes are CLOSED BOOK. Sometimes they will be open Bible.
- **Homework** - There will be a number of written or participatory homework assignments based on the week's lessons. Submission of the homework will generally be done in class, on paper. Some may be done through Canvas, say if you are absent. Typed documents may be uploaded directly. Documents can be scanned and submitted as a complete .pdf document. Homework is graded for effort, accuracy and completeness.
- **Tests** – There are two major tests. The precise schedule for exams will be determined as the class unfolds. Each test will focus on the material learned in the most recent classes. There is of necessity some cumulative nature to the coursework so that later tests will require a solid grasp of the earlier material. Tests are CLOSED BOOK.

Canvas

Canvas is an online course management system for college courses. It will be used in this course for online submission of homework and for posting grades, announcements, and access to relevant course documents. Further details on how to set up a Canvas account and access this course can be found in the appendix to this document. **Please make sure you accept the course invitation as soon as possible!**

Assessment

Assignments will have the following grade weights:

Assignment	Grade Weight	Notes
Attendance and	10%	Attendance and instructor

Participation		evaluation of discussions
Reading	15%	Weekly reading and written summaries
Quizzes	25%	Weekly quizzes over the previous reading and lecture
Homework	25%	Weekly written or video assignments
Two Tests	25%	Each test is weighted equally in the final grade.

We will use the following thresholds to convert raw scores in the course into letter grades:

A+: $\geq 98\%$	B+: $\geq 88\%$	C+: $\geq 78\%$	D+: $\geq 68\%$	F: $< 60\%$
A: $\geq 92\%$	B: $\geq 82\%$	C: $\geq 72\%$	D: $\geq 62\%$	
A-: $\geq 90\%$	B-: $\geq 80\%$	C-: $\geq 70\%$	D-: $\geq 60\%$	

Depending on the distribution of raw scores at the end of the semester, these thresholds may change; however the final thresholds will be no stricter than the current thresholds. For example, if you receive a raw score of 85% in the course, you will be guaranteed a letter grade of at least B; however it may happen that you receive a higher letter grade depending on the overall distribution of raw scores.

Class Schedule

Week	Reading Due Today	Topics To Be Discussed Today	Assignments Due Today
1 8/28	There will be weekly reading in this course.	Introductions The matter of inadequacy. What is apologetics? What is the gospel?	What do you hope to learn in this class?
2 9/4	Study the chart "What's Your Worldview?" and my notes on James Anderson <i>What's Your Worldview?</i>	Discuss Textbook and writing assignment. The nature of people. Traditional arguments for the existence of God and their weaknesses.	Start a glossary. Write how you might speak with a follower of _____.
3 9/11	Farnham Ack-ch. 1 Write a summary of the chapters you read (each week).	Discuss MacArthur/Shapiro and Farnham reading and questions. Lecture on 1 Peter 3:15-16 and schools of apologetic thought	Watch MacArthur/Shapiro
4 9/18	Farnham, ch. 2-3 Ditto, and so on below.	Textbook reading, summary of chapter; go over questions	

Week	Reading Due Today	Topics To Be Discussed Today	Assignments Due Today
		What is a <i>worldview</i> and what is <i>your</i> worldview? (Anderson) Skim the history of apologetics.	
5 9/25	Farnham, ch. 4-5	Lengthy discussion of worldview assignment. NPR presentation of gospel; how to examine 1 Peter 3:15-16 and 1 Cor. 2:9. Lengthy discussion of ch 6-7.	Write a worldview summary.
6 10/2	Farnham, ch. 6-7	Exercise: identify logical fallacies. Theological foundations. Presuppositions: what is one, and what are the right ones to believe. Case study: evolution.	Watch Lennox/Baker
7 10/9	Farnham, ch. 8-9	Shortcoming of human reason and effects of the fall. Point of contact. Various evidences and the proper use of evidences.	Quiz 6
8 10/16	Farnham, ch. 10-11	Test #1 More on the elements of Biblical presuppositionalism.	Study for Test #1
9 10/23	Farnham, ch. 12-13	Go over Pratt and answers (and in future weeks as well). Go over Craig/Carrier debate. Points of contact and common ground. The transcendental argument for God's existence.	No quiz. Watch Craig/Carrier
10 10/30	Pratt, ch. 1-2 Write answers to the study questions.	Go over White/Hamimi debate. Epistemology.	Quiz 7 on weeks 8-9 Watch White/Hamimi
11 11/6	Pratt, ch. 3-4 Ditto, and so on below.	The Problems of Evil and How to Respond to Them Watch Frye/Lennox in class and discuss.	
12 11/13	Pratt, ch. 5-6	More on the Problems of Evil (Hume, Burgraff, Bahnsen). Introduction to influential philosophers and ideas (Vlach).	

Week	Reading Due Today	Topics To Be Discussed Today	Assignments Due Today
13 11/20	Pratt, ch. 7-8	Relation of Epistemology to apologetics. View of reality. What about belief systems that claim similarity with Christianity? Roman Catholicism, JW, Mormon, and Islam. Is the Muslim God the same God? What about the problem of "You grew up as a Christian, so obviously that is how you are going to believe?"	Assign for next week: Pray with one or more classmates or church people about some unsaved people you know that you would like to witness to.
11/27	Thanksgiving Break		
14 12/4	Pratt, ch. 9-10	How to use a presuppositional approach in speaking with someone (Pratt). Philosophy definitions and relationship to apologetics.	Speak with a person who needs the gospel. Watch Bahnsen/Stein
15 12/11	Pratt, ch. 11-14	Test #2	Glossary, neatly typed and organized due 4/22.

Late Policy

Assignments are expected to be submitted on the due date. If there are extraordinary circumstances outside of the student's control, they may request an extension from the teaching staff.

Additionally, it is often the case that due to any number of other circumstances, a student finds that they are unable to adequately complete a given assignment. In such cases, the student is welcome to submit the assignment after the due date, up to the end of the semester; however, a late penalty will be given for such a late assignment. The standard late penalty is a 20% flat reduction in grade for the given assignment. This late penalty is meant to penalize late submissions and encourage timeliness, while still allowing the student to still finish the given assignment to the best of their ability even if they are unable to complete the assignment for some time due to any extended circumstances.

This late policy is subject to instructor discretion. The 20% late penalty policy is intended to allow for unique or difficult but not extraordinary circumstances. Any student who abuses this policy, per the instructors discretion, is liable to have this policy revoked and the grade revert to either a zero or that based on any submission prior to the due date.

Appendix: How to set up your Canvas Account

This course will use the free version of Canvas. This means that you will be able to set up a Canvas account with your regular email and will be able to access the course on Canvas with a

simple course invitation sent to your email. Please perform the following steps to setup your Canvas account:

- Check your email for a course invitation to Canvas.
- Click the “Get Started” button, which should redirect you to a Canvas page.
- Accept the course invitation. Upon accepting, it should redirect you to a page that will allow you to either set up a new Canvas account or link a current Canvas account.
- If you do not already have a free Canvas account, proceed to create a new account. To create a new account, it will set your login to be your email, you simply need to set your password and accurate time zone.

Your new account should be all set. To log in to Canvas in the future, go to the following URL:

<https://canvas.instructure.com/login/canvas>

Use your email and password to log in. Then click on your BIBLE 121 course.

To use the mobile Canvas app, you’ll want to download the Canvas app. Upon downloading and opening the app for the first time, it will prompt you to “Find my School.” Select this option and put in “Free Canvas Accounts.” Select this option and proceed to log in with your email and password associated with your free Canvas account.

Appendix: How to submit homework on Canvas

From the course’s Canvas home page, navigate to the assignments tab. Select the homework assignment from the list of assignments. Follow the instructions for the different cases of typed and handwritten submissions.

For typed documents:

- Click “Start Assignment” (“Submit Assignment” in the mobile app)
- Click “Upload File” (“Files” in the mobile app)
- Click “Choose File” (simply select the file in the mobile app)
- Navigate to the proper file and select it
- You may add any number of files by selecting “Add Another File”

For handwritten documents:

You may use a scanner, scanner app, or simply take photos of your work and submit the files by following the same steps outlined for typed documents. The best option may be to use the Canvas mobile app to submit the assignment and use the scanner feature as an option after selecting “Submit Assignment.”

Please note, you may submit as many times as you would like prior to the assignment deadline. The most recent submission will count as your graded submission.

Appendix: Academic Integrity

Students are expected to hold themselves to a Christian standard of ethics in all matters. This includes, but is not limited to, refraining from any forms of plagiarism, cheating, sharing or acquiring any materials that would give a student an unfair advantage, or any dishonest representation of one’s work. Below is outlines the consequences for an infringement of

academic integrity for a given assignment:

- First offense – A grade of zero is given for the assignment; the professor must notify the Registrar and Dean of Students. A statement goes into the student's file.
- Second offense – A grade of F is assigned for the course; the professor must notify the Registrar and Dean of Students. A statement goes into the student's file. The Dean of Students and/or Registrar will notify faculty of students who incur a second offense in this area.
- Third offense – The professor must notify the Registrar and Dean of Students. A statement goes into the student's file and the student may be suspended or dismissed from this institution.

Appendix: Policy on Use of Generative Language Models for Written Assignments

The use of generative language models, such as ChatGPT, is not strictly prohibited and in some cases is very much encouraged as a research and brainstorming tool. However, all written assignments submitted as your own work should reflect your own personal writing. This prohibits copy and paste use of such tools, however, you may feel free to quote such tools provided that you make clear it is a quotation.

In general, you should treat generative language models as equivalent to speaking to another person. You may gain insight from them and be able to improve your value and productivity, but you should not misrepresent someone else's work as your own. These tools may also be treated somewhat like calculators in a math class. You may use them when appropriate and assignments may even assume their use in some ways, but all submitted work must be your own unless specified otherwise.