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Delivery	Thursday 6-8pm 31 July - 13 November Fully Online		
AQF Level	7	Credit Points	6

#### UNIT DESCRIPTION

This unit explores a theology, spirituality and practice of missional discipleship. Missional Discipleship aims to deepen students as disciples in the flow between their inner spiritual vitality and outward missional participation in God's work in their communal, vocational and cultural contexts. Key topics include: Biblical and theological foundations for missionally-orientated discipleship and spirituality; discipleship and culture; dispositions and practices to sustain missional spirituality; and practical and relational approaches to evangelism and apologetics, apologetics in a secular society and with people from various world religions, historical approaches to apologetics.

#### PREREQUISITES

MTG130.5 Exploring the Christian Faith

#### LEARNING OUTCOMES

ON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THIS TASK THE STUDENT WILL BE ABLE TO:	RELATED CONTENT	RELATED ASSESSMENT
1. Explore the nature and scope of missional discipleship with reference to the biblical text, Christian tradition and contemporary scholarship	Lectures and Pre-readings Weeks 1-13	1,2,3
2. Reflect on their engagement in various practices of missional discipleship	Lectures and Pre-readings Weeks 1-13	2,3
3. Analyse opportunities for missional discipleship in their lives, faith community and missional context to envision their ongoing participation in the mission of God	Lectures and Pre-readings Weeks 1-13	1,2,3

#### CHANGES MADE SINCE LAST OFFERED (in response to Student Unit Evaluations)

This is the first time the unit has been offered by SCMOI.

**REQUIRED TEXTS** (Students should purchase this/these texts)

McGrath, Alister E., *Mere Apologetics: How to Help Seekers and Skeptics Find Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011).  
 Staniloae, Dumitru, *Orthodox Spirituality* (St Tikhon's Seminary Press, 2003).

**RECOMMENDED TEXTS/BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Abu Qurrah, Theodore, *A Treatise on the Veneration of Icons* (trans. Sydney H. Griffith; Leuven: Peeters, 1997).  
 Alexander, Denis, and Alister E. McGrath. *Coming to Faith through Dawkins: 12 Essays on the Pathway from New Atheism to Christianity* (Kregel Publications, 2023).  
 Anderson, Tawa J. *Why Believe: Christian Apologetics for a Skeptical Age* (Broadman and Holman, 2021)  
 Anderson, Walter Truett ed. *The Truth About Truth: De-Confusing and Re-Constructing the Postmodern World* (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1995).  
 Andrews, Edward D. *Faith Under Fire: Refuting the Top 30 Arguments Atheists Make Against Christianity* (Cambridge, OH: Christian Publishing House, 2024).  
 Athenagoras, *A Plea for the Christians* (ANF2.5; [https://ccel.org/ccel/athenagoras/plea\\_for\\_christians/anf02.v.ii.html](https://ccel.org/ccel/athenagoras/plea_for_christians/anf02.v.ii.html))  
 Bacevich, Andrew J. and Prodromou, Elizabeth H. "God Is Not Neutral: Religion and U.S. Foreign Policy after 9/11", *Orbis* (Vol. 48. Winter, 2004), 43-54.  
 Bahnsen, Greg, *Presuppositional Apologetics: Stated and Defended* (Murrell's Inlet, SC.: Covenant Media Press, 2008).  
 Berger, Peter L. (ed.) *The Desecularization of the World: resurgent religion and world politics* (Grand Rapids, MI.: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 1999).  
 Beshears, Kyle, *Apatheism: How We Share When They Don't Care* (Broadman and Holman, 2021).  
 Biggar, Nigel and Hogan, Linda. (eds.) *Religious Voices in Public Places* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009).  
 Blamires, Harry, *The Christian Mind* (London: S.P.C.K, 1963).  
 Bouma, G., Cahill, D., Dellal, H., & Zwart, A. (2011). *Freedom of Religion and Belief in 21st century Australia. Sydney: Research report prepared for the Australian Human Rights Commission*. <https://humanrights.gov.au/our-work/2011-freedom-religion-and-belief-21st-century-australia>  
 Bowen, John Richard, *Why the French don't like headscarves: Islam, the State, and public space*. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007). 11-34, ("Remembering Laïcité").  
 Bruce, Steve, *God is dead: Secularization in the West* (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 2002).  
 Carson, D.A. *The Gagging of God: Christianity Confronts Pluralism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996).  
 Damascene, Hieromonk, *Christ the Eternal Tao* (Platina, CA.: St Herman Press, 2004).  
 Damick, Andrew, *Orthodoxy and Heterodoxy: Finding the Way to Christ in a Complicated Religious Landscape* (Englewood, NJ: Conciliar Press, 2011).  
 Davie, Grace, and Linda Woodhead, "Secularization and Secularism", *Religions in the Modern World: Traditions and Transformations*, (ed. Linda Woodhead, Hiroko Kawanami, Christopher Partridge, Routledge, 2009) pp. 523-533.  
 Davis, Charles A. *Making Disciples Across Cultures: Missional Principles for a Diverse World*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2015.  
 Freeman, Stephen, *Everywhere Present: Christianity in a One-Storey Universe* (Englewood, NJ: Conciliar Press, 2011).  
 Gray, John, *Seven Types of Atheism* (New York, NY.: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2018).  
 Griffith, Sidney H., *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2002).  
 Groothuis, Douglas, *Christian Apologetics: A Comprehensive Case for Biblical Faith* (Westmont, IL., IVP Academic: 2022).  
 Hartman, Dayton, and Michael McEwen, *The Pastor as Apologist: Restoring Apologetics to the Local Church* (B&H Academic, 2024).  
 Hibbert, Evelyn, *Walking Together on the Jesus Road: Intercultural Discipling*. Littleton, CO: William Carey Library Pub, 2018.  
 Hierotheos, Metropolitan of Nafpaktos, *The Mind of the Orthodox Church* (trans. Esther Williams; Lavidia, Greece: Birth of the Theotokos Monastery, 1998).

- Hierotheos, Metropolitan of Nafpaktos, *The Person in Orthodox Tradition* (Lavidia, Greece: Birth of the Theotokos Monastery, 1999).
- Holden, Joseph M. *The Comprehensive Guide to Apologetics* (Harvest House Publishers, 2022).
- Jelen, Ted G. *To Serve God and Mammon: Church-State Relations in American Politics* (Washington, DC.: Georgetown University Press, 2010), 1-21.
- Justin Martyr, *First Apology* (trans. M. Dods; ed. Philip Schaff; The Apostolic Fathers with Justin Martyr and Irenaeus; ANF01; ([https://ccel.org/ccel/justin\\_martyr/first\\_apology/anf01.viii.ii.html](https://ccel.org/ccel/justin_martyr/first_apology/anf01.viii.ii.html))).
- Karakolis, Christos, "Personal relationship as a prerequisite for moral imitation according to the Apostle Paul", *Personhood in the Byzantine Christian Tradition: Early, Medieval, and Modern Perspectives*, (Alexis Torrance and Symeon Paschalidis, eds., Taylor & Francis Group, 2018).
- Keller, Timothy, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 2009).
- Lewis, C.S., *Mere Christianity* (Revised and amplified edition. London, UK: HarperCollinsPublishers, 2001).
- . *The Abolition of Man* (New York: HarperCollins, 2001 [1944]).
- . *The Problem of Pain* (London: The Centenary Press, 1940), <https://gutenberg.ca/ebooks/lewiscs-problemofpain/lewiscs-problemofpain-00-h.html>
- Lockie, R. (2003). "Relativism and Reflexivity", *International Journal of Philosophical Studies*, 11(3), 319–339. doi:10.1080/0967255032000108039
- Markham, Ian, ed. *A World Religions Reader* (3rd ed. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2009).
- McKnight, Scot. *Kingdom Conspiracy: Returning to the Radical Mission of the Local Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2016.
- Origen, *Against Celsus* (ANF 4, [https://ccel.org/ccel/origen/against\\_celsus/anf04](https://ccel.org/ccel/origen/against_celsus/anf04)).
- Partridge, Christopher H., and Tim Dowley, eds. *Introduction to World Religions* (4th ed. Oxford, UK: Lion, 2014).
- Robinson, Jeffrey M. *Persuasive Apologetics: The Art of Handling Tough Questions without Pushing People Away* (Kregel, 2023).
- Schaeffer, Francis, *Escape from Reason* (Inter-Varsity Press: London, 1968).
- Schaeffer, Francis, *The God Who is There* (Sydney: Hodder and Stoughton, 1969).
- Sibel Oktay, *At The Crossroads of Religion, Democracy and International Relations: The Halki School of Theology* (Religion, Media and International Affairs Program, Moynihan Institute of Global Affairs, <http://sites.maxwell.syr.edu/luce/studies.html>)
- Siljander, Mark D., *A Deadly Misunderstanding* (New York: HarperOne, 2008).
- Sire, James, *The Universe Next Door: A Basic Worldview Catalog*, Sixth edition (Downers Grove IL.: IVP Academic, 2020).
- Skarsaune, Oskar, *In the Shadow of the Temple: Jewish Influences on Early Christianity* (Downers Grove, IL.: IVP Academic, 2008).
- Stanley, T., *Religion After Secularization in Australia* (New York, Palgrave Macmillan: 2015).
- Steinfels, Peter, "Scandinavian Nonbelievers, Which Is Not to Say Atheists", (February 28, 2009, *The New York Times*).
- Strobel, Lee. *The Case for Heaven: A Journalist Investigates Evidence for Life After Death* (Zondervan, 2021).
- Walsh, Brian, and Middleton, Richard, *The Transforming Vision: Shaping a Christian World View* (Downers Grove IL.: IVP Academic 1984).
- Wilson, Bruce, *Can God Survive in Australia?* (Sutherland, Albatross Books: 1983).
- Wilson, Ronald, *Freedom of religion speech: Human Rights from a Religious Perspective* (Speech at Monash University, 2 February 1991, Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission: World Conference on Religion and Peace) [https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKewjqoPmn\\_6v4AhWp4HMBHfRsDyOQFnoECAgQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.humanrights.gov.au%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fdocument%2Fpage%2FFreedom%2520of%2520religion%2520speech%2520Ron%2520Wilson%25201991.pdf&usg=AOvVaw1hsyasMOMpiJAfNp\\_kibN7](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKewjqoPmn_6v4AhWp4HMBHfRsDyOQFnoECAgQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.humanrights.gov.au%2Fsites%2Fdefault%2Ffiles%2Fdocument%2Fpage%2FFreedom%2520of%2520religion%2520speech%2520Ron%2520Wilson%25201991.pdf&usg=AOvVaw1hsyasMOMpiJAfNp_kibN7)

Further resources, including recommended texts, websites and an extended bibliography, are listed on the unit site.

## SEMESTER PROGRAM

Date	Week	Lecture / Workshop Topic	Pre-Readings
31 July	1	Introduction to Missional Discipleship, Apologetics and World Religions; Orthodox worldview and responses to world religions, secularism and atheism. Orthodox understandings of the Person and Church and relation to secular society.	none
7 Aug	2	Missional Discipleship in an Orthodox Context. Christian virtues, engagement with others. Biblical, traditional, and contemporary models	Staniloae, Dumitru, <i>Orthodox Spirituality</i> chaps 5 & 6.
14 Aug	3	Missional Discipleship in a secular society; consumerism. Secularisation and its Discontents: primary principles of secularism, philosophical and historical basis for secularism; Apologetic responses.	Davie & Woodhead, <i>"Secularization and secularism"</i> section
21 Aug	4	Apologetics and societal models: Separation of Church and State: Freedom FOR Religion, and Freedom FROM Religion (USA and France); Orthodox apologetics. (St John of Damascus and Dn Steve)	Bowen - <i>Remembering Laïcité</i>
28 Aug	5	Secular State – Religious Politics; Secular State – Secular Politics; Religious State – Secular Politics; the role and use of the public square; Apologetics in these societies. Traditional understandings of discipleship as martyrdom.	Berger review of <i>Orthodox Spirituality</i> of Staniloae
4 Sept	6	Apologetics, world religions, and Secularism in Australia: the historical factors shaping Australian secular society, history of the relationship between the church, the state, and society in the Australian context. (Stanley, Wilson). Christian engagement with contemporary political and ethical discourse; responding to postmodern and secular contexts.	Athenagoras, <i>A Plea for the Christians</i>
11 Sept	7	Classical and Pre-suppositional apologetics, Protestant, Orthodox, Aquinas, Schaeffer, McDowell, etc. Justin Martyr - First Apology <a href="https://ccel.org/ccel/justin_martyr/first_apology/anf01.viii.ii.html">https://ccel.org/ccel/justin_martyr/first_apology/anf01.viii.ii.html</a>	Justin Martyr - <i>First Apology</i> , Schaeffer- <i>The God Who is There</i> (selected parts)
18 Sept	8	An introduction to cultural exegesis and hermeneutics, and critical analytical tools to engage contemporary cultural issues as they relate to matters of faith. Christian engagement with contemporary political and ethical discourse; responding to postmodern and secular contexts.	Schaeffer- <i>Escape from reason</i> - sections)
25 Sept	9	Apologetics to New Age seekers. The problem of evil; How do Christians respond to the 'New Atheists'; A Christian theological and apologetic response to climate change; What is the role of reason and argument in these conversations?	Staniloae, Dumitru, <i>Orthodox Spirituality</i> chaps 19,20,21.
2 & 9 Oct	Mid-Semester break		
16 Oct	10	Missional Discipleship and World Religions: monotheism, polytheism, myth, mystery, ritual, cosmology, magic, law.	<i>World Religions Reader</i> chaps 1,2.
23 Oct	11	Apologetics and Islam	Griffith, <i>In the Shadow</i> , 75-96.

30 Oct	12	Apologetics and Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism	<i>Christ the Eternal Tao</i> 29-44.
6 Nov	13	Other religions and the uniqueness of Christ; Apologetics and Judaism. Apologetics and tribal and folk religions. World Religions in relation to sin and pollution.	<i>Peace Child</i> , chap 17.
13 Nov	14	Oral Presentations or Spare week in case of sickness	

## ASSESSMENT TASKS

### Due Dates Summary:

Assessment	Words	Value	Due Date
<b>1. Class Discussion Papers on Assigned Readings</b>	>2000	30%	Weekly starting week 2. (Submitted work is due the Friday immediately after the Thursday class presentation)
<b>2. Oral Presentation with supporting text</b>	2000	40%	Week 10 or 11 as agreed/scheduled.
<b>3. Oral Exam (Hurdle requirement)</b> Students <i>must</i> pass this assessment to pass the entire unit.	(1500 equivalent)	30%	Week 13 or 14 at an agreed-upon time.

### Task Description:

#### ASSESSMENT TASK 1

##### Class Discussion Papers on Assigned Readings

**30%**

*Due:* Weekly starting week 2

>2000 words

#### Instructions

Students are to produce 5 papers of >400 words length and deliver them in class for approx. 5 minutes (using a Powerpoint slidepack is optional), with an analysis of key points of the week's assigned reading. During week 1 students will pick which of the 12 possible week's readings they will focus on. This presentation should include the following elements: key points from the reading related to the subject themes, some analytic comments (for example the author's theological relationship to other writers), and 1 or 2 points about the context of the text.

#### Rationale and Expectations

There are many writings relevant to the topics of Missional Discipleship and Apologetics across 2000 years that need to be understood in context and in relation to other texts. Students are expected to become aware of the breadth of views and their historical and theological contexts.

#### ASSESSMENT TASK 2

##### Oral Presentation with supporting text

**40%**

*Due:* Week 10 or 11 as arranged.

Students present their missional discipleship formation and apologetics e-portfolio, analysing their engagement with practices for missional discipleship (1000 words) and apologetic engagement with some group (1000 words). (2000 words equivalent)

**Instructions**

Students are to present in class their missional discipleship formation and apologetics reflection and plan, based on a logically structured and clearly presented written composition that demonstrates engagement with a representative range of the church fathers and scholarly literature, analytical skills in addressing the topic, and insight into their own lived-experience of missional discipleship and apologetics with some selected group (for example Mormons, atheists, Marxists, New Ager, to be agreed with the lecturer). The “reflection” aspect should cover the student’s spiritual practices such as prayer and awareness of others’ needs, apologetic assumptions and actions as currently practiced, and discussion of areas of weakness in their missional discipleship e.g. consumerism, apathy. The “plan” aspect should cover specific actions undertaken and/or planned for improvement in the areas identified in the reflection section. The e-portfolio can be a powerpoint slidepack or some other presentation, and must accompany text that does not need to be presented as a formal written essay, but should demonstrate knowledge of appropriate sources.

**Rationale and Expectations**

This subject is somewhat subjective in application but based on solid historical and contemporary principles and examples, thus a self-reflection exercise best captures the individual’s current state and growth plans while allowing for freedom and creativity in expression.

**ASSESSMENT TASK 3****Oral Exam****30 %**

*Due:* The oral exam will be conducted during Week 13 or 14 at an agreed-upon time.

Equivalent to 1500 words

Note that this is a **Hurdle Assessment**. This means that Students **must** pass this assessment to pass the entire unit.

**Instructions**

Students will respond to some simple and more complex questions and brief texts related to various aspects of the unit’s material, and explain their answers. From Week 1 and during most classes students will be given sample Oral Exam questions and an opportunity to respond to them, with guidance given about the kinds of answers required to achieve each level from Pass to High Distinction.

**Rationale and Expectations**

Students are expected to understand a wide range of material and be able to reflect on the meaning and practices of missional discipleship and apologetics. In real-life situations they will be required to give answers for their faith in conversation. Having to provide verbal answers at short notice is an excellent real-world assessment and practice for these situations.

**OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION ABOUT ASSESSMENTS**

**Use of AI:** No AI generated content is allowed in the final submission for any assignment.

Students may:

- Use in-built generative AI to improve the grammar, spelling or other written clarity of their own work.

**Students may NOT:**

- Use AI to reword their work to the extent of changing their own writing 'voice'.
- Where AI programs are embedded (i.e. Grammarly/CoPilot), students should state the type and extent of AI use in their work at the end of the Bibliography (see Referencing Guides for examples). The student **MUST** keep a copy of their own original draft (pre-AI involvement) to show if requested.

Please refer to this Unit's website tile Assessment (<https://learn.tabor.edu.au/course/view.php?id=5860&section=4>) for further information about assignments, assessment criteria, grading scale, and the process for late submission of assignments.

Refer to the [Student Academic Toolkit](#) for information about academic integrity and avoiding plagiarism, referencing, formatting, and for relevant links to Tabor and faculty policy. If you are unsure, consult your lecturer or program coordinator for advice.

**FURTHER INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS UNIQUE TO THIS UNIT**

Note that Assessment #3 is a **Hurdle Assessment**. This means that Students **must** pass this assessment to pass the entire unit.