

HON1000-1 FA23 - Introduction To Christian Scholarship

Instructor: Ben Cater, Ph.D.

Office: Academic Dean's Center, Rm. #2

Phone: 619.849.2932

Email: bcater@pointloma.edu

Phone: ext. 2932

Office hours: drop-ins and by appointment

PLNU Mission: To Teach, To Shape, To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is molded and formed, and service becomes an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we aspire to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Honors Mission Statement

"The Honors Program exists to promote greater understanding of diverse human traditions of self-awareness and creativity. Examining these traditions in light of the Christian faith and liberal methods of learning, students excel in their abilities to interpret and discuss written, visual, and sonic texts within theological and interdisciplinary frameworks. Students take their education beyond the classroom in extracurricular activities, as well as in works of service and mercy as informed by the Wesleyan tradition."

Course Description

This course introduces students to the Honors Program. It is primarily structured around readings and conversations about our readings. Readings and discussions are organized into three sections: "Origins," "Habits," and "Vocation." The first section surveys the major historical events and figures who helped establish a biblically informed scholastic tradition. The second section analyzes the habits of the mind, heart, and body that encourage us transform into Christian scholars. The third section meditates on who we are called to be in Jesus Christ, both as individuals and as members of His body. As each one of these sections could be developed into an entire course by itself, our readings and discussions are designed to introduce students to the great conversation of Christian Scholarship, which I hope they participate in for the rest of their lives.

Course Learning Outcomes

- identify the major ideas, methods, and virtues associated with the Christian intellectual tradition
- reflect on various academic and career paths in the context of Christian notions of vocation
- participate in out-of-the-classroom experiences that deepen understanding of ideas introduced in the classroom, of oneself, and fellow students

Required Texts

Gorrell, *Always On: Practicing Faith in a New Media Landscape*

Keller and Inazu, *Uncommon Ground: Living Faithfully in a World of Difference*

Noll, *Jesus Christ and the Life of the Mind*

Wilson, *Reading for the Love of God: How to Read as a Spiritual Practice*

Participation

Participation is vital to academic success. Participation takes many forms, but generally includes showing up on-time, looking alert and ready to learn, and being familiar with previous content; focusing one's attention on PowerPoint slides, lectures, and classroom conversations; asking and answering questions, staying after class to gain further understanding of subject matter, and availing oneself to Dr. Cater's office hours. As a one-unit Honors course, HON1000 requires two to three hours of outside study per week. Finding quiet time to read and re-read, discuss and think about lecture notes and course readings are incredibly important to success in this class, other classes, and many pursuits in life. Regarding classroom conversations, students should seek to speak in informed, relevant, and respectful ways. Dr. Cater is committed to making the class a safe learning environment for everyone. Student participation will be rewarded quantitatively but measured according to the instructor's perceptions of its quality and frequency. Punctual attendance is mandatory, but if tardiness becomes a habit, Dr. Cater will issue a warning and note to the student's adviser. Missing more than 1 class (roughly ten percent of the total) will result in being reported to Dr. Holly Irvin, Vice Provost of Academic Affairs; missing 4 classes will trigger a student's de-enrollment from the course.

Course Communication and Digital Devices

Students are responsible for all communication sent by Dr. Cater to their PLNU email and Canvas accounts. The instructor prefers face-to-face communication, both after class and during office hours, but frequently provides clarifying notes about lectures and assignments through digital channels, so please check them daily. Dr. Cater communicates with students Monday through Friday and occasionally, on Saturday. Please do not expect him to communicate with you until sundown on Sundays. Cell phones, laptops, and tablets are prohibited in class since overwhelming evidence (from neuroscientists and psychologists, mainly) has confirmed that students from PLNU to Harvard Law School and many schools in between are more easily distracted, unable to process and put together ideas, and retain information when they take notes digitally than when they do so with pen and paper.

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/a-learning-secret-don-t-take-notes-with-a-laptop/>Links to an external site.

<https://hbr.org/2015/07/what-you-miss-when-you-take-notes-on-your-laptop>Links to an external site.

<https://www.npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-your-laptops-away>Links to an external site.

<https://www.gse.harvard.edu/news/uk/17/08/note-taking-low-tech-often-best>Links to an external site.

However, if you need to use your cell phone or strongly prefer to use your laptop or tablet, see Dr. Cater to make arrangements.

Make-ups and Academic Accommodations

Make-up exams and quizzes will not be allowed without a university-approved reason that is agreed to in writing by the university Provost. In compliance with federal and state laws, students requesting academic accommodations “must file documentation with the Disability Resource Center (DCR), located in the Bond Academic Center.” The DCR will then contact the student’s instructor and “provide written recommendations for reasonable and appropriate accommodations to meet the individual needs of the student.” For more information, see “Academic Accommodations” in the Undergraduate Catalog.

Grading

25 pts	Participation
50 pts	Weekly Reading Notes
50 pts	Essay

Course grades will be based on a combination of class participation, reading notes/written reflections, and a final exam. Reading notes must be hand-written and kept in a loose-leaf journal or notebook. Headings for each section of reading notes must be clearly marked by author and title. The journal or notebook must be brought to every class meeting. They must also remain in a separate journal or notebook than class notes. Notes will come due at the beginning of class. Notes should be 2-3 pages typed or hand-written on legal or regular-size printer paper. They should cover the key ideas, concepts, questions, etc. of the reading. Include page numbers and direct quotations. Ask questions about the text in your notes. Show me that you're thinking carefully about the reading, not just staring at the text. The final exam will be cumulative in nature and take the form of a dinner conversation about your intellectual, personal, and religious growth. Details to follow.

Final Exam Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final exam on its scheduled day. No requests for early examinations or alternative days will be approved.

Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one’s own when in reality they are the results of another person’s creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. Faculty should follow and students may appeal using the procedure in the university Catalog. For more information, see the following link:

https://catalog.pointloma.edu/content.php?catoid=41&navoid=2435#Academic_Honesty
University Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the U.S. Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

Below is an approximate schedule of units, topics, assignments, and assessments. Dr. Cater reserves the right to make adjustments if necessary.

Part I: Origins

Aug 29 – Introduction

Sept 5 – Noll, chpts 1-3

Sept 12 – Noll, chpts 4-6

Sept 19 – Noll, chpts 7-8

Sept 26 – “No Christianity Here Please, We’re Academics” <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2010/07/30/no-christianity-please-were-academics>Links to an external site.

Part II: Habits

Oct 3 – Wilson, chpts 1-3

Oct 10 – Wilson, chpts 4-5

Oct 17 – Wilson, chpts 6-7

Oct 24 – “Why Walking Helps Us Think” <https://www.newyorker.com/tech/annals-of-technology/walking-helps-us-think>Links to an external site.

"What Conversation Can Do For Us" https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2023/03/20/what-conversation-can-do-for-us?utm_campaign=falcon_mHCX&utm_source=facebook&utm_brand=tny&utm_medium=social&utm_social-type=owned&mbid=social_facebook&fbclid=IwAR2sP0qUUX2IA-oYrruQCox6bs24rAmY2MXVVSyQybmDOoikcRm_ZQiVmmwLinks to an external site.

*For this week, come having read and discussed the assigned essays while you walk and talk with your assigned partner at Peet's Coffee (955 Catalina Blvd. Ste 103. San Diego, CA 92106). Identify the central argument of each, supporting evidence, and presentation. Did you agree/disagree with the arguments, or have firsthand experience with their claims? What challenges might you encounter to taking walks for "cloud time," or slow, thoughtful, fun, and humane conversations with actual people? What can you do to circumvent or diminish the challenges? How might you incorporate these practices more regularly into your time at PLNU and beyond? Take a selfie of you and your partner and include it in a 1-2 page reflection on the essays and conversation. **Important: when you order a drink from Peet's, say you're part of HON1000, get your receipt, take a picture, and include it in your assignment.** Upload all to Canvas.

Partners:

Leah Boles and Kate Williams

Ava Wangen and Jaxon Deboef

Carson Dillon and Vanessa Venegas

CJ Umeda and Mia Edwards

Nico Gamboa and Natalie Tamburstuen
Bella Sarti and Ryan George
Kate Gerspacher and Haylie Runner
Luke Ogden and Elizabeth Gray
Kari Henderson and Lucy Murillo
Natalie Munro-tavormina and Ashley Homme
Alexander Kuhn and Grace Moores
Gianna Mandujano and Becca Lott

**If I have made a mistake and you do not have a partner, let me know.

Oct 31 – Gorrell, chpts 1-2

In lieu of meeting for class today, please do the following during class period: take 25 minutes by yourself outside on this beautiful day to work through numbers 1 and 2. Then, in the next 25 minutes, meet with someone in the class you haven't met yet and share your thoughts about numbers 1 and 2. The goal of this book is to help us think carefully about what it might mean to practice Christian faith as scholars in a new media landscape.

1: On average, how much time do you spend online every day? Note the minutes and/or hours. Next, estimate what you spend time doing - reading, researching, writing, scrolling, watching videos, posting photos, or other - and note the amount of time you spend on each activity. Compare your minutes/hours and activities to your calling as a thinking, knowledge and wisdom-seeking Christian. Are they supportive or not? Could they be more so and if so, how?

2: Read and be read by the following passage from Ephesians 5:15-17: "Look therefore carefully how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise; redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is." Think about what it might mean to redeem the time online and write down your thoughts. What does wisdom look like in terms of what we see and communicate online, what information we internalize, why, and how it affects our view of God, Creation, Self, and scholarship?

3: Upload your notes to Canvas.

Nov 7 – Gorrell, chpts 3-4

Nov 14 – Gorrell, chpts 5-6

Nov 21 – **NO CLASS**

"When A.I. Goes to War" <https://christianitytoday.com/ct/2023/july-web-only/when-ai-goes-to-war-moore-kristian.html>Links to an external site.

"Six Ways Digital Technology Deforms

Us" <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/technology-deforms/Links to an external site.>

Part III: Calling

Nov 28 – Keller and Inazu, Introduction to p. 100

Dec 5 – Keller and Inazu, p. 101-199 (Guest lecture: Dr. Kerry Fulcher, Provost)

Dec 12: **Final Exam** (1:30-4pm)

Write a 3-5 page essay about Christian Scholarship. Your essay should have a thesis, good organization, and arguments with evidence drawn from your readings and notes. It should address the following issues: What is Christian scholarship? Where, how, and why does it emerge? What ideas, attitudes, practices are central to it? How might the Gospel impact your general course of study, major field, or future profession? Be specific.