

	School of Theology & Christian Ministry
	Theology 3005: Christian Faith & the Natural Sciences 3 units
Spring 2024	

Meeting days: M-W-F	Instructor: Michael Lodahl, Ph.D
Meeting times: 12:15-1:10	Phone: 858 405 3184
Meeting location: Taylor 106	Email: mlodahl@pointloma.edu
	Office location and hours: Sme Hall, by apptmnt

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 modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

Foundational Explorations Mission

Loma provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In keeping with the Wesleyan tradition, the curriculum equips students with a broad range of knowledge and skills within and across disciplines to enrich major study, lifelong learning, and vocational service as Christ-like participants in the world's diverse societies and culture.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Catalogue description: This course explores central Christian convictions, e.g., the doctrines of creation, providence, the incarnation and the resurrection of the body, in careful and respectful dialogue with the natural sciences, especially cosmology and biological evolution.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to

- Interpret relevant biblical texts carefully and responsibly;
- Analyze the critical elements in the Christian doctrines of creation, providence, Christology, ecclesiology, and eschatology; and
- Appraise the significance of scientific discoveries, concepts, and theories for Christian theology, the above doctrines in particular.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Cordero Maskiewicz, April; Estes, Douglas; and Work, Telford. *What About Evolution?*

Haught, John F. *Science and Faith: A New Introduction*

Strawn, Brad D. and Brown, Warren S. *Enhancing Christian Life:*

How Extended Cognition Augments Religious Community

Wood, Todd Charles and Falk, Darrel R. *The Fool and the Heretic:*

How Two Scientists Moved beyond Labels to a Christian Dialogue about Creation and Evolution

Yong, Amos. *The Bible, Disability, and the Church: A New Vision of the People of God*

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS

1) Regular, faithful attendance to class and active participation in class discussions based on faithful reading of the assigned material. Students should be prepared to be quizzed on the assigned reading on any given day of class.

2) Four brief (*minimum* of 800 words per paper) reflection papers during the semester as scheduled. These papers will give you the opportunity to reflect upon any idea, concept, or controversy encountered in class reading or during class discussion. These papers should demonstrate active engagement with the pertinent reading and your own thinking in relationship / response to the material. In each paper the student should strive to bring the ideas of the natural sciences as discussed in the assigned reading and in class into creative conversation with pertinent ideas / doctrines of the Christian faith. ***It is expected that there will be at least one quotation from the assigned reading, properly annotated.*** Failure to include such will automatically result in the loss of 10 percentage points under the 'Content' category for grading. (See below.) These papers should be college-level examples of good grammar, spelling, punctuation, and reflection.

For these papers, I will provide a brief list of prompts that you may choose from, or simply use as a general guide. Do not feel constrained by these prompts. You may want to go in a different direction for your paper(s).

Here is the general rubric I will utilize for grading student reflection papers in this course:

Content / Concepts / Clarity 55%

Organization / Effective Usage of Paragraphs / Flow 10%

Proper Spelling 10%

Proper Grammar / Punctuation / Capitalization Use 25%

3) Weekly Canvas online discussion participation.

- The PLNU School of Theology and Christian Ministry is committed to the full equality and dignity of all people. Recognizing that human beings have often used language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women and other marginalized peoples, the department strongly urges students, faculty and staff to avoid sexist, racist, or otherwise exclusionary language in public discourse, in classroom discussions and especially in their writings.
- *I strongly encourage you to avail yourself of the Loma Writing Center:*

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center. Getting feedback during the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar and polishing final drafts, and more. For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see <https://www.pointloma.edu/centers-institutes/loma-writing-center> or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

GRADE CALCULATION:

Determined on the basis of attendance / participation (20%); four reflection papers (15% each, 60% total); and active, responsible weekly Canvas online discussions (20%).

ASSESSMENT AND GRADING

Final letter grades will be based on the following:

A	B	C	D	F
A 94-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 60
A- 90-93	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

In final computation of semester grade, I will round up from .5 to the next point.

PLNU COPYRIGHT POLICY

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

PLNU 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. *Your professor will not hesitate to confront any student whose written work is suspected of being plagiarized from online or AI sources.* 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. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

PLNU ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS POLICY

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities. Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2486). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will issue an academic accommodation plan ("AP") to all faculty who teach courses in which the student is enrolled each semester.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course and/or if they do not wish to utilize some or all of the elements of their AP in that course.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC.

PLNU ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION POLICY

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice.

COURSE CALENDAR

Jan 8 – Introduction to the course. The Wesleyan Quadrilateral & Different Ways of Knowing

Jan 10 Karen Strand Winslow essay, "The Earth is Not a Planet"; M. Lodahl, Notes on Genesis.

Jan 12 – *The Fool and the Heretic*, 9-37

Jan 15 – MLK Jr. Day

Jan 17 – Fool & Heretic, 39-64

Jan 19 – F & H, 65-90

Jan 22 – F & H, 91-114

Jan 24 – F & H, 115-149

Jan 26 – F & H, 150-175

Jan 29 – F & H, 177-196

Jan 31 – *What About Evolution?* Introduction (xvii-xxiii), Chapter 1 (1-36)

Feb 2 – *What About Evolution?* Chapter 3 (66-102)

- *First reflection paper due no later than midnight, Feb 4*

Feb 5 – Yong, *The Bible, Disability, and the Church* 1-29, 35-40

Feb 7 – Yong, 57-81

Feb 9 – Yong, 82-104, 115-117

(Course schedule for week for Feb 12-16 follows the announcement below.)

Please note that I am offering significant extra credit opportunities Feb 12-14, during Point Loma School of Theology's annual Wiley Lecture Series. This year the lectures feature Dr. Sarah Jean Barton of Duke University, whose lectures will address themes in disability theology. There are four lectures scheduled as listed below; for each lecture you attend for extra credit, you must attend in person, take careful notes (to be turned in), and write a thoughtful 2-3 page (double-spaced) summary / reflection / response paper. For each lecture response paper, the paper will be graded with a maximum possible extra point total (for each paper) of 25 points in the attendance / participation category. All extra credit papers for these lectures will be due by the end of the month of February.

Lecture 1: "Lord, Teach Us to Pray: Practicing Disabled Prayer"

*Monday Feb. 12, 2024 11:00-11:50am, Crill Performance Hall

Lecture 2: "Bless the Lord, O My Soul: Prayer as Disabled Joy"

*Monday Feb. 12, 2024 1:30-2:20pm, Crill Performance Hall

Lecture 3: "There We Sat Down and Wept: Prayer as Disabled Lament"

*Tuesday Feb. 13, 2024 9:30-10:20am, Crill Performance Hall

Lecture 4: "On Earth As It Is In Heaven: Prayer as Disability Justice"

***Wednesday Feb. 14, 2024 8:30-9:20am, Crill Performance Hall**

Feb 12 – Yong, 118-144

Feb 14 – Discussion of Amos Yong's book alongside Wiley Lectures of Sarah Jean Barton

Feb 16 – Reading break day: let's catch our breath!

Feb 19 – Haught, *Science and Faith*, Introduction & chapter 1

Feb 21 – Haught, chapter 2

Feb 23 – Haught, chapter 3

- *Second reflection paper due no later than midnight, February 25*

Feb 26 – Haught, chapter 4

Feb 28 – Haught, chapter 5

Mar 1 – Haught, chapter 6

- *No extra-credit from the Wiley Lectures will be accepted after midnight, March 2*

Mar 4-8 – Spring Break; no classes

Mar 11 – Haught, chapter 7

Mar 13 – Haught, chapter 8

Mar 15 – Haught, chapter 9

Mar 18 – Haught, chapter 10

Mar 20 – Haught, chapter 11

Mar 22 – Haught, chapter 12

- *Third reflection paper due by midnight, March 24*

Mar 25 – *Matthew Matters* 128-133; Luke 24, Jn 20

Mar 27 – 1 Cor 15

Mar 28 – Easter break through April 2

Apr 1 – Easter break continues

Apr 3 – John Wesley & Bodies (Lodahl essay)

Apr 5 – John Wesley & Image of God (Lodahl essays)

Apr 8 – St. Augustine’s rule for biblical interp’n; *Matthew Matters* c. 3, “Wisdom’s Commands”

Apr 10 – Strawn and Brown, *Enhancing Christian Life*, pages 1-21

Apr 12 – *Enhancing*, 22-38

Apr 15 – *Enhancing*, 39-59

Apr 17 – *Enhancing*, 60-80

Apr 19 – *Enhancing*, 80-97

Apr 22 – *Enhancing*, 97-114

Apr 24 – *Enhancing*, 115-133

Apr 26 – *Enhancing*, 133-148, 155-156

- *Fourth reflection paper due no later than midnight, April 28.*

April 29 to May 3: Final Exam Week. We will not have a final exam as such; there is an end-of-semester questionnaire that is worth 30 points attendance / participation. It requires no hard study and we will likely do it online. 😊