

IDH 3035: God and Man in the Great Conversation
Florida International University
The Honors College



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General Information

Course Description and Purpose

The record of humanity's struggle to give answer to the great questions of life has taken the form of a "great conversation," whereby writers, while listening to the answers provided by their predecessors, have tried to offer their own solutions, — or to record their perplexity in the face of the difficulties encountered. This great conversation is ongoing, and it is there for us to draw near and listen to.

Perhaps no question has dominated this conversation more than that which reflects on the relationship between God and Man. In this course we will read and discuss some of the great works of the past which address themselves to this great question — "not," as C.S. Lewis once wrote about the reading of old books, "that there is any magic about the past. People were no cleverer than they are now; they made as many mistakes as we. But not the same mistakes." We will ourselves become participants in this great conversation, reflecting and commenting on their mistakes and ours, and — why not? — offering our own solutions.

Course Objectives

At the conclusion of this course students will be able to:

- trace the historical development of the problems in the philosophy of religion as expressed in the religious literature of the Abrahamic traditions and Western philosophy;
- describe some of the key texts in this tradition;
- discuss the key terms in the philosophy of religion;
- recognize and analyze various patterns and ideas central to the Abrahamic traditions and Western philosophy; and
- critically read religious literature with an understanding of its place in the "great conversation".

Policies

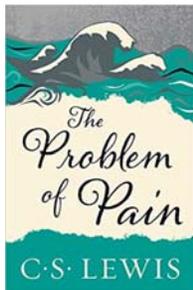
Before starting this course, please review the following pages:

- [Policies](#)
- [Netiquette \(links to an external site.\)](#)
- [Technical Requirements and Skills](#)
- [Accessibility and Accommodation](#)
- [Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)
- [Academic Misconduct Statement](#)

Course Prerequisites

Review the [Course Catalog \(links to an external site.\)](#) webpage for prerequisites information.

Textbook and Course Materials



The Problem of Pain

C.S. Lewis
HarperOne, 2015
ISBN-10: 0060652969
ISBN-13: 978-0060652968

You may purchase your textbook online at the [FIU Bookstore](#)



Till We Have Faces: A Myth Retold

C.S. Lewis
HarperOne, 1980
ISBN-10: 0156904365
ISBN-13: 978-0156904360

You may purchase your textbook online at the [FIU Bookstore](#)

You will be responsible for reading the above books as assigned in the course calendar. Additional readings will be provided by me and are marked accordingly (PDF) in the Course Calendar.

Expectations of this Course

This is an online course, which means most (if not all) of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same for a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students.

Students are expected to:

- **Review the getting started page** located in the course modules;

- **Introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion;
- **Take the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with the learning management system, Canvas;
- **Interact** online with instructor and peers;
- **Review** and follow the course calendar and weekly outlines;
- **Respond** to discussions by the due date specified. **No late work will be accepted;**
- **Submit** assignments by the corresponding deadline.

Course Detail

Course Communication

Communication in this course will take place via the Canvas Inbox. Check out the Canvas Conversations Tutorial ([links to an external site](#)) or Canvas Guide ([links to an external site](#)) to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox. I will respond to all correspondences within 48 hours.

Discussion Forums

Keep in mind that your discussion forum postings will likely be seen by other members of the course. Care should be taken when determining what to post.

Discussion Forum Expectations: You are expected to read all assigned material and be prepared to discuss it intelligently in the Discussion Forum.

Each week you will find a PDF with notes by me introducing the text to be read in its broad historical, philosophical and literary (or even mythological) context. At three points during the course, punctuating the start, half-way mark, and close of the course, there will also be zoom interventions by me which will frame the larger discussion on the utopian imagination. After you have read my notes and watched my lectures, you can go on to do the assigned reading. Because of the short amount of time we have in the class, the readings I have chosen aren't very long (relatively speaking); however, I would encourage you to take as much time as possible to be able to read them thoroughly without rushing through them. This means that you are recommended to begin reading right away and read ahead of the assigned dates.

As this is a fully online class, the Discussion Forum is the main mode of interaction for the course. You are therefore expected to discuss the read or watched material on the Discussion Forum. Anyone may begin a discussion at any time on the topic assigned for the week (see below) and based on the preceding lectures or notes.

You should post a **minimum** of twice per week, **beginning with Week 1**, to demonstrate comprehension of the course readings and lecture materials. One posting per week should be original (you derive the discussion topic based on the week's materials) and the second should be in response to at least one other posting (a students' or the professors'). Original postings should be completed by Friday/11:59PM and response postings must be completed by Sunday/11:59PM. This ensures that there are enough original postings for other students to respond to during the week.

Original postings are required to be a minimum of 200 words. Response postings should be a minimum of 100 words.

In preparing for this assignment you should familiarize yourself not only with the readings and my notes or lectures, but also with its historical context, its author, its literary and philosophical antecedents and political implications, etc. You are encouraged to bring your own expertise and interests to bear on the discussion.

Mere postings of “I liked X” or “I was surprised by Y”, while of course welcomed, are not what I’m looking for. Pick an idea, motif, story, etc., that struck as particularly interesting and begin a conversation. What we want are conversations that take us beyond the assigned material.

Finally, this will also be the proper place to raise any questions you may have about something I said in my notes or lectures.

First and last rule of the Discussion Forum: Always be respectful.

Book Review

You will create a video review on a book to be determined in consultation with the professor. Guidelines are provided under the Book Review assignment.

This assignment meets the Research Skill student learning outcomes for The Honors College portfolio.

Final Reflection

You will write one final reflection paper on one of the topics covered this semester. You will be placed into peer review groups and will be responsible for reviewing your partner's paper. I have provided guidelines for peer review in the Final Reflection assignment page. Please observe these guidelines carefully. The grade for the Final Reflection will include your review.

This assignment meets the Interdisciplinarity and Connectivity student learning outcomes for The Honors College portfolio.

Zoom Video Conference

Zoom is a video conference tool that you can use to interact with your professor and fellow students by sharing screens, chatting, broadcasting live video/audio, and taking part in other interactive online activities. We will be utilizing this tool to discuss the material with a little less formality. There will be three meetings worth 10 points each.

The meetings will be 20-30 minutes in duration.

They will take place Wednesdays at 9:00 PM EST. Recordings of each meeting will be available shortly after the meeting ends by clicking on the Zoom link in the course navigation menu. If you cannot attend the live meeting, you can watch the recording and submit a short summary in order to receive half-credit.

Grading

Course Grades Distribution Table

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Points for Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Weekly Discussions	6	5	30	30%
Zoom Meetings	3	10	30	30%
Book Review	1	20	20	20%
Reflection Paper	1	20	20	20%
Total	—	—	100	100%

Letter Grade Distribution Table

Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%
A	93 or above	B	84 - 86	C	70 - 76
A-	91 - 92	B-	81 - 83	D	60 - 69
B+	87 - 90	C+	77 - 80	F	59 or less

Honors College Policies and Requirements

Academic Misconduct Procedures and Policies: In The Honors College, the term “honor” refers both to academic accomplishment and character. Students in Honors should therefore adhere to and be held to the highest standards of personal academic accountability. Academic dishonesty in any form, including plagiarism, is antithetical to the very definition of being an Honors student at FIU. Consequently, an Honors College student found responsible for academic misconduct will be dismissed from the College.

An Honors faculty member may bring charges of academic misconduct against an Honors student if the faculty member suspects plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct. The faculty member will decide whether to pursue informal resolution, file formal resolution charges, or take no further action, and will follow the procedures outlined in the Academic Misconduct Procedures available at <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/get-support/student-conduct-and-academic-integrity/academic-integrity/index.php>. Please refer to the following documents for additional information: FIU Student Handbook: <https://studentaffairs.fiu.edu/about/student-handbook/index.php>.

Student Portfolios: The Honors College will be using a portfolio method to assess students’ learning outcomes. The portfolio allows for maximum flexibility in gauging student learning. Students decide (with instructor consultation) what “artifacts” or assignments to include for consideration in their portfolios to demonstrate successful achievement of each of five key student learning outcomes over the 4-year Honors experience. Portfolios provide a rich context for students to show what they have learned and to explain their learning process. Because the Honors curriculum is meant to be thought-provoking and reflective, student self-assessment through portfolios will facilitate learning and provide in-depth assessment. Each Honors College course

includes at least one assignment that could potentially fit portfolio requirements. <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/portfolio/>.

Honors Engagement: Honors College students are required to accumulate at least 20 engagement points each academic year (Fall and Spring) by attending Honors College activities. Students attending only one semester (Fall or Spring) are required to accumulate 10 engagement points. Each activity has a point value. Students may select which events and activities they want to attend. The new system is designed to be more flexible for students, offering events at various days and times (including some weekend events) and allowing for a variety of ways to meet the requirements. Please plan accordingly. <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/citizenship/>

Community Service: Honors College students must also complete 20 volunteer service hours. These hours DO NOT count toward the 20 engagement points discussed above. <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/community-service/>.

Honors Education in the Arts (HEARTS): The HEARTS program is designed to give Honors College students opportunities to “explore and appreciate different artistic and cultural traditions and modes of artistic expression. HEARTS will also serve as a clearinghouse (and curatorial framework) for our students to experience the arts on campus and in the community by providing them with information about cultural activities and access to performances with free or discounted tickets. <http://honors.fiu.edu/current-students/hearts/>

Resources:

Panthers Care & Counseling & Psychological Services: If you are looking for help for yourself or a fellow classmate, Panthers Care encourages you to express any concerns you may come across as it relates to any personal behavior concerns or worries you have, for the classmate’s well-being or yours; you are encouraged to share your concerns with FIU’s Panthers Care website.

Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers free and confidential help for anxiety, depression, stress, and other concerns that life brings. Learn more about CAPS at caps.fiu.edu. Professional counselors are available for same-day appointments. Don’t wait to call 305-348-2277 to set up a time to talk or visit the online self-help portal.