

Course Offerings, Spring 2019

Claire Verdoorn

Comparative Worldviews: “What is truth?” Pilate’s unanswered question, asked of one who could have answered it fully, remains as potent for us today as it was in his time. Under the umbrella of this question lie questions like: What is right and wrong? Does God exist? What is a human being? Do words have meaning? Is there a purpose to life? Is there a point to suffering?

This course aims to address these vital questions by connecting students with important truths about the world, through reason, imagination, and relationship. It is the goal of this course to equip students to “love the Lord with all [their] mind,” engaging in clear, wise, and compassionate discourse with a culture of confused ideas. It will introduce students to six major competing worldviews: Christianity, Islam, Secularism, Marxism, New Spirituality, and Postmodernism, exploring the areas of philosophy, law, biology, politics, and others.

This course aims to prepare students for college-level discussion. It is a challenging course geared towards students 15 and above. Students are expected to complete weekly reading assignments prior to class, coming prepared with questions and discussion topics from the material. The text is rich and detailed but straightforward. We will augment the text with the writings of major proponents of the worldviews. There will be several quizzes and two exams, chiefly on material presented in the text. The course is meant to inspire students to ask lively, ambitious, and honest questions and to increase their critical thinking skills.

Section 1: Wednesdays, January 16 – May 22, 12:30-2:00pm

Section 2: Thursdays, January 17 – May 23, 12:30-2:00pm (Located in Perry, IA)

Texts: *Understanding the Times*, 2015 edition (Only one text per family is required, but one per student may be easier. Note: There are several good editions of this text, but the 2015 edition has been reformatted significantly from the previous version and is required for the cohesiveness of the class. It is available on Amazon and eBay, as well as summit.org)
The Bible, any version.

Location: Windsor Presbyterian Church and Perry, IA

Rate: \$155 per student, \$100 for each additional student in family
\$10 copy fee per student

Introduction to Storytelling – This course will focus on storytelling as an art form and what it means to spin a good tale. We will read classic pieces of short fiction and use them as inspiration to render our own story techniques. We will also discuss story-making concepts and learn about genre. At the end of the class, students will compose their own short story. The aim of this course is to have a great time reading fiction and to learn the impact stories can have upon people and the world. Ages 10-13

Session 1: Wednesdays, January 23 – March 6, 10:00-11:00am

Session 2: Wednesdays, March 21– May 8, 10:00-11:00am

Text: No text required

Location: Windsor Presbyterian Church

Rate: \$70 per student, \$60 for each additional student in family

Elements of Fiction – Geared for high school students, this course will examine what makes a compelling piece of fiction and why storytelling is important. We will examine different modes of storytelling throughout history and talk about the importance of fiction in the Christian life. By reading excerpts the works of classic authors like Doyle, Dickens, and Kipling, as well as Lewis and Tolkien, we will study how to read well and how stories are pivotal in our understanding of culture. The aims of this course are to give students a fulfilling experience of stories, to offer the tools needed for college-level literary analysis, and to equip them to be better lifelong readers. Ages 14 and Up

Session 1: Thursdays, January 24 – March 7, 3:00-4:00

Session 2: Thursdays, March 21 – May 2, 3:00-4:00

Texts:

Location: Windsor Presbyterian Church

An Experiment in Criticism, by C.S. Lewis

On Fairy Stories, by J.R.R. Tolkien (provided)

How to Read a Book, by Mortimer J. Adler (provided)

Rate: \$80 per student, \$75 for additional student in family
\$10 copy fee per student

Great Communicators Workshop – Join us for a brief but fun session of building confidence and learning about effective communication! We will play speaking games, learn about body language, diction, common public speaking mistakes, clarity, and the significance of good communication skills in today's culture. As well as practicing impromptu and persuasive speaking, we will spend some time developing a speech vocabulary and learning about further opportunities to grow in public speaking. No experience or speech preparation necessary for this workshop.

Session 1: Thursday, February 21, 3:00-4:45pm (one day only)

Session 2: Thursday, March 14, 3:00-4:45pm (one day only)

Text: No text required. We will draw from Jeff Myers' *Secrets of Great Communicators* as well as other materials (provided).

Location: Windsor Presbyterian Church

Rate: \$16 per student



Hello! My name is Claire Verdoorn. I am passionate about connecting students to truth, beauty in the world, and the things they love – particularly through the medium of written and verbal communication. I studied English and Philosophy of Worldviews at Belhaven University and am pursuing a long-term goal of teaching college-level literature. In the meantime, I've worked for Summit Ministries, a worldview-training and discipleship program in Colorado. For my free time, I'm quite enthused about hiking, camping, spending time with people, traveling, drinking coffee, and many forms of storytelling. It would be a privilege to get to know you better and to work with your student!

To register for a class, please send me the registration form on the page below.