



CHRISTIAN HERITAGE COLLEGE

HT385

PHILOSOPHIES OF HISTORY

This sample unit outline is provided by CHC for prospective and current students to assist with unit selection.

Elements of this outline which may change with subsequent offerings of the unit include Content, Required Texts, Recommended Readings and details of the Assessment Tasks.

Students who are currently enrolled in this unit should obtain the outline for the relevant semester from the unit lecturer.

Unit Name	Philosophies of History
Unit Code	HT385
Awards	Bachelor of Education (Secondary) - History teaching area Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Education (Secondary) - History major This unit is able to be undertaken towards other CHC awards according to course rules and the meeting of prerequisite requirements, as applicable.
Core/Elective	Core
Prerequisite	40 credit points of 200-level HT units
Mode	Internal
Delivery/Contact hrs	Class contact 33 hours Engagement with unit materials 44 hours Assignment preparation 63 hours Total 140 hours
Unit Rationale	<p>The study of history raises a number of philosophical and epistemological questions which need to be addressed if the student is to develop maturity and rigour as a historian. What is the nature of historical knowledge and methodology? Is history shaped primarily by individuals or by impersonal forces? What are the strengths and limitations of historical evidence? Is historiography a scientific or a literary mode of discourse? What is the role and influence of the particular personality of the individual historian in interpreting history? What are the “unspoken assumptions”, the underlying philosophical presuppositions in relation to worldviews, on which historiography is based?</p> <p>This unit examines the major issues which confront the historian in understanding history and the historiographical process. It identifies and critiques the major models and theories of history, within the context of a survey of the development of historiography. It analyses important historiographical debates in order to highlight the contrasting philosophies of history and the practical implications of their divergent assumptions. Particular attention will be paid to the contributions of Christian historians in the area of historiography, in order to promote reflection on the particular advantages and dilemmas which arise out of the Christian worldview for the historian.</p>

Learning Outcomes:

On completion of this unit, students will have provided evidence that they have:
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understood the major issues and debates relating to the nature of history and historical inquiry. 2. Analysed and critiqued the major theories of history and their underlying philosophical presuppositions. 3. Drawn upon the leading writers and theorists of history in addressing historiographical issues. 4. Appreciated the particular challenges facing the Christian historian and the strengths and limitations of a Christian philosophy of history. 5. Compared and contrasted different historiographical approaches in the works of individual historians. 6. Applied knowledge of theoretical issues to specific problems of historical research. 7. Written at an appropriate tertiary standard (with special attention to correct grammar, punctuation, spelling, vocabulary, usage, sentence structure, logical relations, style, referencing and presentation).

Content:

Week	Topic
1	Unit introduction
2	What is History?
3	Cyclical history
4-5	Christian history
6	The idea of Progress
7	Historicism
8	Marxist history
9	Twentieth century theories of history
10	Uses and abuses of history
11	The resurgence of Christian history

Set Text Requirements:

Bebbington, D 1990, *Patterns in History*, rev. edn, Baker, Grand Rapids, MI.

Recommended Readings:

- Bauman, M & Klander, MI (eds.) 1995, *Historians of the Christian Tradition: Their Methodologies and Impact on Western Thought*, Broadman & Holman, Nashville, TN.
- Frykenberg, RE 1996, *History & Belief: The Foundations of Historical Understanding*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI.
- Green, A & Troup, K (eds.) 1999, *The Houses of History: A Critical Reader in Twentieth Century History and Theory*, Manchester University Press, Manchester.
- Harvey, VA 1996, *The Historian and the Believer: The Morality of Historical Knowledge and Christian Belief*, University of Illinois Press, Urbana, IL.
- Herrera, RA 2001, *Reasons for Our Rhyme: An Inquiry Into the Philosophy of History*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI.
- Hobsbawm, E 1997, *On History*, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London.
- Iggers, G 2005, *Historiography in the Twentieth Century: From Scientific Objectivity to the Postmodern Challenge*, Wesleyan University Press, Hanover, NH.
- Jenkins, K 1997, *The Postmodern History Reader*, Routledge, London.
- Kenyon, J 1993, *The History Men: The Historical Profession in England Since the Renaissance*, 2nd rev. edn, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, London.
- Macintyre, S & Clark, A 2004, *The History Wars*, new edn, Melbourne University Press, Carlton, VIC.
- Munslow, A 2007, *Narrative and History*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
- Nash, RH 1999, *The Meaning of History*, Broadman & Holman, Nashville, TN.
- Niebuhr, R 1949, *Faith and History: A Comparison of Christian and Modern Views of History*, Scribner's, New York.
- Sweet, W (ed.) 2004, *The Philosophy of History: A Re-examination*, Ashgate, Burlington, VT.
- Wells, RA (ed.) 1998, *History and the Christian Historian*, Eerdmans, Grand Rapids, MI.
- Windschuttle, K 2000, *The Killing of History*, rev edn, The Free Press, New York.

Assessment:

Assessment Item	Topic/s	Learning Outcomes assessed	Week Due	Weighting
Oral Presentation (1000 words)	Read the Books of Daniel and/or Job in the Old Testament. Outline the perspective of God's relationship to human events and human history which is represented in the book(s). Justify your views by reference to Scripture. You may, if you wish, broaden the scope of the paper by making reference to the teaching of other books in the Bible on God's involvement in human affairs and the purpose and direction of human history.	1-2, 4	Weeks 4-5	20%
Paper (2000 words)	Choose one of the following topics: a) Choose a topic which is related to the themes of the unit. The topic is to be approved by the lecturer. The paper should identify and discuss major issues in the philosophy of history and in historical interpretation, and provide a Christian critique of non-Christian viewpoints. b) Select two or more books related to a topic or theme in the unit. Write a critical review which examines, compares and critiques the ways in which the writers deal with issues in the philosophy of history or historical interpretation. The reviews are also to provide a Christian critique of the books.	1-6	Week 7	30%
Term Paper (2500 words)	Choose a topic which is related to the themes of the unit. Your topic is to be approved by the lecturer. Your paper should identify and discuss major issues in the philosophy of history and in historical interpretation, and provide a Christian critique of non-Christian viewpoints.	1-6	Week 11	50%

Unit Overview:

As an advanced study, this unit examines the philosophical question: What is history? It considers historiography and the role of the historian, the underlying philosophical presumptions, the methodologies, the theories, and the issues and problems that the historian faces. It also examines history written from a Christian worldview.