

Proposal to the University Curriculum Committee  
Freshman Inquiry Course

I. Cover Sheet

Course title	Faith and Reason
Date first offered	Fall, 1999
Sections per year	6
Statement of theme/topical area	We will look at how the dichotomy between faith and reason has shaped the Western intellectual and spiritual landscape.

Signatures of participating faculty:

<u>Martha Balshem</u>		
Name (typed)	Signature	Date
<u>Don Hartsock</u>		
Name (typed)	Signature	Date
<u>Chip Long</u>		
Name (typed)	Signature	Date
<u>Michael Reardon</u>		
Name (typed)	Signature	Date
<u>Unnamed Faculty</u>		
Name (typed)	Signature	Date
<u>Unnamed Faculty</u>		
Name (typed)	Signature	Date

Contact Faculty:

<u>Martha Balshem</u>	<u>UNST</u>	<u>5-4482(w) 293-2296(h)</u>	<u>balshem@irn.pdx.edu</u>
Name	Mail code	Telephone (work, home)	Email

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II. Course Narrative

A. Statement of theme/topical area (no more than 200 words):

What is the reason for the human condition? Where do we look for a moral compass? How do we find truth? Human beings throughout history have sought to answer these questions through faith and reason. In this course, we will look at how the complex dichotomy between faith and reason has played out in human history. We will discuss the emergence of science during the Enlightenment; Darwin, evolution, and the authority of science in modern society; and contemporary issues such as creation science and faith healing. We will read broadly, touching on classical philosophy, sacred texts, modern fiction, poetry, theology, evolutionary biology, and cosmology. We will consider how our concepts of faith and reason, and the institutions of science and religion, shape both our intellectual landscapes and our efforts to develop our own moral characters.

B. Learning objectives specific to this theme:

By the end of this course, students should be able to:

1. Discuss Christian religious fundamentalism in the United States.
2. Argue both scientific and creationist positions regarding human evolution and the age of the earth.
3. State the major models for the relationship between science and religion.
4. Discuss their own search for a moral compass.
5. Conduct themselves in a respectful manner when expressing or reacting to moral or religious viewpoints expressed in a university classroom.
6. Relate matters of faith and reason to the struggle to define one's character.

C. Assessment of student learning (specific to theme):

Assessment of theme-specific student learning will be based on graded written work and oral presentations; ungraded work such as personal journals; a theme-specific measure of knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to religiosity and appreciation of diversity; and a theme-specific measure of writing ability imported from Clackamas Community College.

Graded -  
20's - globally  
over the year -  
30% of work to

D. Description of methods to ensure coherence of theme across sections:

The "Faith and Reason" team will meet weekly throughout the academic year to discuss course implementation. Faculty will visit each other's classes on a regular basis. Each term, we will share major assignments and readings.

participatory ~~for~~ faculty

E. Interdisciplinarity of theme:

Our faculty team includes an anthropologist (Balshem), a philosopher (Hartsock), a specialist in modern literature (Long), and a historian (Reardon). We hope to include a scientist on our team.

F. Relation of course to other University Studies offerings (cohesion, ties to future learning):

This particular theme is not formally tied to any Sophomore/Junior cluster. However, students interested in continuing to pursue the issues we will raise in "Faith and Reason" will be well served in several clusters, including "Science and the Humanities," "The Nineteenth Century," "American Studies," and "Natural Science Inquiry."

G. How this theme will address the University Studies Goals:

University Studies Goal	Representative Assignments	Assessment Plan
Communication: Writing	2 <sup>nd</sup> term: a 7-8 page paper on a significant historical figure from the late 19 <sup>th</sup> Century	University Studies writing assessment (embedded in final portfolio); theme-specific pre- and post-course writing assessment
Graphics	2 <sup>nd</sup> term: a graphic representation of data from survey on religiosity.	Assess ability to produce an appropriate graphic and describe it in written text.
Oral Communication	All terms: required participation in class discussion	Assess readiness, preparation for discussion
Numeracy	All terms: survey on religiosity. Sampling; question design; correlation; difference of means; research ethics.	Assess ability to analyze survey data reported in the media.
Visual Communication	Not yet designed.	
Group process	2 <sup>nd</sup> term: "Meeting of the Minds": group role play assuming personas of 19 <sup>th</sup> Century historical figures	Assess individual contributions to the group process; assess efforts of group to integrate all members
Computer Literacy	All terms: creation and elaboration of web pages	Assess how much of third-term portfolio is on the web.
Inquiry and Critical Thinking	3 <sup>rd</sup> term: unit on creation versus evolution	Assess ability to use critical thinking concepts in written and oral analyses of this debate
Diversity and Human Experience	Unit on images of gay and lesbian people	Assess assigned but ungraded entries in personal journals, early and late in the year
Ethics and Social Responsibility	Service learning project with local service organizations	Assess assigned but ungraded entries in personal journals, early and late in the year

### III. Course Schedule

Term	Topical Outline	Faculty
First Term	<b>Introductory topics:</b> 1. Moral decisions and the creation of character 2. Case study on faith healing: the authority of science, the authority of religion.	Don Hartsock, Chip Long Martha Balshem
	<b>Historical background:</b> 1. Genesis: an ancient statement on morality, the human condition, and the history of the earth and cosmos. 2. The rise of Christianity in Europe 3. The Enlightenment	Michael Reardon Chip Long
Second Term	4. The 19 <sup>th</sup> Century rupture between science and religion: Darwin, Freud, Einstein. 5. Science as a profession; critical studies of science. 6. Faith in science as a social phenomenon.	Michael Reardon
Third Term	<b>Current Issues:</b> 1. Creation science (a) Evolutionary theory since Darwin; creationist challenges (b) The Grand Canyon: A case study in the evolution/creation debate 2. Neurobiology, artificial intelligence, and the reductionist view of human consciousness 3. Images of gays and lesbians: scientific and biblical sources	Martha Balshem  Don Hartsock
	<b>Conclusions:</b> 1. Models for the relationship between science and religion 2. The foundations of character and the making of moral choices	Martha Balshem, Michael Reardon Don Hartsock, Chip Long

#### Notes:

This topical outline will change with the addition of new faculty. For instance, the addition of a geologist would allow us to expand the unit on the Grand Canyon and include a review of creationist challenges to plate tectonics theory; the addition of a physicist would allow us to explore cosmology and quantum theory.

#### IV. Preliminary Reading List

- Banville, John, *Kepler: A Novel*. Vintage, 1993.
- Barbour, Ian G., *Religion in an Age of Science. The Gifford Lectures 1989-1991. Volume 1*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1990.
- Bauman, M. Garrett, *Ideas and Details: Guide to College Writing*. Harcourt Brace, 1997.
- Boyer, Peter J., *Miracle Man*. The New Yorker, April 12, 1999, pps. 64-83.
- Camus, Albert, *The Stranger*. Matthew Ward, trans. Vintage, 1989.
- Kitcher, Philip, *Abusing Science: The Case Against Creationism*.
- Lindberg, David C. and Ronald L. Numbers, eds. *God and Nature: Historical Essays on the Encounter between Christianity and Science*. Berkeley: Univ. of Calif. Press, 1986.
- Plato, *The Last Days of Socrates*. Hugh Tredennick, trans. Penguin, 1995.