

CST 4400ONLH

Christian Apologetics

Online Syllabus

Shorter University

Instructor Information

See link in Canvas.

Course Information

- Course: Christian Apologetics
- Course Number: CST 4400ONLH
- Credit Hours: 3
- Prerequisites: CST 3725 and CST 3726

Course Description

Various approaches to the apologetic task will be investigated. Attention will be given to the systematic and rational defense of the Christian faith against many serious contemporary challenges. Topics include such areas as tests for truth, a critique of relativism and pluralism, the problem of miracles, and the historicity of the Christian faith. A primary aim of the course will be the practical application of apologetics in the church's ministry. Prerequisites: CST 3725 and CST 3726.

Student Outcomes

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- Explain the biblical foundations for apologetics
- Discuss contemporary issues from a Christian worldview
- Evaluate contemporary points of view on a variety of issues confronting the Christian faith
- Engage in apologetic dialogues and presentations about crucial questions about the

Christian faith

- Integrate primary and secondary sources of information in apologetic dialogues and presentations

Required Texts

Cowan, Steven B., ed. *Five Views on Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000. ISBN9780310224761

House, H. Wayne and Joseph M. Holden. *Apologetics and Christian Evidences*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2006. ISBN9780310219378

Sweis, Khaldoun A. and Chad V. Meister. *Christian Apologetics: An Anthology of Primary Sources*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan 2012. ISBN 9780310325338

Supplemental Materials

The following works are not required, but students should have access to them as needed to complete course assignments.

Cosgrove, Mark P. *Foundations for Christian Thought: Faith, Learning, and the Christian Worldview*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006. ISBN 9870825424342

Guinness, Os. *Fool's Talk: Recovering the Art of Christian Persuasion*. Downers Grove, ILL: IVP Books, 2015. ISBN 9780830836994

Kreeft, Peter and Ronald K. Tacelli. *Handbook of Christian Apologetics: Hundreds of Answers to Crucial Questions*. Downers Grove, ILL: IVP Academic, 1994. ISBN9780830817740

Koukl, Gregory. *Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Christian Convictions*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009. ISBN 9780310282921

McGrath, Alister E. *Mere Apologetics: How to Help Seekers & Skeptics Find Faith*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2012. ISBN 9780801014161

Sire, James W. *Why Good Arguments Fail: Making a More Persuasive Case of Christ*. Downers Grove, ILL: IVP Academic, 2006. ISBN 9780830833818

_____. *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*, 5th ed. Downers Grove, ILL: IVP Academic, 2009. ISBN9780830838509

Sproul, R. C., John Gerstner, and Authur Lindsey. *Classical Apologetics: A Rational Defense of the Christian Faith and a Critique of Presuppositional Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984.

Related Websites

[A list of 100 contemporary Christian Apologists](#)

[Apologetics for a New generation](#)

[William Lane Craig's webpage](#)

[Peter Kreeft's webpage](#)

[Ethos, Pathos, Logos: 3 Pillars of Public Speaking](#)

[Biblical Foundations and Models for Contemporary Apologetics](#)

[C. S. Lewis Society](#)

[J. P. Moreland's webpage](#)

Technology

- You must have regular access to a computer and an Internet connection to participate in this course. All coursework is conducted online, and no in-person meetings will be held.
- Shorter University uses Canvas as its online Learning Management System (LMS). An LMS provides students and faculty with an Internet-based learning environment that is both secure and easy to use. All course materials will be provided through Canvas, and all assignments will be submitted through the software, as well. When a student is enrolled in a course, they will automatically be enrolled in the course module in Canvas.
- Students can [log in to Canvas](#) using their normal SCHOLAR ID and password.
- Students should always email their instructors from their Shorter University Hawkmail account. Emails can be initiated from an email program or from Canvas itself.
- Assignments may be distributed in proprietary file formats, such as PDF or Microsoft Word. Students will be expected to have the necessary software to open and interact with these files.

Grading Information

Assessments	Percentage of Total Grade
Discussion Board Postings	30%
Weekly Learning Activity Assignments Week 2: Interview Week 3: Photo Shoot Week 4: Plato's Cave Week 5: <i>Avenger's Age of Ultron</i> Week 6 : Annotated Bibliography Week 7: Learning Questions Week 8: Learning Questions	40%
Apologetic Essay	30%
Total for the course	100%

Grade Scale	Points
A	90-100

B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	59 and below

Course Assessments and Policies

Discussion Forum Participation

In a traditional classroom, each student would be expected to attend class regularly and interact with the professor and with the other students. The online classroom is no different. The discussion forum allows us to reflect on each week's material individually, but more importantly, it also allows us to discuss the material with one another and learn as a community. Each week's discussion forum will have a topic, which will either require you to respond to a reading or critically engage with an issue.

Introductory Forum Post

Write an introductory paragraph and post in the Introductory Forum. Provide the following information:

- Your name
- Where you live
- Your major (if you have one)
- Something interesting about yourself
- Anything you would like to share with classmates
- Your expectations for the class

Post your introduction before 11:55pm Tuesday.

Weekly Discussion Forum

Every week you will be asked to reflect on various topics related to that week's lesson. Since there may be multiple topics for discussion in any given lesson, *respond to one and only one* Discussion Board question and post your contribution to the topic on the Discussion Board. Your contribution to the topic should show personal reflection on the topic and interaction with course materials. Furthermore, your initial post should be clear, complete, and accurate. This assignment also requires that you read the answers posted by your classmates and each week respond to at least two of those postings.

Steps to constructing the initial forum post are:

1. Read carefully the assigned readings for the week before attempting a forum post.
2. In weeks where two or more discussion questions or topics are presented *choose one*

and only one for your initial post.

3. Read carefully the discussion question or topic. Be sure to answer all parts of the question or topic.
4. Do not wait to the last minute to post your answer! Posting early allows you to write thoughtful answers and to be the first one to make important points. Posting early also ensures that you will not miss the deadline.
5. Make sure you check your answers for spelling and grammar.

In your replies to other students you can:

1. Expand on or clarify a point made in the answer.
2. Offer an additional argument to support a position taken in an answer.
3. Suggest ways in which an idea could be more clearly expressed.
4. Identify passages where you think the writer misunderstood a concept or applied it incorrectly.
5. Disagree with a point or position made in an answer.

If you are disagreeing with the views of another student, please be constructive and respectful. You may criticize a position but not the author. State precisely the point you disagree with. Make sure you have not misinterpreted the writer's position. Offer reasons why you think their view is incorrect and support your position by citing the text or other sources.

Grading: Be sure to respond to at least two of your classmates' posts. Answers will be graded on overall understanding of the topic accuracy, insightfulness, grammar, spelling. Grading for forum posts is as follows:

- Initial post; 70 points
- Interactive Response #1: 15 points
- Interactive Response #2: 15 points

Lesson 1 Discussion Forum:

- Initial Essay due before 11:55pm Wednesday
- Interactive Responses due before 11:55pm Friday

Lesson 2 Discussion Forum:

- Initial Essay due before 11:55pm Wednesday
- Interactive Responses due before 11:55pm Friday

Lesson 3 Discussion Forum:

- Initial Essay due before 11:55pm Wednesday
- Interactive Responses due before 11:55pm Friday

Lesson 4 Discussion Forum:

- Initial Essay due before 11:55pm Wednesday
- Interactive Responses due before 11:55pm Friday

Lesson 5 Discussion Forum:

- Initial Essay due before 11:55pm Wednesday
- Interactive Responses due before 11:55pm Friday

Lesson 6 Discussion Forum:

- Initial Essay due before 11:55pm Wednesday
- Interactive Responses due before 11:55pm Friday

Lesson 7 Discussion Forum:

- Initial Essay due before 11:55pm Wednesday
- Interactive Responses due before 11:55pm Friday

Lesson 8 Discussion Forum:

- Initial Essay due before 11:55pm Wednesday
- Interactive Responses due before 11:55pm Friday

Written Assessments

Weekly Assignments: Each week students will complete a series of learning activities/discussion questions. The questions with answers are to be typed and uploaded to Canvas before 11:55pm Sunday of each week. The only exception to this policy is Week 8; all assignments must be submitted before 11:55pm Friday.

Weekly assignments include some creative projects that will help the student refine his or her apologetic skills. Instructions for the assignments are posted in Canvas. The assignments are due before 11:55pm Sunday of each week. Note Week 8 is the exception, that assignment is due on Friday.

Apologetic Essay: Students will also complete an apologetic essay on a selected topic approved by the professor. Please email the professor for topic approval. Instructions for the apologetic essay are posted in Canvas.

Please note that written assignments other than Discussion Forum posts, will be graded using the Christian Studies Formal Writing Rubric posted in Canvas. Discussion Forum posts will be graded using the Christian Studies Forum rubric posted in Canvas.

Participation Policy

Participation is required to complete this course successfully. Please note that participation is measured by completing the discussion forums each week by the specified due dates, in conjunction with all assignments and tests.

Late Work

As a general rule, late work is not accepted. Because the course is only eight weeks long, it is important that you turn your assignments in on time. Should you have an emergency situation, please contact your professor directly.

Course Schedule

(Check Canvas for details of assignments.)

- **Week 8 ends on Friday, so ensure that all assignments are completed by Friday during the last week.**

Week	Reading	Weekly Assessments and Due Dates
		All assignments are due before 11:55pm on the dates listed below.
1	Sweis and Meister, <i>Christian Apologetics</i> , 15-74.	Tuesday: Introductory Forum Wednesday: Discussion Forum Friday: Discussion Responses Sunday: Apologetics Forum
2	Sweis and Meister, <i>Christian Apologetics</i> , 79-98; 139-167	Wednesday: Discussion Forum Friday: Discussion Responses Sunday: Interview Learning Activity
3	Sweis and Meister, <i>Christian Apologetics</i> , 273-308 Cowan, <i>Five Views on Apologetics</i> , 7-24	Wednesday: Discussion Forum Friday: Discussion Responses Sunday: Photo Shoot Learning Activity
4	Sweis and Meister, <i>Christian Apologetics</i> , 191-204 Cowan, <i>Five Views on Apologetics</i> , 25-89	Wednesday: Discussion Forum Friday: Discussion Responses Sunday: Plato's Cave Allegory Learning Activity
5	Sweis and Meister, <i>Christian Apologetics</i> , 239-270 Cowan, <i>Five Views on Apologetics</i> , 92-145	Wednesday: Discussion Forum Friday: Discussion Responses Sunday: Avengers: Age of Ultron Learning Activity
6	Sweis and Meister, <i>Christian Apologetics</i> , 335-378 Cowan, <i>Five Views on Apologetics</i> , 148-206	Wednesday: Discussion Forum Friday: Discussion Responses Sunday: Apologists' Tool Kit Learning Activity
7	Sweis and Meister, <i>Christian Apologetics</i> , 419-459 Cowan, <i>Five Views on Apologetics</i> , 208-263	Wednesday: Discussion Forum Friday: Discussion Responses Sunday: Learning Activity questions
8	Sweis and Meister, <i>Christian Apologetics</i> , 505-540 Cowan, <i>Five Views on Apologetics</i> , 266-312	Wednesday: Discussion Forum Friday: Argumentative Essay, Learning Activity Questions, and Discussion Responses

Policies and Procedures

Netiquette

Netiquette is a set of rules for how to communicate effectively and politely online.

Effective written communications are an important part of online learning. In a face-to-face class, body language along with verbal responses and questions help students and the instructor communicate with each other. In an online environment, however, misunderstandings can easily occur when basic rules of Netiquette (online etiquette) are not followed, such as using texting abbreviations or **USING ALL CAPITAL LETTERS IN WRITTEN COMMUNICATIONS**. Therefore, please use the following guidelines when communicating in this course:

- Using ALL capital letters in online communication indicates you are yelling. Limited use of capitalized words is acceptable when emphasis is needed. Underscoring and italics can also be used for emphasis.
- Use a descriptive subject line in emails and forum postings.
- Include your name in all emails; we can't always tell who you are based on your email address.
- No derogatory comments, ranting or vulgar language is acceptable in any form of communication in the course. Respect for others and their views is expected.
- Please keep in mind that something considered offensive may be unintentional. If you are concerned about something that appears to be unacceptable, please inform the instructor via email.

Class Attendance

Online courses are typically delivered asynchronously, meaning that there are no fixed times when students need to be online. While there is no standard attendance policy for online classes, students are expected to log-in to class several times each week to check for updates and to communicate with the professor and/or with other students. There will also typically be deadlines for the completion of assignments, and there may be requirements that the student participate each week in online chats or forum discussions. In some cases there may be a requirement for the student to log-in at a particular time during the week to participate in a group chat or discussion. As with any traditional course, a student cannot skip several weeks of online classes and expect to succeed!

No Show Policy

Students who fail to complete the mandatory introduction forum within the first 9 class days from the start of the session will be automatically dropped from the class. **PLEASE NOTE:** Students must login as well as complete mandatory introduction forum within this 9-day period. Simply logging into a course will still constitute as a **NO SHOW** for the course if the mandatory introduction forum within the actual online course platform is not completed within the first 9 class days from the start of the session.

Students who do login and complete the mandatory introduction forum within the first 9 days from the start of the session, but who then stop participating in their online class will NOT be automatically withdrawn from the class. To withdraw from the class the student must send an e-mail to their advisor and his or her instructor from his or her Shorter e-mail account requesting to withdraw. The withdrawal will be effective from the date of the e-mail request. An automatic F will be given if a student is not properly withdrawn.

Academic Integrity Policy

A Community of Honor

As a liberal arts university committed to the Christian faith, Shorter University seeks to develop ethical men and women of disciplined, creative minds and lives that focus on leadership, service and learning. The Honor System of Shorter University is designed to provide an academic community of trust in which students can enjoy the opportunity to grow both intellectually and personally. For these purposes, the following rules and guidelines will be applied.

Academic Dishonesty

"Academic Dishonesty" is the transfer, receipt, or use of academic information, or the attempted transfer, receipt, or use of academic information in a manner not authorized by the instructor or by university rules. It includes, but is not limited to, cheating and plagiarism as well as aiding or encouraging another to commit academic dishonesty.

"Cheating" is defined as wrongfully giving, taking, or presenting any information or material borrowed from another source - including the Internet by a student with the intent of aiding himself or another on academic work. This includes, but is not limited to a test, examination, presentation, experiment or any written assignment, which is considered in any way in the determination of the final grade.

"Plagiarism" is the taking or attempted taking of an idea, a writing, a graphic, musical composition, art or datum of another without giving proper credit and presenting or attempting to present it as one's own. It is also taking written materials of one's own that have been used for a previous course assignment and using it without reference to it in its original form.

Students are encouraged to ask their instructor(s) for clarification regarding their academic dishonesty standards. Instructors are encouraged to include academic dishonesty/integrity standards on their course syllabi.

Procedure

- A. It is the responsibility of an instructor to certify that academic assignments are independently mastered sufficiently to merit course credit. The responsibility of the student is to master academic assignments independently, refrain from acts of academic dishonesty, and refuse to aid or tolerate the academic dishonesty of others.
- B. If an instructor determines that the student is guilty of academic dishonesty, the instructor must discuss the matter with the student. In the event the instructor cannot

reach the student in a timely manner, such as when the student has gone home at the end of a semester, the instructor may assign a grade of "I" (Incomplete) until the student can be contacted and the matter of academic dishonesty discussed. The instructor then completes the "Academic Violation Form" (see Appendix A) which should include evidence and other necessary documentation. The instructor will determine the appropriate remedy: either to assign a grade of zero on that assignment in question or a grade of "F" in the course. The student will designate whether he/she accepts the remedy for the violation of the dishonesty policy or wishes to appeal the instructor's decision. If a student elects to appeal, the "appeal due date" line must be completed on the Academic Violation Form. (See the Appeals section below for more information regarding the appeals process)

- C. Upon completion, the instructor forwards the Academic Violation Form to the Registrar's for the placement in the student's permanent record. The Registrar will forward copies of the Academic Violation Form to the student, the faculty member, department chair, academic dean, dean of students, provost, and president. Not appealing when the form is first completed or by the appeal due date will be taken as an admission of guilt, except under compelling circumstances to be determined at the sole discretion of the provost.
- D. If upon receipt of the Academic Violation Form the Registrar determines that the student is guilty of a second offense, then a grade of FD (Failure Due to Academic Dishonesty) will be assigned by the Registrar for the course regardless of the remedy specified on the Academic Violation Form. Assigning the FD is to be done by the Registrar when the second Academic Violation Form is placed in the student's record, and the Registrar will notify all parties in writing. The student is then permanently disbarred from membership in any honorary society and is permanently ineligible for any SU honor list. The student may petition the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee to have the dishonesty notation removed from the transcript after one year or upon graduating from the University if no additional dishonesty offenses occur and the student satisfactorily completes the Academic Integrity Program. The grade of F remains on the transcript. Upon receipt by the Registrar of a third offense, the Registrar will assign the grade of FD and then notify all parties. After all appeals are exhausted, if the third offense still stands, then the student will be permanently expelled from the University. The notice of expulsion will be forwarded to the student, department chair, appropriate academic dean, dean of students, provost, and president. A copy of the final report with the three offenses will become a part of the student's permanent record. The university reserves the right to expel the student after a first or second offense, depending on the circumstances and at the sole discretion of the provost.

Appeals

- A. The student who wishes to appeal an academic violation charge should submit his/her appeal in writing to the chair of the appropriate department by the appeal due date indicated on the Academic Violation Form, which is normally within ten regularly scheduled class days after the completion date of the Academic Violation Form. This statement should contain the reasons for which the student is appealing the instructor's decision. The burden of proof lies with the student in such a case to show that an error or malfeasance has occurred. Within ten regularly scheduled class days of receiving the written appeal, the department chair will notify in writing both the instructor and the student of the chair's decision. If the department chair is also the instructor who files the

Academic Violation Form, then the student must appeal to the appropriate academic dean.

- B. When, in the opinion of the department chair, the student fails to show reasonable cause for further investigation, the chair may deny the appeal without taking further action. When, in the opinion of the department chair, a student's appeal raises reasonable doubt as to whether a mistake or malfeasance has occurred, the chair will meet with the faculty member and with the student and render a decision within ten regularly scheduled class days of the receipt of the appeal. If the decision favors granting the student's appeal, the department chair may request that the Registrar remove the Academic Violation Form from the student's record. The chair will notify both the student and the instructor of this action.
- C. If the student files the initial appeal or elects to appeal the chair's decision during Maymester, Summer I, Summer II or during final exam week of the Fall or Spring semesters and if the instructor or department chair is not available during that time, all of the foregoing time requirements begin to run with the first day of class in the next major term. In extreme or unusual circumstances regarding the timeliness of the appeals process, the provost will make the final determination.
- D. Any student who has exhausted the remedies open under the procedures outlined above may appeal the entire matter to the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee in writing within ten regularly scheduled class days of receiving the response from the department chair. Upon receipt of the appeal, the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee will review the matter and issue a decision within fifteen (15) regularly scheduled class days. The Academic Integrity Appeals Committee has the authority to deny the appeal, reduce the penalties in the event of extenuating circumstances, or direct the registrar to remove the record of the Academic Violation Form from the student's permanent record. The results of the Academic Integrity Appeals Committee are final.
- E. All results from the proceedings of the Academic Dishonesty Appeals Committee should be reported to the appropriate academic dean, dean of students, provost, and president as information.

NOTE: During the appeals process, the student may continue to attend the class in which the violation occurred.

Students Needing Accommodations

Shorter University provides accommodations for students who have a disability. The student must contact the Director of Educational Support in FSU 219 (706-233-7323) as soon as possible to discuss your needs. Shorter University is committed to providing access to programs and services to all qualified students with disabilities. Student Support Services is located in the Fitton Student Union, Room 219 (706-233-7323). Academic support is available to all students through the Center for Learning and Academic Success at Shorter (CLASS). The Center offers peer tutoring and coordinates study groups for students seeking assistance. Also, students can receive help with writing through individual tutoring in the Writing center. CLASS is located on the second floor of the Sheffield-Thompson building in the Bailor Suite.