I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Several major critical assaults on the veracity of historic Christianity shall be examined. The course shall begin with an examination of the philosophical and cultural influences on the Enlightenment and its subsequent attack upon orthodox forms of Christianity. The 19th century shall next be examined and naturalism's attack upon the Christian faith. Most of the focus of the course shall be on the criticisms that have been leveled against orthodox Christianity in the twentieth century. These shall revolve around four foci: the problem of postmodernity, the problem of technology, the problem of pluralism and the problem of evil. Finally we shall examine the relationship between these criticisms and the task of apologetics today.

II. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Complete the assigned reading from the required texts listed below.
2. Book Reviews of Hitchens, Turpin and Marty texts (see below)
3. Either:
   a. 5-7 page paper on one of the classic 19th century texts listed below under “Required Reading”
   b. In-class presentation on one of the teams and topics listed below under Class Presentations.
4. A final paper on a topic relevant to the course. A short one paragraph proposal of the paper (with a small bibliography) shall be turned in by October 28. The paper shall be 10-15 pages in length (double spaced in a 12 pt font). Due on the last day written work is permitted. (December 16)
5. Attend Colson Lectureship with Chuck Colson, Wednesday evening Sept 17 at 7:00 pm in the GCTS Chapel. You will receive extra credit of 4 points if you prepare a one page book review of Colson, The Faith, and turn it into me prior to Colson’s lecture on Sept. 17.

III. Evaluation

- Final paper shall count as 80%.
- Book Reviews count 4 points each if turned in on time, 2 pts if late
- 19th Century Figure paper – 4 points if turned in on time, 2 pts if late
- Presentation – 4 points for participation
- Required Reading – 4 points if completed prior to end of semester

IV. REQUIRED TEXTS
  a. Christopher Hitchens, God is Not Great (Twelve, 2007)
  c. Martin Marty, When Faiths Collide (Blackwell, 2005)
  d. Andrew Hoffecker, Revolutions in Worldview (P&R, 2007) (chapters 6-10 required)
  e. Pick one of the following:
     Ludwig Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity
     Charles Darwin, The Origin of the Species
     Frederick Nietzsche, Twilight of the Idols
     Karl Marx and Frederick Engels. On Religion
     Sigmund Freud, On Totem and Taboo
     Jean Paul Sartre, No Exit

V. WARNING ON PLAGIARISM
   Helpful guidelines on plagiarism can be found on the Indiana University website listed below. This document has the official recognition of the Gordon-Conwell faculty and provides very helpful tools to guide you as you prepare your papers/exams. In order to save paper, we’ve provided you with the website address:
   http://www.indiana.edu/~wts/wts/plagiarism.html. Please consider this carefully.

VI. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY RIGHTS
   To protect the professor’s intellectual property rights with regard to classroom content, students are asked to refrain from audio and video recording of classes, as well as audio, video, and written publication (including internet posting and broadcasting) or live transmission of classroom proceedings.

VII. INTERNET USAGE
   Students are asked to refrain from accessing the internet at any point during class sessions, unless otherwise instructed by the professor. “Surfing the web,” checking email, and other internet-based activities are distracting to other students and to the professor, and prevent the student from fully participating in the class session.
Course Outline
AP 625 Critiques of Christianity

Week One - Introduction (Sept 9)
   Introductory remarks and course mechanics
   A short history of Christian apologetics
   The Rational and Social Shape of (Un)belief

Week Two - The Philosophical Context (Sept 16)
   David Hume and Immanuel Kant
   The Enlightenment and its attack upon theism

Week Three - The Post-Enlightenment Critiques of Christianity (23)
   Ludwig Feuerbach / Karl Marx

Week Four - The Post-Enlightenment Critique of Christianity (Sept 30)
   Charles Darwin / Sigmund Freud / Frederick Nietzsche

Week Five - Revolutions of Modern Culture (Oct 7)
   Democratic Revolution / Consumer Revolution
   Bureaucratic Revolution / Therapeutic Revolution

Week Six - The Dangers/Critiques of Postmodernism (Oct 21)
   Truth and Relativism
   Pragmatism and Skepticism

Week Seven - The Problem of Consumerism (Turpin) (Oct 28)

Week Eight - The Problem of Pluralism (Marty) (Nov. 4)

Week Nine - Religion as Problematic (Dawkins) (Nov. 18)

Week Ten – Concluding Comments (Nov 25)

Reading Reports Due Dates
1. 19th Century Figure – Paper due Oct 7
2. Problem of consumerism (Turpin) Reading Report – Oct 28
3. Problem of pluralism (Marty) – Reading Report – Nov 4
4. Problem of religion (Hitchens) – Reading Report – Nov 18

Presentation Topics and Dates
1. Problem of consumerism (Turpin) – Oct 28
2. Problem of pluralism (Marty) – Nov 4
3. Problem of religion (Hitchens) – Nov 18