



Honors Program

Fall 2025

HON1000: Introduction to Christian Scholarship (1 unit)	Bond 156, T 1:30-2:25pm
Ben Cater, PhD, Colt Hall 208 Office Hours: MWF 1-3pm, TR 3-4pm and by appointment	Email: bcater@pointloma.edu Phone: Ext. 2932
Final Exam: Tues Dec 16 1:30-4pm	

PLNU Mission

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.

Honors Program Mission

"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 Humanities Honors Program. Students will be introduced to the history and aspirations of the Christian liberal arts and ways that their education as aspiring scholars is situated within the larger context of God's will and purposes for their lives. Students will also be introduced to and participate in various acts of Christian devotion and works of mercy that are important practices of the Wesleyan tradition.

Honors Program Learning Outcomes

- Analyze and discuss diverse human traditions of creativity and self-reflection while examining them in light of Christian faith.
- Interpret written and visual media in light of their contexts, complexity, and aesthetics.
- Articulate life questions within multidisciplinary and theological frameworks.
- Demonstrate an ability to design and participate in discourses in an informed and hospitable manner.
- Participate in acts of devotion and works of mercy through service opportunities, as informed by the Wesleyan tradition

Course Learning Outcomes

At the Conclusion of the Course Students will be able to:

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

Required Texts

Bilbro, Reading the Times (9780830841851)

Hughes, The Vocation of a Christian Scholar (9780802829153)

McDermott, Everyday Glory (9780801098291)

Ryken, Art for God's Sake (9781596380073)

Warren, Liturgy of the Ordinary (9780830846788)

Course Assignments

Note-taking: No computers or phones are allowed in class. Tablets with digital pencils are OK. Taking notes by hand is superior to computers for thinking, learning, and remembering. If you have an accommodation that allows you to have a laptop, let me know and we will work out arrangements. Here are two articles on the utility of hand-writing notes:

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/why-writing-by-hand-is-better-for-memory-and-learning/>

<https://www.npr.org/sections/health-shots/2024/05/11/1250529661/handwriting-cursive-typing-schools-learning-brain>

Reading: The dates on the syllabus indicate what we will be discussing in class. Please have the assignment read prior to the discussion.

Reading Responses: Seven times during the semester – but never more than once a week – each student will post to Canvas a 1.5-2 page Blue Book response to the daily reading or activity. Unless specific directions are given, the response can involve an analytical reflection, a personal reflection, or can connect the book to course themes. It may also be a combination of any of these elements. It must include direct reference to the daily reading in the form of direct quotations or allusions with page citations. You may reference your book or notes while you write. Due dates for the reflections are indicated on the course schedule below and on Canvas.

Final Exam: Write a 500–600-word essay about Christian Scholarship that addresses the major themes of the class. Themes include the origins, scriptural basis, crafts and habits, and purpose of Christian scholarship. More details will be included in the assignments tab associated with this assignment.

Participation: Every student is expected to actively participate in HON1000. This means showing up on time, having completed the daily reading and prepared to discuss it, listen, and learn from fellow students. Participation informs 25% of our final grade. Because HON1000 meets once a week, every class is valuable, and so students are allowed to miss one class without penalty (no explanation will be needed). But after that, each absence will deduct 2% from your final grade. Excessive absences/tardies will warrant a written warning from Dr. Cater. More information on the PLNU attendance policy can be found at the bottom of this syllabus.

Honors events: Honors events are included in the class schedule to enhance classroom learning. Attendance is optional but highly encouraged.

Late Assignments: Only in rare circumstances will Dr. Cater accept late work.

Assessment and Grading

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Responses	50%
Final Exam	25%
Participation	25%

Sample Standard Grade Scale Based on Percentages

A	B	C	D	F
A 93-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F Less than 59
A- 90-92	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the

same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Spiritual Care

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

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 Recording Notification

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

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. 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. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined 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 in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). 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 work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. The EAC makes accommodations available to professors at the student's request.

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. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

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. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any special accommodations.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced a bias incident regarding language, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/bias.

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of

campus pastors at pointloma.edu/title-ix. If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/bias

Content Warning*

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In [class name], all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics include [list topics]. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Trigger Warning*

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In [class name], we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. These topics include [list topics]. Each time this topic appears in a reading or unit, it is marked on the syllabus. The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) is prohibited in this course for any aspect of your work, including idea generation, drafting, editing, or final submissions. This course is designed to assess your independent critical thinking, writing, and research skills without the assistance of AI technologies. Violations of this policy will be treated as breaches of academic integrity.

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 until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

Loma Writing Center

The Loma Writing Center exists to help all members of the PLNU community cultivate transferable writing skills to engage their academic, professional, personal, and spiritual communities. We work toward this goal by conducting one-on-one consultation sessions, supporting writing education across the PLNU community, and participating in ongoing writing center research.

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you’re in 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 [Loma Writing Center webpage](https://pointloma.edu/centers-institutes/loma-writing-center) or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

- Appointment Calendar: <https://plnu.mywconline.com/>
- Website: <https://www.pointloma.edu/centers-institutes/loma-writing-center>
- Email: writingcenter@pointloma.edu

COURSE SCHEDULE

*denotes Honors events

Part I: Christian Scripture, Tradition, and the Humanities

Tues 9/2	Introduction to the Course and Syllabus Review Discussion of <i>Simply Christian</i>
Tues 9/9	<i>The Transhumanist Question</i> Reading Response #1 due in-class
*Fri 9/12	Honors Welcome Dinner at Dr. Cater’s house 5-7pm (4644 Adair St.)
Tues 9/16	<i>Everyday Glory</i> chpts. 1-5 Reading Response #2 due in-class

*Sat 9/20 *Les Miserables* at the Civic Theater at 8pm

Tues 9/23 *Everyday Glory*, chpts. 6-11
Reading Response #3 due in-class

Part II: Practices and Habits of Christian Scholarship

Tues 9/30 *Reading the Times* Part I
Reading Response #4 due in-class

Tues 10/7 *Reading the Times* Part II
Reading Response #5 due in-class

Tues 10/14 *Reading the Times* Part III
Reading Response #6 due in-class
*Guest Lecture on the Nicene Creed by Dr. Suzanne Nicholson, Ashbury University, Thurs 10/16

*Sat 10/18 Sailing the Californian 12-4pm

Tues 10/21 “Why Walking Helps Us Think”
“The Ascent of Mt. Ventoux”
“What Conversation Can Do For Us”
Reading Response #7 due in-class

Tues 10/28 Walk and Talk (NO CLASS) – see Canvas for details
Activity Response #1 due on Canvas

Tues 11/4 *Art for God’s Sake*
Reading Response #8 due in-class

Tues. 11/11 *Liturgy of the Ordinary* chpts. 1-5
Reading Response #9 due in-class

Tues 11/18 *Liturgy of the Ordinary* chpts 6-11
Reading Response #10 due in-class

*Thurs 11/20 Yulianna Avdeeva at the Baker-Baum Concert Hall 7:30pm

Tues 11/25 Rest, Reflect, Rejoice (NO CLASS)
Activity Response #2 due on Canvas

Tues 12/2 *The Vocation of a Christian Scholar*
Reading Response #11 due in-class

Tues 12/9 *The Vocation of a Christian Scholar* chpts. 1-3
Reading Response #12 due in-class

Tues 12/16 1:30-4pm **Final Exam**