Course Description and Objectives:
This course simulates a non-formal educational approach where the exchange of ideas, concerns, and passions about the ministry as a post-Christian context takes the center stage. This course explores the sociocultural conditions of a late- and post-modern, post-Christian West as they relate to the ministry of the church in North America and the world.

This course has three major goals:
First, students will explore the dialectical relationship between the late- and post-modern conditions and various ministry approaches of the church.

Second, students will develop a theological and ministerial engagement trajectory that can aptly respond to the ever-protean sociocultural milieu in a post-Christian era in the following areas:
- Perspectivalism and hermeneutics
- Theological prolegomena and the nature of the church
- Generational shifts and challenges
- Incarnation, embodiment and predicament
- Reflexivity and the project of self
- Globalization and balkanization
- Missional and Emerging church movements

Third, Students and the instructor will seek to forge a learning community that is committed to mutual teaching/learning, cultivating the intrinsic motivations for life-long learning and flexibility in church ministry in an ever-protean society.

Course Texts:
Required:

Course Expectations and Assignments:
- **Attendance and Participation (20%)**
The course’s seminar format seeks to forge a learning community that is committed to mutual teaching/learning, cultivating intrinsic motivations for life-long and inter-dependent learning as students prepare to enter into and/or enhance various ministry vocations in a post-Christian world.

- **Book Synopsis & Reflection Papers (40%)**
For each session the student is to come prepared to: (1) share major tenets of the readings (with specific
passages); (2) raise questions pertaining to the readings; (3) be able to reflect on the readings biblically and theologically (i.e., what does a particular idea or theme say about God’s character and word-action? About the church as an institution & as the people of God, world, etc.?); (4) brainstorm ministerial implications from the readings; and (5) be open to share your personal musings. Each Book Synopsis & Reflection paper should be about 2 to 3 double-spaced pages.

All Book synopses & reflections (both paper & electronic) due in class on March 30.

- **Final Project (40%)**

  Students are to choose one from the following:

  1. A 20-page integrative paper that pulls together theoretical insights from the course texts and class discussions about various aspects of ministry in a post-Christian world. This paper will be useful for those who want to review and synthesize the theories introduced in the course in order to constructively articulate one's theoretical underpinning of the “post” conditions that the church is faced with, i.e., Perspectivalism and hermeneutics; Theological prolegomena and the nature of the church; Generational shifts and challenges; Incarnation, embodiment and predicament; Reflexivity and the project of self; Globalization and balkanization; and Missional and Emerging church movements. In this exercise, you may include charts/tables summarizing and operationalizing (making the data into a manageable & useful chunks) certain issues/ideas. But what is important for this kind of exercise is to build relationships among the theories that you interact with. Otherwise, the paper will have very little use for you in the future.

  2. You may write a 15-page research paper tracing the depth and breadth of a theory, perspective, or proposal discussed in class or reading. The paper should include: (1) the point of departure in theory-generating (i.e., What were some reasons/dissatisfactions in a preceding theory/practice the theory in focus is reacting against or modifying, etc. ?); (2) the theoretical underpinnings of the theory/practice in focus; (3) the promise or usefulness of the theory/practice; and (4) implications of the theory/practice for the ministry of the church in a post-Christian world.

  3. You may want to design a series of teaching-learning sessions on an aspect of the Bible, theology, or Christian praxis, intentionally and strategically based upon one or two major themes discussed in the course - i.e., Leading evangelical leaders’ (mis-)understanding of Lyotard’s notion of metanarrative, Deconstruction as “God’s latest instrument” the persistence of paternalism in the Western church, etc. This project must include, not only the detailed description of (the flow of) the teaching-learning activities, but also the rationale for the activities (side by side). It should include at least 4 sessions in the series.

  4. You may write 5 case studies where each case carefully portrays one aspect of the post-Christian condition that the church is faced with. Included in each case study is then: (1) the description of the case; (2) various levels (kinds) of questions for the follow-up discussion of the case & any suggestions for the discussion leader; (3) salient issues/themes that need to be highlighted from the discussion; (4) any necessary background information pertinent to the case study.

  5. You may come up with a substantial idea for the final project and pursue it, upon the approval of the instructor.

All in all, you will want to give a serious thought to the final project that demonstrates your understanding of the course materials and your ability to take a significant step toward interacting and/or internalizing some of the salient themes from the course. You will want to email me with your idea for the final project by the midnight of **Tuesday, March 31.**
• Late Papers will be docked a letter grade for each day they are late, no exceptions.
• Be aware that due to the limited amount of space allotted for each assignment, the instructor expects a density of content and thought greater than that usually found within papers of similar length.
• All papers should be in Turabian format.
  • For online help, consult: http://www.libs.uga.edu/ref/turabian.html

Class Schedule:

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<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading &amp; Assignment Due for Class</th>
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<td>January 26</td>
<td>• Introduction to the Course</td>
<td>• Christianity and the Postmodern Turn, Introduction, chs.1-3; 7-9</td>
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<td>• Approaches to Understanding “Post”-Conditions</td>
<td>• Book Synopsis &amp; Reflection 1</td>
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<td>February 2</td>
<td>• Surveying the Contours of Late-modernity</td>
<td>• Christianity and the Postmodern Turn, chs.4-6; 10-12</td>
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<td>• Surveying the Contours of Post-modernity</td>
<td>• Book Synopsis &amp; Reflection 2</td>
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<td>February 16</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>READING WEEK</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 23</td>
<td>• Post-Christian Response I: Church as a Hermeneutical Community</td>
<td>• What Would Jesus Deconstruct?</td>
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<td>• Book Synopsis &amp; Reflection 3</td>
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<td>March 2</td>
<td>• Post-Christian Response II: Programs to De-Program Church Programs</td>
<td>• Reveal</td>
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<td>March 9</td>
<td>• Post-Christian Response III: A “Forced” Self-Assessment of the Western Church</td>
<td>• Why the Rest Hates the West</td>
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<td>March 16</td>
<td>• Post-Christian Response IV: Reacting against the Present and Forging the Future by the Discontent</td>
<td>• An Emergent Manifesto of Hope</td>
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<td>• Book Synopsis &amp; Reflection 5</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>NO CLASS</td>
<td>READING WEEK</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 30</td>
<td>• Forging a Self-Reflective &amp; Other-Responsive Ministry</td>
<td>• All Book Synopses &amp; Reflections Due</td>
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<td>• Final Project Idea Email Due – Midnight of March 31</td>
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<td>April 6</td>
<td>• Integrative Case Studies</td>
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<td>April 13</td>
<td>• Final Project Outline Sharing</td>
<td>• Final Project Outline Due</td>
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<td>• Closure</td>
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<td>• Course evaluation</td>
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<td>April 27</td>
<td>All work due 4pm</td>
<td>• Final Project Due</td>
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Bibliography:
Postmodernism


Jones, Preston, ed. *Is Belief in God Good, Bad or Irrelevant?: A Professor and a Punk Rocker Discuss Science, Religion, Naturalism and Christianity*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2006.


**Postmodernity**


**Globalization & the Church**


**Millennials & Generational Issues**


Twenge, Jean. *Generation Me: Why Today’s Young Americans Are More Confident, Assertive, Entitled—*

Christianity in a Post-Christian Era

Hermeneutics & Self

Ministry among Postmoderns

**Emerging Churches**