

Unit outline for HSW 180.8 Literature & Christian Faith

Name of unit
Literature & Christian Faith (HSW180.8)

Unit description
In this survey course, students engage critically and reflectively with a broad range of classical to contemporary literature, examining the influence of Christian belief and practice on literary themes and styles, as well as the social and cultural contexts in which the literature arose. An examination of the close connection between a Christian theological understanding of human nature and the creative impulse, as well as literary aspects of Christian scripture, provides students with an invaluable resource when it comes to recognising, reading, understanding and enjoying the diverse range of western literature.

SECTION 1 – GENERAL INFORMATION (CORE)

Administrative details

Associated higher education awards (for example, Bachelor, Diploma)	Duration (for example, one semester, full year)	Level (for example, introductory, intermediate, advanced level, 1st year, 2nd year, 3rd year)	Unit coordinator
Graduate Certificate in Creative Writing & Communication	One semester	Introductory-Intermediate	Dr James Cooper
Graduate Diploma in Creative Writing & Communication	One semester	Introductory-Intermediate	Dr James Cooper
Masters in Creative Writing & Communication	One semester	Introductory-Intermediate	Dr James Cooper

Core or elective unit

Indicate if the unit is a:

- core unit
- elective unit
- other (please specify below):

Unit weighting

Using the table below, indicate the credit point weighting of this unit and the credit point total for the course of study (for example, 10 credit points for the unit and 320 credit points for the course of study).

Unit credit points Example: 10 credit points	Total course credit points Example: 320 credit points
6	24 Grad Cert 48 Grad Dip 96 Masters

Student workload

Using the table below, indicate the expected student workload per week for this unit.

No. timetabled hours per week (1)	No. personal study hours per week (2)	Total workload hours per week (3)
2.5	6.5	9

(1) Total time spent per week at lectures, tutorials, clinical and other placements, etc.

(2) Total time students are expected to spend per week in studying, completing assignments, etc.

(3) Sum of (1) and (2) equals workload hours.

For those students requiring additional English language support, how many additional hours per week is it expected that they will undertake?

Additional English language support: 0 hours per week

Prerequisites and co-requisites

Are students required to have undertaken a prerequisite or co-requisite unit for this unit?

Yes No

SECTION 2 – ACADEMIC DETAILS (CORE)

Learning outcomes for the unit	
On successful completion of this unit students will be able to:	
1.	Critically discuss the challenges and implications of discerning, reading and interpreting how selected texts reflect changing understandings of Christian faith
2.	Explain and evaluate the enduring influence of Christian faith on western literature across historical and cultural contexts, including the present day
3.	Provide a personal reflective response to selected texts in light of close reading, critical analysis and independent research
4.	Locate, evaluate and use resources to support a contextual exposition and literary analysis of selected texts and the way they engage with Christian ideas

Topics included in the unit	
Introduction – The Christian Difference	
Early English Literature 1 – The First Few Centuries	
Early English Literature 2 – The Medieval Period	
Chaucer's Canterbury Tales in Focus	
The Reformation & Renaissance Literature	
Shakespeare in Focus	
Milton in Focus	
The Metaphysical Poets	
Christian Poetics – Thinking Christianly About the Arts	
The Enlightenment and the Rise of the Novel	
Romanticism & Poetry	
The Victorian Era – Honest Doubt and Fighting Faith	
Modernism and the Christian Response	
Resounding the Sacred in a Secular Age	

Assessment tasks			
Type (1) (see examples noted below this table)	When assessed – year, session and week (for example, year 1, semester 1, week 1)	Weighting (% of total marks for unit)	Cross reference to learning outcomes
<p>Quiz Approx. 1000 words</p> <p>Create a review quiz based on the lecture content from weeks 1-5</p>	Week 6	20%	2
<p>Tutorial Presentation 2000 words</p> <p>Part A. Prepare notes for a presentation outlining the interplay of Christian culture and literary themes in the life and work of a notable author not studied as part of the course.</p> <p>Part B. On the basis of feedback to Part A. Prepare and lead a 30 min tutorial presentation aimed at facilitating a critical discussion of Christian/spiritual themes within a specific text.</p>	Week 7 Part A Weeks 10-14 Part B	Part A 20% Part B 20%	1, 2, 4
<p>Creative Analysis Paper</p> <p>Write a 2000 word comparative analysis of 2 major works/authors studied during the course of the unit – one pre 1600 one post 1700. Compare and contrast works in terms of style/theme/cultural impact in light of lecture content and wider reading. OR</p> <p>Alternatively write a detailed review of one major work/author, and develop your own creative artefact inspired by and in response to the writer/work you have chosen.</p>	Week 14	40%	1, 3, 4

(1) Examples of types of assessment tasks include: assignments; examinations; group projects; online quizzes/tests; presentations; work-based projects; and reflective journals. Ensure that details of the types of assessment tasks are included such as specific topics, duration/length/word limit of assessment and any specific formats.

2.1 Prescribed and recommended reading

Provide below, in formal reference format, a list of the prescribed and recommended reading for the unit.

Required Text

Jeffrey, D.L. & Maillet, G. (2011). *Christianity and Literature: Philosophical Foundations and Critical Practice*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic.

Recommended texts

Barratt, D., Pooley, R., & Ryken, L. (Eds.). (1995). *The discerning reader: Christian perspectives on literature and theory*. Leicester: Apollos.

Barrs, J. (2013). *Echoes of Eden: reflections on Christianity, literature, and the arts*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books.

Bettridge, J. (2009). *Reading as belief*. Palgrave MacMillan.

Detweiler, R., Jasper, D. (Eds.). (2000). *Religion and literature*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox.

Gallagher, S.V., & Lundin, R. (Eds.). (1989). *Literature through the eyes of faith*. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row.

Guite, M. (2008). *Faith, Hope and Poetry: Theology and the Poetic Imagination*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

McGrath, A. E. (Ed.) (2001). *Christian Literature: An Anthology*. Malden, MA: Blackwell.

Ryken, L. (1979). *Triumphs of the imagination: literature in Christian perspective*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP.

— (1989). *The Liberated Imagination: thinking Christianly about the arts*. Wheaton IL: Shaw Books.

— (Ed.). (2002). *The Christian imagination: the practice of faith in literature and writing*. Colorado Springs CO: Shaw Books.

— (2009). *The Creative Arts*. Online article at: <https://www.summit.org/resources/articles/essays/the-creative-arts/>

Veith, G. E. (2013). *Reading between the lines: a Christian guide to literature*. USA: Crossway Books.

Recommended journals and websites:

<https://www.gutenberg.org/> (excellent free source of classical texts not limited by copyright)

<http://christianshakespeare.blogspot.com.au/> (interesting array of articles on Christian aspects of Shakespeare's plays)

<https://www.christianityandliterature.com/Journal> (use Tabor library to access this journal online)