



HCS Course Outline

Reformed Worldview, Apologetics and Ethics Grade 12, University/College

Identifying Information

School	Heritage Christian School
Department	Religious Studies
Course Title/Grade/Course Type	Reformed Worldview, Apologetics and Ethics, Grade 12, University/College
Heritage Course Code	HRE4M
Credit Value (HCSS Credit)	1
Name of Policy Document & Publication Date	Locally Developed
Prerequisite(s) & Co requisite(s) if any	HRT3M
Course Developer(s)	A. Ben Harsevoort & Erik VanDyk
Development Date	2002
Course Reviser(s)	Erik VanDyk
Revision Date	Fall 2005

Rationale for the Course

Throughout their educational experience at Heritage Christian School students receive rigorous biblical instruction. From the creation account in the beginning of Genesis to prophecies of Christ in the end of the New Testament, students are educated in many of the key aspects of Christianity. A culminating course was needed in the senior year to enable students to define and defend their worldview in a comprehensive manner.

This course would define Reformed Christianity as a complete and internally consistent worldview—metaphysically, ethically, and epistemologically. In addition, it would prepare students to respectfully defend each aspect of their worldview against those who might wish to oppose it. The challenges to Reformed Christianity are numerous, especially on university and college campuses. Many would argue that God is dead, or that the Bible is unreliable, or that faith in something other than logic and science only leads to superstition. It is desirable, therefore, to equip our students with the necessary tools to defend their worldview, answering the biblical directive found in I Peter 3:15: “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have [and to do so] with gentleness and respect.”

Origin of the Course

This course is not based on any Ontario Ministry of Education course or on any other course outside the province. It was commissioned by the Principal and Education Committee of Heritage Christian School and was developed by faculty from 2002 to September 2005.

Involvement of Postsecondary/Community Partners

The course outline was sent for review to two postsecondary institutions, i.e. Niagara College and Redeemer University College. Both institutions signed an endorsement recognizing that the content of the course is appropriate for their destinations. Please see Participating Postsecondary/Community Partners endorsements attached in Appendix A.

Links to Other Courses

As prerequisite for this course students must successfully complete Grade 11 World Religions (HRT3M).

This course will enable students to excel in many different fields of study. Because of the academic rigor of the course, students will be prepared for those postsecondary courses that demand the use of logic, rhetoric, public speaking, and formulation of argumentation. The course is, however, most directly linked to the disciplines of philosophy and comparative religions (see Curriculum Overlap).

Course Description and Curriculum Expectations:

Reformed Worldview, Apologetics and Ethics, Grade 12, University/College (HRE4M)

This course will enable students to define and defend a Reformed Christian world and life view. To begin, students will examine what Reformed Christians believe and in that regard will focus on the Bible books of Romans and Hebrews as well as the six main doctrines of Christianity. Second, having defined Reformed Faith, students will consider the challenges involved in living a consistent Christian life. After considering Biblical guidelines for practical Christianity, difficult ethical issues and dilemmas will be analyzed and discussed from a uniquely Reformed Christian perspective. Third, students will be taught how they can defend their Reformed faith and, in that regard, will be taught various apologetic strategies. Lastly, the course will cultivate the students' ability to use inquiry, logic, and rhetoric in their presentation and defence of the Reformed world and life view.

Prerequisites: HRT3M

Strands:

1. Defining the Reformed World and Life View
2. Ethical Principles, Issues, and Dilemmas
3. Defending the Reformed World and Life View
4. Methods of Philosophical/Religious Inquiry and Communication

Defining Reformed Christianity (Romans and Hebrews)

Overall Expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

1. conduct a survey study of the book of Romans
2. conduct a survey study of the book of Hebrews
3. identify and find Biblical support for the main doctrines of Reformed Christianity and demonstrate an understanding of how each doctrine is an integral part of the Reformed world and life view

Specific Expectations

Survey of the Book of Romans

By the end of this course, students will:

4. understand the author, date and occasion of the book of Romans
5. understand the structure, characteristics, and themes of the book of Romans
6. understand how the book of Romans fits into the whole of Scripture

Survey of the Book of Hebrews

By the end of this course, students will:

7. understand the author, date and occasion of the book of Hebrews
8. understand the structure, characteristics, and themes of the book of Hebrews
9. understand how the book of Hebrews fits into the whole of Scripture

Main Reformed Doctrines

By the end of this course, students will:

10. identify and provide Biblical support for the Reformed doctrines of God, Man, Christ, Salvation, Church, and the Last Things (the Six Loci)
11. demonstrate how each of the doctrines are interrelated and dependent on one another
12. demonstrate how each of the doctrines are foundational in creating a good apologetic

Ethical Principles, Issues and Dilemmas

Overall Expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

13. demonstrate an understanding of the main questions, concepts and theories of ethics
14. determine guiding principles for ethical issues through an in-depth study of Exodus 20, Matthew 5-7, Ephesians 4-6, Colossians 3-4, and Romans 12-16
15. develop a Biblical responses to contemporary ethical issues (e.g. abortion, war and peace, capital punishment, human cloning, stem cell research, etc.)

Specific Expectations

Main Questions, Concepts, and Theories of Ethics

By the end of this course, students will:

16. identify the main questions of ethics (e.g., What are good and evil? What is the good life? What is virtue? Why be moral? What obligations do people have to one another?)
17. evaluate the responses given by some of the major philosopher (e.g., Maimonides, Kant, Mill) and major schools of ethics (e.g., utilitarianism, Thomism, post-modernism, Confucianism) to some of the main ethical questions making references to classical texts.

Guiding Principles for Ethics

By the end of this course, students will:

18. conduct an in-depth analysis of Exodus 20, Matthew 5-7, Ephesians 4-6, Colossians 3-4, and Romans 12-16 to discover guiding Biblical principles
19. determine guiding Biblical principles for ethical issues (e.g., Ten Commandments, obedience to civil authority, not giving offence, etc.)

Biblical Response to Ethical Issues

By the end of this course, students will:

20. be familiar with contemporary ethical issues and dilemmas through an analysis of case studies (e.g. abortion, war and peace, capital punishment, human cloning, etc.)
21. conduct thorough research into select ethical issues and develop a comprehensive response to the issues based on Biblical principles

Defending the Reformed World and Life View

Overall Expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

22. demonstrate an understanding of the biblical foundation for apologetics
23. offer a reasoned defence of the Christian faith in the face of opposing worldviews
24. offer substantive challenges to opposing worldviews

Specific Expectations

Biblical Foundation for Apologetics

By the end of this course, students will:

25. demonstrate an understanding of the Bible as the only appropriate foundation for apologetics
26. demonstrate an understanding of the apologetic significance of the Reformed doctrines of God, Man, Christ, Salvation, Church, and the Last Things
27. demonstrate an understanding of the basic attitudes and actions important for defending the faith

A Reasoned Defense of Christianity

By the end of this course, students will:

28. demonstrate an understanding of the key terms and concepts necessary to understanding and defending Christianity (e.g. beliefs, ultimate beliefs, presuppositions, worldview, meta-narratives, transcendentals, pretended neutrality, bias, preconditions for intelligibility etc.)
29. demonstrate the interrelation of Christian metaphysics, ethics, epistemology
30. demonstrate the strengths and logical consistency of the Christian world and life view
31. answer the objections offered by those opposing Christianity (e.g. atheists, agnostics, skeptics, relativists, pantheists, etc.)

Challenging Opposing Worldviews

By the end of this course, students will:

32. demonstrate an understanding of the key terms necessary for challenging opposing worldviews (e.g. beliefs, ultimate beliefs, presuppositions, worldview, meta-narratives, transcendentals, pretended neutrality, bias, preconditions for intelligibility, etc.)
33. demonstrate the weaknesses and logical problems implicit in the position of those that oppose Christianity (e.g. atheists, agnostics, skeptics, relativists, pantheists, etc.)

Methods of Philosophical/Religious Inquiry and Communication

Overall Expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

34. gain a workable understanding of the basic laws of formal logic as tools to be used in apologetics
35. use methods of inquiry to locate, gather, evaluate, and organize research materials from a variety of sources
36. communicate the results of inquiries, using appropriate terms and concepts and a variety of forms of communication

Specific Expectations

Formal Logic

By the end of this course, students will:

37. demonstrate an understanding of the main questions in logic (e.g. What is a valid argument? What is a logical fallacy?)
38. correctly use the terminology of logic (e.g. logical consistency, contradiction, deduction, validity)
39. be able to identify and challenge prejudicial conjectures, philosophical bias, presuppositions which do not comport with each other, and behaviour which betrays professed belief
40. apply logical and critical thinking skills to evaluate or defend positions in philosophical writings

Research Skills

By the end of this course, students will:

41. organize and record information gathered through research, using a variety of methods (summaries, lecture notes, note taking, visual organizers)
42. evaluate the credibility of sources and information (e.g. by considering the authority, impartiality, and expertise of the source and checking the information for accuracy, reliability, underlying assumptions, prejudice, and validity of argument)
43. formulate questions for research and inquiry into ethical, religious, and philosophical issues

Communication

By the end of this course, students will:

44. express ideas, arguments, and conclusion, in writing as appropriate for the audience and purpose, using a variety of styles and forms (i.e. reports, essays)
45. clearly explain their own views in philosophical discussions in class and in other types of exchanges (i.e. seminars, debates, group discussions and presentations)
46. use appropriate terminology to communicate results of religious, ethical, and philosophical inquiry

Curriculum Overlap

This course does overlap with the course entitled: “Philosophy: Questions and Theories, Grade 12 University Preparation (HZT4U).” Expectation numbers 13, 16, 17, 34, 37-39, 40 & 45 were taken from HZT4U and used in this course. Aside from this overlap, the rest of the expectations were designed to teach material not available in other provincial courses.

Assessment and Evaluation of Student Achievement

The Achievement Chart that will be used for the course was taken from the *Achievement Chart for Social Sciences and Humanities* found in the Ministry of Education’s *The Ontario Curriculum, Social Sciences and Humanities*, p. 144-145.

Final Grades will be determined as described in the section “Reporting Student Achievement” in the *Ontario Curriculum, Grade 9 to 12: Program Planning and Assessment, 2000*.

Textbook and Resources

Bahnsen, Dr. Greg L. , *Always Ready*. Atlanta: American Vision, 1996.

Berkhof, Louis. *Summary of Christian Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1938.

Geisler, Norman L. *Christian Ethics, Options and Issues*. Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1990.

Haldane, Robert. *Romans (Geneva Series of Commentaries)*. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1874.

McQuilkin, Robertson. *An Introduction to Biblical Ethics* (2nd Edition). Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1989.

Pearcey, Nancy. *Total Truth*. Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2004.

Pratt, Richard L. Jr. *Every Thought Captive*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1979.

Schlect, Chris. *The Christian Worldview and Apologetics*. Moscow, Idaho, 1998.

Story, Dan, *Christianity on the Offense*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1998.

VanTil, Cornelius. *The Defense of the Faith*. Phillipsburg, New Jersey: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1955.

Wilson, Geoffrey B. *Hebrews*. Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 1979.

Supplemental Information:

- Unit Titles (Time and Sequence)
- Unit Organization
- Evaluation of Student Achievement

Unit Titles (Time & Sequence)

Unit 1	Defining Reformed Christianity (Romans and Hebrews)	35 Hours
Unit 2	Ethical Principles, Issues and Dilemmas	30 Hours
Unit 3	Defending the Reformed World and Life View	35 Hours
Unit 4	ISU Presenting and Defending the Reformed World and Life View	10 Hours

Unit Organization

Unit # 1 Defining Reformed Christianity (Romans and Hebrews)

Time: 35 Hours

Description

This unit begins with a study of the book of Hebrews. After learning the background information of title, author, date, purpose, and audience addressed, students work through the main themes of the book. Students examine how Christ is the centre of the book of Hebrews and analyze the passages that speak of His work, His names, His offices, His divine and human natures, and His power. Students then associate themselves with the three main functions of the book: to teach, to warn and to exhort. A series of prominent subjects round out the study of Hebrews where students investigate the significance of Melchizedek, the numerous comparisons made to the O.T., the list of the “heroes” of faith in chapter 11, as well as other subjects. To apply what they have learned, students compose a letter to an imagined friend that encapsulates all the major themes of the book.

Students are then taught the background information of the book of Romans: title, author, date, purpose and audience addressed. Students then investigate major themes of the book of Romans as they come chapter by chapter. To assist their study, students hear and analyze renowned theologian R. C. Sproul lecture on various themes of the book of Romans. Students will also research one major tenet of the book for the purpose of a formal research essay —rife with cross references and Bible commentary provided by various theologians.

Strands: Defining the Reformed World and Life View
Methods of Philosophical/Religious Inquiry and Communication

Overall Expectations: 1-3, 35-36

Specific Expectations: 4-12, 41-46

Unit # 2 Ethical Principles, Issues and Dilemmas

Time: 30 Hours

Description

Students conduct in-depth study of Exodus 20, Matthew 5-7, Ephesians 4-6, Colossians 3-4, and Romans 12-16 to determine the guiding principles of practical Christianity. Following that, students work individually as well as in small groups to report on and debate several select ethical issues. First, students discover the guiding principles that apply to select ethical dilemmas. Second, students prioritize and apply the principles to the specific issues so as to determine the right course of action. Third, students research how the issues have been dealt with historically by various cultures, groups, associations and governments. Fourth, students prepare and deliver formal debates focusing on key ethical questions.

Strands: Ethical Principles, Issues, and Dilemmas
Methods of Philosophical/Religious Inquiry and Communication

Overall Expectations: 13-15, 34-36

Specific Expectations: 16-21, 37-46

Unit # 3 Defending the Reformed World and Life View

Time: 35 Hours

Description

Students first learn the sensitivity with which worldview questions must be addressed. Arrogance, intellectual bullying and sarcasm are contrasted with the biblical model of humility, love and sensitivity. With the help of textbook readings and the use of many analogies, students familiarize themselves with definitions basic to a Christian apologetic: the interconnectedness of beliefs, presuppositions, worldviews, circular thinking, pretended neutrality, transcendental, etc. The two-fold approach is then taught. First, students learn how to defend Christianity as a system of thought that provides the only reliable basis for metaphysics, epistemology, and ethics. Secondly, students learn how to go on the offensive and challenge worldviews that stand in opposition to Christianity. To confirm their learning, students write numerous dialogues between themselves and imagined representatives of other faiths.

Following a discussion of how evidence ought to be used, students are introduced to various strands of evidence that strengthen the Christian position. Evidence is taken from creation, science, history, logic, and human experience to answer the objections of so many skeptics. Students also listen to and analyze the debates between leading theists and atheists.

Strands: Defending the Reformed World and Life View
 Methods of Philosophical/Religious Inquiry and Communication

Overall Expectations: 22-24, 34-36

Specific Expectations: 25-33, 37-46

Unit # 4 Independent Study Unit: Presenting and Defending the Reformed World and Life View

Time: 10 Hours

Description

Having learned the major metaphysical, epistemological and ethical tenets of the Reformed worldview, students are to write a comprehensive essay to answer the question: “What do I believe and why?” The essay must weave all the main components of the course into one essay consisting of 1500 to 2000 words. Students must complete extensive research into academic, religious, and philosophical literature to formulate their definition and defence of their Christian Worldview.

Strands: Defining the Reformed World and Life View
Ethical Principles, Issues, and Dilemmas
Defending the Reformed World and Life View
Methods of Philosophical/Religious Inquiry and Communication

Overall Expectations: 1-3, 13-15, 22-24, 34-36

Specific Expectations: 4-12, 16-21, 25-33, 37-41

Evaluation of Student Achievement

Knowledge/Skill Category	Course Grade Weighting	%
<p>Written Reports Thinking/Inquiry/Problem Solving Communication</p> <p>Oral Presentations Communication</p> <p>Formal Debates Knowledge/Understanding Thinking/Inquiry/Problem Solving Application/Making Connections Communication</p> <p>Paper & Pencil Tasks Knowledge/Understanding Application/Making Connections</p> <p>Unit Tests Knowledge/Understanding Application/Making Connections</p> <p>Essay and Seminar Knowledge/Understanding Thinking/Inquiry/Problem Solving Application/Making Connections Communication</p> <p>Final Examinations Knowledge/Understanding Thinking/Inquiry/Problem Solving Application/Making Connections Communication</p>	<p>Course Work Written Reports/Essays Oral Presentations Formal Debates Paper & Pencil Tasks Unit Tests</p> <p>ISU Essay and Seminar</p> <p>Final Examination</p>	<p>75</p> <p>15</p> <p>15</p>

Course Overview

Religious Studies, Grade 12 University/College (HRE4M)

Course Description

This course will examine what we believe as Reformed Christians and in that regard will focus on the books of Romans and Hebrews. Having defined Reformed Faith, students will consider the challenges involved in living a consistent Christian life. After considering guidelines for practical Christianity, difficult ethical issues will be analyzed and discussed from a uniquely Reformed Christian perspective. Then students will be taught how they can defend their Reformed faith and, in that regard, will be taught various apologetic strategies. Lastly, the course will cultivate the students' ability to use inquiry, logic, and rhetoric in their presentation and defense of the Reformed world and life view.

Course Culminating Activity: FINAL EXAM

Unit Titles and Times

TOTAL HOURS: 110

Unit 1	Defining Reformed Christianity (Romans and Hebrews)	35 Hours
Unit 2	The Christian Life (Practical Christianity and Ethical Issues)	35 Hours
Unit 3	Defending Reformed Christianity (Apologetics)	37 Hours
	Culminating Activity: Exam	3 Hours

Unit 1: Defining Reformed Christianity (Romans and Hebrews)

Time: 35 Hours

Unit Description

Unit Overview Chart

Activity	Time	Expectations	Focus/Task
1.1			
1.2			
1.3			
1.4			
1.5			

Unit 2: The Christian Life (Practical Christianity and Ethical Issues)

Time: 35 Hours

Unit Description

Unit Overview Chart

Activity	Time	Expectations	Focus/Task
1.1			
1.2			
1.3			
1.4			
1.5			

Unit 3: Defending Reformed Christianity (Apologetics)

Time: 37 Hours

Unit Description

Unit Overview Chart

Activity	Time	Expectations	Focus/Task
1.1			
1.2			
1.3			
1.4			
1.5			

Culminating Activity—FINAL EXAM

Time: 3 Hours