

Mountain Theological Seminary

Graduate Course Syllabus

Apologetics

AP600

Fall 2026
MTS
Arvada, CO 80004

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to Christian evidences, from the existence of God to biblical archaeology to the Problem of Suffering. Learn how to construct convincing presentations for unbelievers and make apologetics a part of your own personal ministry. This class teaches principles of defending and promoting the Christian faith. (3 hours)

COURSE RATIONALE

In a non-Christian world, where faith is challenged and disinformation is rampant, apologetics is essential. If we are to reach the majority of the world's population, who do not share our Christian presuppositions, we must adapt our thinking to their needs. Apologetics has always served a vital role in building faith. Other beneficiaries of apologetics are the younger generation, even those who have grown up in the church. Thus getting a handle on Christian evidences enables us to connect not only with outsiders, but also insiders.

"The need of the hour is a mature apologetics that is historically informed and theologically rooted in the gospel itself. This will require not only knowing how to find reasons for our faith, but also knowing how to stoke imaginations, model cruciform lives, and publicly confess both our own personal shortcomings and the failures of the church through history... Once viewed as a tool to win debates, apologetics is now becoming more focused on generating productive conversations that open doors for people to consider the gospel" (Joshua Chatraw, *A Better Story about Apologetics*).

MTS MISSION

The mission of Mountain Theological Seminary is to equip followers of Jesus around the world to be spiritual leaders and servants in Christ's church by providing them with a transformative biblical distance education.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

As a result of this course, students should accomplish the following objectives:

1. Analyze and defend major Christian apologetic arguments regarding the existence of God, the reliability of Scripture, the identity of Jesus Christ, and responses to religious pluralism.
2. Evaluate competing worldviews using biblical, theological, philosophical, and historical reasoning.
3. Construct concise, biblically grounded responses to common objections to the Christian faith.
4. Integrate apologetic principles into personal ministry, demonstrating both truthfulness and Christlike character in evangelistic and discipleship settings.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Here follow, in descending order of point value, the most weighty assignments (totaling 92% of the 100 maximum points the student can earn).

1. Reading and reporting on the required apologetics texts (66 points) – fulfills objectives 1, 2, 3, and 4.
2. Participation in five Zoom sessions (15 points) – fulfills objective 4.
3. Worldviews Classes (6 points) – fulfills objectives 2 and 3.
4. Reading various supplementary articles (5 points) – fulfills objective 1
5. Spending an hour studying the material of each of four noted living apologists, then personally interact with them in real-time video sessions. Fulfills objective 4.

USDE REQUIREMENTS

The United States Department of Education (USDE) requires a minimum of 135 hours of work for *any* 3-hour course, regardless of how long the course lasts. It does not have to be the *same work* as a traditional 15-week course, but it must be the *same amount* of work. To meet this USDE requirement, ***all RMSMT instructors must list in their syllabi the amount of time that each assignment might take. The total hours for all work in a 3-hour class must equal at least 135 hours, including any in-class time.*** Use the following formula for reading and writing workloads: an average adult student takes 1 hour to read and absorb 20 pages of graduate-level text and 1.5 hours to research and write and rewrite 1 page of graduate-level text. Our reading and writing guidelines require about 1,000 pages of reading per course and up to 50 pages of writing per course (including any online posts). Using the formula above, reading 1,000 pages should take about 50 hours and writing 50 pages should take about 75 hours. That is a total of 135 hours, not including any in-class time for any onsite or offsite courses.

45 hours in class + (X pages /20) hours of reading + (Y pages of writing x 1.5) hours of writing $\geq$ 135 hours. Note that the total number of hours in a course may be more than 135, but it cannot be less.

1 hour in the classroom = 1 hour of course work

20 pages of reading = 1 hour of course work

1 page (300 words) of research and writing = 1.5 hours of course work 1 hour of field research = 1 hour of course work

1 page of online posting (200+ words) = 1 hour of course work.

For writing papers students are to use *Turabian* style and format: The following link is available for reference: http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html

COURSE TEXTBOOKS

1. Joshua Chatraw, *Telling a Better Story*
2. Francis Collins, *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*
3. Gary Habermas & Mike Licona, *The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus*
4. Douglas Jacoby, *Compelling Evidence for God and the Bible*
5. Greg Koukl, *Tactics*
6. C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*
7. James Sire, *The Universe Next Door*

	<i>Hours</i>	<i>Points</i>
MODULE 1 – INTRODUCTION (Sun 30 Aug–Sat 5 Sept)		
Read half of Douglas Jacoby’s <i>Compelling Evidence</i>	7	0
Introductory ZOOM session (5 in all)	1	3
	-8-	-3-
MODULE 2 – GOD (Sun 6–Sat 19 Sep)		
Watch Debate on the existence of God and submit 1-page report	3	2
Finish <i>Compelling Evidence</i> and submit report	6	11
	-9-	-13-
MODULE 3 – RELIGION (Sun 20 Sep–Sat 3 Oct)		
Watch the Worldviews classes (Robert Kurka): Apologetics 1, Apologetics 2, Apologetics 3, Apologetics 4 and 2-page report	4.5	6
Read & report on <i>The Universe Next Door</i>	17	4
Watch Rubel Shelly apologetics class on theodicy (suffering)	1	
ZOOM session with Rubel Shelly (3 Oct)	1	3
	-23.5-	-13-
MODULE 4 – MORALITY (Sun 4–Sat 17 Oct)		
Carefully read Morality articles A , B , C , and D and confirm	0.5	1
Read and report on C.S. Lewis’ <i>Mere Christianity</i>	15	11
	-15.5-	-12-
MODULE 5 – JESUS CHRIST (Sun 18–Sat 31 Oct)		
Read Jesus articles A , B , and C and confirm	0.5	0.5
Explore (min. 30 minutes) www.risenjesus.com and confirm	0.5	0.5
Read & report on <i>The Case for the Resurrection of Jesus</i>	19	11
Read the article Why I Left Atheism , by John Clayton	1	
ZOOM session with John Clayton (31 Oct)	1	3
	-22-	-15-
MODULE 6 – SCRIPTURE (Sun 1–Sat 7 Nov)		
Read Bible articles A , B , and C and confirm	0.5	0.5
Watch the classes on Bible Contradictions and Inerrancy and confirm	2	1.5
Listen to How the Bible Came to Be (all 5 talks) & 1-page report	3	1
Listen to the Slavery and the Bible & 1-page report	0.5	1
Archaeology talks: Old Testament & New Testament & 1-page report	1.5	1
	-7.5-	-5-
MODULE 7 – SCIENCE (Sun 8–Sat 21 Nov)		
Science articles A , B , C , D , E , and F and confirm	1	0.5
Watch The Universe , Exobiology , How to Read the Primeval Narrative & submit three 1-page reports	5	3
Spend 30 mins exploring the ASA and the Biologos website and confirm	0.5	0.5
Read Francis Collins’ <i>The Language of God</i> and report	17	11
Read the studies on Darwin by Denis Lamoureux and submit 1-p report	2	1
ZOOM session with Denis Lamoureux (21 Nov)	1	3
	-26.5-	-18-
MODULE 8 – STRATEGY (Sun 22–Sat 29 Nov)		
Read Greg Koukl’s <i>Tactics</i> or Joshua Chatraw’s <i>A Better Story</i> and report	17	11
If you read and report on both, you will earn 5 extra credit points.		
Listen to the Seven Compact Arguments talk, then send in your own		
Compact Arguments outline (seven topics, at least four points per topic)	3	3
Final exam project	4	4
Final ZOOM session	1	3
	-25-	-21-
Total hrs = 137 Total pts = 100		

BOOK REPORT RUBRIC

Here is an outline you may use for each of the 6 required book reports:

Points:

- | | |
|--|-----|
| • Confirm that you have read the book in full. | 2 |
| • What is the big idea of the book? | 2 |
| • How can this book be useful in my ministry? | 2 |
| • Were any of the concepts difficult to grasp? | 0.5 |
| • What else did you found interesting? | 0.5 |
| • Write at least 200 words but no more than 300. | 2 |
| • Use proper grammar and punctuation | 2 |

REPORT RUBRIC

Here is an outline you may use for each of the 9 other reports:

Points:

- | | |
|--|------|
| • Confirm that you have reviewed the assigned material | 0.25 |
| • What did you find interesting or helpful? | 0.25 |
| • Write at least 200 words, but no more than 300. | 0.25 |
| • Use proper grammar and punctuation | 0.25 |

UNIVERSITY GRADING SYSTEM

The following is the University's grading system:

A	Excellent	94–100	4.00
A-		90–93	3.67
B+		87–89	3.33
B	Good	83–86	3.00
B-		80–82	2.67
C+		77–79	2.33
C	Average	73–76	2.00
C-		70–72	1.67
D+		67–69	1.33
D	Passing	63–66	1.00
D-		60–62	0.67
F*	Failing	0–59	0.00
P	Pass		0.00
NP	No Pass		0.00
AU	Audited Course		0.00
FX	Failed Course Repeated		0.00
NG	No Grade Required		0.00
W**	Approved Withdrawal		0.00
WF	Withdrawal After Deadline		0.00
I	Approved Incomplete		0.00

* Hours of F grades are computed for grade point average.

** Hours of W grades are computed for grade point average of students eligible for veterans' benefits

POLICIES

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Students are expected to attend every class session. For online classes (in real time) video cameras must be turned on throughout the duration of the session.

In the event that a student misses one class session, he/she must work with the instructor to determine what is needed to make up what was missed. If the student does not make up the work in a satisfactory manner, the student's final grade will be lowered one letter grade at the end of the course. If the student misses two class sessions, the student's final grade will be lowered one letter grade provided that he/she makes up work for both class sessions. If that make up work is not completed, then the final grade will be lowered by two letter grades. If the student misses three class sessions, he/she will be given an F for his/her final grade and not be allowed to finish the course.

At times students have legitimate extenuating circumstances for their absences from class. If this occurs and the student is doing well in class up to that point, the student can contact the professor of the class and the Dean of the appropriate MTS School and ask for a 30-day extension beyond the end of class to complete the work in the class. This request however must be made at least 2 weeks before the final class session. If a 30-day extension is approved beyond the end of class and the student fails to finish all the requirements of the class by the end of those 30 days, the student will be assigned an F for his/her final grade for that class. Appeals can be made to the appropriate MTS Dean.

LATE WORK POLICY

All work is due when listed in the course syllabus, unless otherwise stipulated by the instructor. Grading of any late work on any assignment during the semester will be done at the discretion of the Instructor. (Note that instructors are not under obligation to accept any assignment that is late but may do so and grade it if they wish according to their discretion). No work may be accepted later than one week after the course concludes, since *final grades for all classes are due two weeks after the last class session*. The only exception to this policy is for students who request and are granted an official course extension as noted in the above paragraph. All such extensions are granted only for extreme circumstances (extended illness, death in family, etc.), and the extension may not exceed 30 days from the last day of class. As every assignment has a due date, points will be lost in proportion to the lateness of any submission. Only the appropriate MTS Dean may grant such requests, which must be made in writing at least 2 weeks before the last class session. Otherwise, the grade earned at the end of the class is the one granted.

ACADEMIC AND PERSONAL DISCIPLESHIP INTEGRITY POLICY

It is the policy of MTS that its students and faculty exhibit a high standard of honesty and integrity and a commitment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. Students are expected to be committed to a living standard depicted in the Bible both academically and relationally both inside and outside of school. Incidents of lack of integrity, including such things as plagiarism, cheating, treating others with lack of respect will be taken seriously and offenders held accountable up to and including probation, suspension and/or removal from their academic program and MTS. All infractions should be reported to the appropriate Dean of MTS.

INSTRUCTOR/STUDENT COVENANT

As instructor of this course, I covenant with each student that I will model Christ-like behavior, value and respect each student as a fellow disciple/learner, be prepared for each class session, make appropriate assignments, grade all assignments fairly, return all graded assignments promptly, and be available for consultation outside of class. In return, I expect each student to model Christ-like behavior, value and respect fellow students and me as the instructor, be prepared for each class session, and complete assignments in ways that demonstrate integrity.

ONLINE ETIQUETTE

Most of the online or hybrid courses in the graduate programs require students to interact with each other and with the instructor on a regular basis (per syllabus instructions). Most of that interaction is done through online comments posted on Canvas. Due to the constraints and unique nature of online communication, students should be aware of the tone or insinuations of any comments they post. Comments can often be misinterpreted when non-verbal cues such as facial expression and voice intonation are not present. Excessive punctuation, such as repeated exclamation points, could be construed as overly emotional or angry. Students need to consider how remarks might be interpreted by someone who does not know them personally and can only take their words at face value. Students should compose their comments per instructions under the syllabus assignments, paying careful attention to proper grammar and spelling.

LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES

While MTS does not have an official physical library onsite. However, we do have an online library for all students. Students can access this library with the link and User ID and Password noted below:

<https://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?authtype=ip,uid&custid=s9813984&profile=ehost&defaultdb=aph>

Username: rmsmt2016

Password: ICOC!YYYY (YYYY = Current Year)

There are also several State University libraries in the area which can be visited for research, including the University of Colorado in Boulder, Regis University, University of Colorado in Colorado Springs, Colorado College in Colorado Springs, Naropa University in Boulder. The best search engine for biblical article research is EBSCO ATLA Religion with Serials database, which can be found at all of the above libraries.

Please also visit any theological or university library in your area to see if they have access to ATLAs Religion data base. In Colorado, you may also check with local libraries for the availability of EBSCO *Academic Search Premier* data base. It searches many well respected academic religious journals also. MTS students can also access *Academic Search Premier* through our MTS website at www.mtsem.org.