

**Trinity Western University**

**Undergraduate Course Syllabus**

**Course Number:** PSYC 490 01 (IDIS)

**Course Name:** Personhood: An interdisciplinary look at the individual

**Semester and Year:** Summer 2017: July 10 – August 4

**Instructor:** Dr. Philipchalk

**Contact Information:** philipch@twu.ca

**Office Hours:** As required

**Co-requisites or Pre-requisites:** 70 career hours earned or in process

**Semester Hours:** 3

**Course Description:**

“A consideration of the function of worldviews, the meaning of a Christian worldview, and the implications of a Christian worldview for the understanding of persons and their role in modern society. Inasmuch as contemporary worldviews have been shaped extensively by developments in science, as well as by historical influences from philosophy and religion, an interdisciplinary approach is taken” (*Academic Calendar*).

**Course Learning Outcomes:**

The following chart demonstrates how this course participates in Trinity Western University’s Global Student Learning Outcomes. The column on the left indicates TWU’s Student Learning Outcomes relevant to this course; the column on the right provides learning outcomes specific to this course.

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| **1. Knowledge and its application**  • a broad foundational knowledge of human culture and the physical and natural world.  • a depth of understanding in any chosen field(s) of study.  • applied knowledge acquired through discipline-appropriate experiential learning. | **By the end of this course, students will have gained**   * an understanding of the concept of worldview and an appreciation of the role of ones worldview in ethical and lifestyle decisions * an awareness of the impact of different worldviews on areas of science, philosophy, art, music, law & technology, and the ethical issues raised in these areas |
| **2. Cognitive complexity**  • skills including: critical and creative thinking, quantitative reasoning, communication, research, and information literacy.  • an ability to articulate various interdisciplinary and multi-disciplinary perspectives, integrating informed Christian perspectives.  • an ability to respond with wisdom, humility and charity to questions, issues, and problems of the human condition. | **By the end of this course, students will have gained**   * an ability to articulate ones worldview in humility and love * an interdisciplinary understanding of the contributions and controversies inherent in living out a Christian worldview in contemporary society * ability to use reason to apply ones worldview and formulate a position on various ethical issues in diverse disciplines * a willingness to critically examine ones worldview and an openness to change |
| **3. Inter-and Intra-Personal Wellness**  • a holistic awareness of their personhood, purpose, and calling within the context of the communities in which they live and study.  • personal and social health.  • an appreciation of the role of community in wellness. | **By the end of this course, students will have gained**  • an understanding of the human person, what it means to be created in the image of God, and what this implies for a Christian witness in various disciplines of work and study |
| **4. Spiritual Formation**  • a spiritual dimension by means of an exposure to a reflective and caring Christ-centered community which encourages:  • a further understanding of God.  • a discovery of a deep and personal spiritual foundation.  • an embodiment of a Christ-like way of life characterized by love for and service to others. | **By the end of this course, students will have gained**   * an appreciation for the role of the individual in a community of believers encouraging one another in mutual pursuit of Christlikeness in all areas |
| **5. Social Responsibility and Global Engagement**  • the resources, skills, and motivation to become engaged global citizens who serve locally, nationally, and globally in socially and economically just ways.  • a commitment to informed and ethical reasoning.  • respect for the dignity and rights of all persons.  • respect for creation and its sustainable use and care. | **By the end of this course, students will have gained**  • an understanding of difficult issues facing the global community   * an appreciation of the ethical principles underlying their worldview and how these lead to humble, respectful service in all areas * an awareness of possible avenues of Christian service in social, economic, and environmental areas of struggle |
| **6. Leadership**  • skills to become creative, collaborative, informed, competent, and compassionate people who influence the various contexts into which they are called.  • abilities and attitudes characterized by service, humility and integrity. | **By the end of this course, students will have gained**  • the skills to humbly yet confidently articulate their position on important issues and so exert a Christian influence   * an appreciation for the strength of leading through service rather than just traditional power |

**Required Texts and Materials:**

Colson, C., & Pearcey, N. (2004). *How now shall we live?* Wheaton, IL: Tyndale.

Guest lectures and other materials will be made available in the online environment.

**Course Activities/Requirements:**

The course contains 36 “Lessons” divided into 3 “Modules.” Most lessons are designed to follow a reading in the Colson and Pearcey textbook. However, several lessons are built around a guest lecture streamed online from the course website. These guests are experts in various disciplines. Their contributions provide an important interdisciplinary perspective. Because you will be working on your own, with no scheduled class time, you will need to be self-disciplined. The 36 lessons correspond to the number of 50-minute face-to-face classes usually scheduled 3 times per week over 1 semester.  Deadlines for assignments and forum closing are meant as "outside limits."  They are not meant to be goals.  Evenly pacing your progress will mean you will finish before these cut-off points.

**Online discussion (20%)**. You are expected to participate in the online discussion in what is called a “Forum.” The forum discussion takes the place of both in-class discussion and student class presentations in the more traditional classroom setting. You can respond at any time. Forum participants don’t have to be online at the same time. The online discussion is an important part of the course. Each lesson contains online discussion questions to which you may respond. Equally valuable, you may respond to other people’s responses in the forum.  You don’t need to respond to every question posed in the course materials. On the other hand, you may raise new questions relevant to the lesson or course content. It is important that you keep up with the forum discussion so that other people are more likely to read your comments, rather than waiting until everyone has moved on.  In an attempt to keep everyone moving along, the discussion for Module 1 will close to further comments at midnight on Friday, July 21.  The Module 2 discussion will close at midnight on Saturday, July 29, and the Module 3 discussion at midnight on Friday August 4.  Some important criteria for forum grading are regular participation, thoughtful and concise comments, and interaction with others’ comments.

**Essay assignments (40%)**. Several lessons contain a section called “Assignment Possibility.” These are written assignments from which you choose.  A complete list for the first module is presented under the heading "Assignment options for Module 1." You are expected to write two essay assignments for the whole course. You should choose one assignment from the first module and one from either the second or the third module.  Each assignment will be marked out of 20.  Your total mark on these two assignments will comprise the 40 percent of your total grade. These can be submitted through the “Assignment drop box” online.  The suggested minimum length for these assignments is 1500 words.  Please put your name at the top of your paper, and submit it in MS Word format. N.B.: The first unit assignment is due by midnight on Friday, July 21, the second (whether done on a Module 2 or 3 topic) by midnight on Saturday, July 29.

**Final research paper (40%)**. The interdisciplinary research paper is designed to give you the opportunity to delve more deeply into topics related to personhood and worldview. Since this is basically the goal of the course, the research paper will also serve as the final exam. This means that you can filter each topic and discussion for its relevance to the goals of the course. You can also raise pertinent issues as they occur throughout the course, with the final research paper in mind. Special sections at the end of each lesson called “Worldview Reflection/Application” will assist you in thinking along these lines.

The research paper should articulate your worldview, giving special attention to the “Who are we?” questions discussed in the course (e.g., “Who am I?” “Where am I?” “What’s wrong?” “What is the remedy?” etc.). You should also deal with at least three of the topical content areas covered in the course. That is, show how your position relates to *at least three* different areas such as philosophy, biblical anthropology, biology, evolution, genetics, neuropsychology, the new physics, technology, or some of the several cultural topics discussed. For example, in discussing modern genetics the answers to the “Who are we?” questions might be shown to determine one’s ethical and practical conclusions regarding genetic mapping, cloning, etc.. Conversely, developments in these areas might influence your answers to the basic questions about the person.

You should expect to develop your position in at least 3,500 words (roughly 12 -15 pages). Your paper should contain references where appropriate (APA style is preferred but not mandatory), and a complete list of references at the end. However, since this is primarily a personal statement, references may not be necessary. N.B.: The final paper is due four days after the end of the course, specifically, by midnight on Tuesday, August 8.  All late papers will lose 1/2 mark for each day late.

**Course Evaluation:**

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| **Evaluation Method** | **Percentage** | **Assesses Course Learning Outcome** |
| Participation in online discussion | 20% | 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 |
| First Essay | 20% | 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 |
| Second Essay | 20% | 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 |
| Final Research Paper | 40% | 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 |

**Course Policies:**

**Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism at TWU**

One of the core values of Trinity Western University is the integration of academic excellence with high standards of personal, moral, and spiritual integrity. The University considers it a serious offence when an individual attempts to gain unearned academic credit. It is the student’s responsibility to be informed about what constitutes academic dishonesty. For details on this, and on identifying and avoiding plagiarism go to the [University Homepage > Academics > Academic Calendar > Academic Information > Academic Policies > Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism](http://www.twu.ca/academics/calendar/2014-2015/academic-information/academic-policies/academic-dishonesty-and-plagiarism.html).

**Campus Closure and Class Cancellation Policy**

In the event of extreme weather conditions or other emergency situations go to the [University Homepage > Campus Notification (in the page footer) > Class cancellation policy](http://www.twu.ca/campus/campus-notification.html).

**University Standard Grading System**

The Standard Grading System can be found at the University Homepage > Academics > Academic Calendar > Academic Information > Grading Practices [University Homepage > Academics > Academic Calendar > Academic Information > Grading Practices](http://www.twu.ca/academics/calendar/2014-2015/academic-information/grading-practices/).

[NOTE: If your department or course deviates from the standard, include that grading system here, and change the title of this section to Course Grading System.]

**Students with a Disability**

Students with a disability who need assistance are encouraged to contact the Equity of Access Office upon admission to TWU to discuss their specific needs. All disabilities must be recently documented by an appropriately certified professional and include the educational impact of the disability along with recommended accommodations. Within the first two weeks of the semester, students must meet with their professors to agree on accommodations appropriate to each class. Students should follow the steps detailed by the Equity of Access Office outlined in the Student Life section of the University Calendar.

**Late Assignments Policy**

Late assignments will penalized one half mark per day.

**Course Outline:**

**Module 1** *(July 10 – July 21)*

* Lesson 1: Goals and orientation
* Lesson 2: Certainty & faith
* Lesson 3: Worldview questions
* Lesson 4: Mind, body, spirit
* Lesson 5: The image of God
* Lesson 6: Brain & mind in neuropsychology
* Lesson 7: Christianity is a worldview
* Lesson 8: Multiculturalism
* Lesson 9: Faith & reason
* Lesson 10: Science & religion
* Lesson 11: Cosmology
* Lesson 12: In the beginning

**February 20 (midnight): First essay assignment due, Module 1 forum discussion closes**

**Module 2** *(July 22 – July 29)*

* Lesson 1: Darwinism
* Lesson 2: Creation Science
* Lesson 3: Design & evolution
* Lesson 4: Mind, body, & soul in evolution?
* Lesson 5:Genetics (A)
* Lesson 6: Genetics (B)
* Lesson 7: Reproductive technologies
* Lesson 8: Theodicy
* Lesson 9: The person
* Lesson 10: Abortion & euthanasia
* Lesson 11: Sex, love, & spirit
* Lesson 12: Gender identity & roles

**March 19 (midnight): Second essay assignment due, Module 2 forum discussion closes**

**Module 3** *(July 30 – August 4)*

* Lesson 1: The cultural commission
* Lesson 2: Marriage
* Lesson 3: Education
* Lesson 4: Sports
* Lesson 5: Work
* Lesson 6: Law & politics
* Lesson 7: Science & technology
* Lesson 8: The arts
* Lesson 9: Modern art
* Lesson 10: Television, movies, & theatre
* Lesson 11: Music & pop culture
* Lesson 12: The environment

**August 4 (midnight): Module 3 forum discussion closes**

**August 8 (midnight): Final research paper due**