

# HIGH SCHOOL BIBLE COURSES

## Course Syllabus

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Bellevue Christian High School

Instructor: Daniel Ribera

Semester: First 2006-2007

Room: G109

### Mission Statement

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Our goal is to prepare young people to live fully for God in a rapidly changing world, with the ability to understand, evaluate, and transform their world from the foundation of God's unchanging values.

### Course Descriptions

<b>Philosophy of Education</b> One semester Required of all students	The Philosophy of Education course is designed to introduce students to the Christian worldview to which BCS is committed. We will answer such basic questions as, "Who is God?", "How do we know Him?", and "Who am I?" it addresses the basic concerns of humanity. Our class will also examine the nature of unbelieving thought and evaluate it from a Christian perspective. We will stress the importance of seeing our world through Christian eyes.
<b>Introduction to Christian Ethics</b> One semester Required of all students	The Introduction to Christian Ethics course is designed to assist the students to 1) understand the nature of ethics, 2) evaluate non-Christian ethical systems, 3) develop a Christian approach to ethics, 4) understand the demands of Kingdom living, and 5) apply God's Word to the moral choices that confront them every day.
<b>Apologetics</b> One semester Elective class	The Introduction to Christian Apologetics course is designed to help students 1) understand the nature of the Apologetic task, 2) develop critical thinking skills, 3) recognize the underlying assumptions that govern unbelieving thought, 4) evaluate non-Christian modes of thought, and 5) become equipped with specific answers to the common objections raised by unbelievers.
<b>Church History</b> One semester Elective class	The Church in History course is designed to 1) help the student understand the spiritual and theological development of the Christian church in its historical and cultural context, 2) introduce students to the major figures and movements in the history of the Church, and 3) acquaint the student with social, political, and intellectual developments during the first 2000 years of Christian history.

## Assignments

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**1. Students will be assigned readings primarily from the following texts:**

<b>Philosophy Of Education</b>	<b>Ethics</b>
Stott, John. <i>Christian Basics: An Invitation to Discipleship</i> . Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2003.	Lutzer, Erwin. <i>The Necessity of Ethical Absolutes</i> . Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981.  Bridges, Jerry. <i>The Pursuit of Holiness</i> . Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1978.
<b>Apologetics</b>	<b>Church History</b>
Pratt, Richard L., Jr. <i>Every Thought Captive</i> . Phillipsburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1979.  Johnson, Philip. <i>Defeating Darwinism by Opening Minds</i> . Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 1997.	Kuiper, B. K. <i>The Church in History</i> . Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1964.

**2. Students will be assigned additional writing assignments based on responses to articles, primary source documents, and other sources:**

<b>Philosophy of Education</b>	<b>Ethics</b>
<i>BCS Doctrinal Statement</i> <i>BCS Principles of Christian Education</i> Greene, Albert, Ph. D., <i>Foundations of Education</i>  Excerpts from various Christian thinkers including Harry Blamires, Abraham Kuyper, and others.	The Ten Commandments, Exodus 20:1-17  Readings from articles and documents regarding ethical issues that arise in current events.
<b>Apologetics</b>	<b>Church History</b>
Bertrand Russell, <i>Why I am Not a Christian</i> Outline of Thomas Aquinas' Apologetic Arguments Van Til, Cornelius, <i>Why I Believe in God</i> Transcripts of debates between Christians and Atheists	Biography of a pre-19 century historical figure  Historic Christian Church Creeds  Excerpts from the writings of Martin Luther, John Calvin and other reformers  Current issues in church/denominational polity, worship, and theology

**3. Students will conduct research in their area of study and present their learning:**

<b>Individual Projects</b>	<b>Philosophy of Education</b> Interview four adults on their beliefs and worldview, including metaphysics, epistemology, axiology, and religion. Compare their answers, and present your findings in a paper.	<b>Ethics</b> Select an ethical issue, research 1) standards or rules, 2) motives, 3) goals or consequences; develop your metaethics including epistemology, anthropology, and the resolution of moral conflicts; share your findings in a class presentation.
<b>Group Projects</b>	<b>Apologetics</b> Select a non-Christian world religion (for example, Islam, Hinduism, Sikhism, Judaism, Buddhism, Taoism, etc.) and research its history, culture and adherents, beliefs and theology, ethics and values, system of worship and observances, and critique the religion from a Christian perspective. Share your findings in a class presentation and a written brief.	<b>Church History</b> Select a denominational group (Protestant, Catholic, Anglican, or Orthodox), visit a worship service, interview a pastor or priest, research the denomination's history, theology, church government, and worship. Share your findings in a class presentation.

**My Philosophy of Christian Education**

God's Word is central to all we do in Christian Education. We speak of God revealing Himself through His Word. He speaks to us through His Son, the Word incarnate. Christ came to the earth to reveal the Father. When the Philip asked Jesus to show him the Father, Jesus (who is called the Word by the Gospel writer) answered:

"Don't you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. (John 14:8-10, NIV)

God also speaks to us through His written Word. "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work" (II Timothy 3:16-17, NIV).

Finally, and of particular importance for the school, God speaks in and through His creation. "For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that men are without excuse" (Romans 1:20, NIV). Thus, the school curriculum takes the creation as its

subject matter. This is true of all schools, though it is acknowledged in the Christian school. In the Christian school, we study math, science, literature, music, and technology, as subjects that reveal the creator and we don't divide life into religious and secular compartments. All we study has meaning because the God gives it meaning.

How does the Bible fit into the curriculum? The Bible is a written text, but it is not just another work of literature, not just another part of the creation. Though it certainly is literature, and may be studied as other literature is studied, it is more than that.

Through God's Word, applied to our hearts and minds by the Holy Spirit, we acknowledge God's voice in the creation. The Scriptures teach us who God is and what He has done. The written Word is a text that informs our perspective, reveals our hearts, points us to Christ, and addresses our presuppositions.

These ideas speak directly to how and why we read and study the scriptures, how we understand God's world, His works, and His Word, how we defend the faith, how we define ethical behavior and righteousness, and what we believe to be wisdom in this life.

## **Class Policies**

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### *BASIC EXPECTATIONS:*

Students are expected to come to class on time, prepared to participate. Being prepared includes having a notebook for class notes and homework, a binder for handouts, pen (or pencil), textbook, this syllabus, and homework assignments ready for class. Please select a bound notebook for class notes and homework assignments. Choose a composition-style notebook, or spiral bound notebook. Do not use a notebook with perforated pages that separate too easily or loose leaf style binder from which pages may be removed. It is too easy to lose pages from those. I prefer for all of your assignments and class notes to remain in your notebook. However, you should have a section in your binder into which to place the papers that are handed out in class. I try to always hand out papers with three holes punched so you can conveniently place them in a binder. You will need to keep all handouts for study and reference.

All written work must follow the style convention described in the BCS Style Sheet handout. Only responses using full, meaningful sentences will be accepted. All relevant policies from the *BCS Student Academic Handbook* and the *Parent-Student Handbook* will be applied in our class.

### *INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:*

Our class time may include lectures, individual and group presentations, whole and small group discussions, oral or silent readings, interviews with guests, video and audio recordings of debates, interviews, or lectures, and tests and quizzes. Out of class assignments may include reading, writing, journaling, interviews, and optional extra credit projects.

*DISCUSSIONS:*

All students are expected to participate in class discussions. During our class discussions we will *practice* the following *virtues*: patient and courteous attention to others who are speaking, thoughtful reflection, focused engagement, courageous and critical questioning, and respectful and gracious responses.

*INDIVIDUAL AND GROUP WORK:*

In some cases, it is expected that the work a student submits will be his or her own individual and original work. This is an individual process (you work alone) and an individual finished product (e.g., you write and submit your own paper). If you quote another source verbatim, borrow an idea, capture a digital image, copy/cut and paste text from another person, or digital source you must cite the source. Please use the BCS standards for citing sources. It is plagiarism when you present writing, illustrations, images, or ideas as your own, when they are not originally yours. Even collaboratively written text should be acknowledged for what it is.

Sometimes you will be allowed to work cooperatively in a group in order that you may benefit from the learning process itself and profit from and contribute to the learning of others. In this case a group process will be permitted. At times you may still need to present your own written product. That is, you may discuss the assignment, share ideas and even answers, but the work of writing you submit must be your own work product. This is a group process (you work together), but an individual product (e.g., you still write and submit your own paper). Your thinking may have benefited from others, but the end product will be unique.

At other times you may be required to submit a single joint group project. For example, members of the group will not only share in the research, but they will also contribute equally toward the written work, a poster, a PowerPoint presentation, a hand-out, and the actual class presentation. This is not only a group process (you work together), but a group product as well (e.g., you write and submit one common group paper). If you are unclear, please inquire whether the work submitted needs to be an individual or a group product.

*SEATING:*

Initially students may select their own seat in the classroom. I reserve the right to assign/reassign seats at anytime for some or all students in order to eliminate distractions, improve discussions, change class dynamics, and generally to improve learning. Please see me if you need to request a specific seat for any reason.

*WEBSITE:*

We maintain our own website for my bible classes. You may visit the site either through the Bellevue Christian website (<http://www.bellevuechristian.org> -- go to class web pages and click on the site for Dan Ribera) or you may go directly to [www.bibleblog.net](http://www.bibleblog.net). This site will include all handouts, assignments, resource links, student work, my blog, and our own web forum.

*WEB FORUM:*

On [www.bibleblog.net](http://www.bibleblog.net) you will find a link to our web forum. When you click on this link a new window will open for the discussion forum. You will find a forum for each of my courses: Philosophy of Education, Ethics, Apologetics, and Church History. Each student will post to their class forum at least twice in a semester.

Students must be registered to participate on the web forum. In order to register follow the links to the forum at [www.bibleblog.net](http://www.bibleblog.net) and click on "register." You must register using your *BCS username* (e.g., mine is *dribera*) and an active email address. It does not need to be your BCS address, just an active one that you actually read. Once you submit the registration form I will receive an email requesting account activation. I will only activate accounts for which I recognize the username. Please don't use an anonymous screen name, and don't use just a first name. That may work well on IM, but since our forum is an extension of my classroom, I must easily recognize every participant.

Some students may also participate as webmasters, designers, and moderators for extra credit.

*HANDING IN ASSIGNMENTS:*

Assignments are typically checked on Tuesdays. I will walk around the class checking and stamping your work. You may also submit assignments digitally by emailing them to me at [dribera@bellevuechristian.org](mailto:dribera@bellevuechristian.org), or on a floppy disk, CD, or USB drive. Other methods of submitting assignments, either hard copy or digitally may be made by arrangement. If you are submitting digital work (i.e., word document, publisher) or making a presentation in class that requires a digital presentation (i.e., PowerPoint, website, media presentation), you are responsible to ensure a reliable, convenient method for submitting your work. Floppy disks have been known to fail and email attachments have been known to be blocked. You are responsible for submitting work and/or presenting when it is due. Don't post documents in a private directory that will require me to log-off my computer. Having to log-off my account and log-on to your account wastes class time and it also doesn't allow me to save a copy of your presentation to my account. So please place presentation documents in publicly accessible places.

*LATE WORK/ABSENCES:*

All work is due on the assigned day. Students may ask for an extension only if they do so at least 24 hours in advance. Extensions will not be granted on the day the work is due. Late work will be penalized.

*EXTRA CREDIT:*

You may earn extra credit if you:

1) Follow a consistent scripture reading program. I have a number of bible reading plan options, or you may use one from your church. Reading a chapter of the bible, (not to include

any assigned for school), three times a week will earn up to 15 extra credit points, one point for each week. Keep track of your reading in your journal.

2) Work on our class web site as **forum moderator** (read entries and responses), **webmaster** (add hyperlinks, pages, text, and graphics as needed), **web designer** (change from the “stock” MS theme we are using, and redesign the overall look of the site to be more interesting and functional). These are not intended to be huge overwhelming projects. Small significant contributions will be important.

3) Find and submit current and relevant print or digital articles in the areas of philosophy of education, faith and learning, apologetics, ethics. This should not dominate your time, but small significant contributions will help build a library of articles for our classroom. Five points per article for a total of 15 extras points.

## Evaluation

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**Students will be evaluated by their performance in the following categories:**

<b>Reading 20%</b> Reading (Text, Documents, & Articles), Thinking (Essential Questions), Responding, Writing, etc.	<b>Knowledge 20 %</b> Tests and Quizzes: Vocabulary, Content, Application, Etc.
<b>Application 40%</b> Research, Interviews, and Presentation	<b>Participation 20%</b> Attendance, Preparation, Cooperation, Discussion, Responses, Questions
<b>Extra Credit up to 10%</b> Bible Reading, Forum Moderator, Memorization,	

### GRADE CALCULATIONS:

Grades will be calculated based on these percentages:

93+	A
90	A-
87	B+
83	B
80	B-
77	C+
73	C
70	C-
67	D+
63	D
60	D-
< 60	E