Proposed Common Course  
A&S Core Curriculum

I. Proposed Course Title: *The Christian Heritage*

II. Credit Hours: 3

III. Course Level *(1000-4000)*: 1000

IV. Department or Departments responsible for teaching course: Religion

V. Proposed Description *(1 to 2 sentences)*:

An introduction to Christian life and thought, from the early church to the present, through an examination of great texts with an emphasis on Christian doctrine, ethics, witness and institutions.

VI. Core Curriculum Objectives *(list 2-4)*:

1. As a common course providing all A&S students a shared foundation of knowledge through the study of the Christian heritage/tradition, it will introduce students to the basic building blocks of the historic, living, Christian faith.
2. Students will acquire a greater and deeper understanding of the broad development of Christianity, its theological convictions and practices (beliefs, ethics, witness, institutions).
3. With this broader, more in-depth understanding of the Christian heritage/tradition, students will be better enabled and better equipped to have informed engagement with others from a Christian perspective—a critical dimension of a transformational Christian education.
4. The course, then, contributes to a transformational general education curriculum that facilitates the process of students becoming informed and productive citizens of a democracy and servant leaders of faith communities which highlights the cultivation of Christian virtues.

VII. Justification for course from A&S Core Curriculum Vision *(using quotations)*:

*Baylor Catalog, Curriculum Organization, General Education Outcomes* (p. 30): Baylor graduates should be able to: communicate… think critically… *demonstrate knowledge of the Christian scriptures and heritage that*
enables engagement with others from a Christian perspective… commitment to social and civic responsibility (italics added)

I. Vision Statement Preamble: “The College of Arts & Sciences core curriculum is the foundation for a degree from Baylor University; it serves to educate men and women to become informed and productive citizens of a democracy and servant leaders of faith communities.” (italics added)

II. Vision Statement, Section E: “As spiritual beings, students are created with the ability and freedom to know God. God’s nature is made known through both revealed and discovered truth. Within a community of Christian scholars, students will learn the Scriptures, history, and central beliefs and practices of the living Christian tradition. The core curriculum will illuminate how Christianity is an intellectually informed faith. Through this theologically informed education, students will be enabled to pursue and cultivate faith, hope, and love.” (italics added)

Oversight-Integration Working Group: Response to Referred Question No. 5 (Are there courses that may not be adjusted or eliminated from the current core due to University requirements?). (Please refer to the whole statement): Selected lengthy quotation here: “Changes to the religion requirements would be of the highest sensitivity to the University and its constituents and would, therefore, require involvement form the leadership of the University at the highest levels…there is obvious value in having biblical, historical, and theological scholars in the Department of Religion teaching these courses from a confessional perspective…. The inclusion of REL 1350 [Christian Heritage] in 2004 acknowledged that (1) textual familiarity with the Bible was insufficient and (2) an understanding of the broad development of Christianity and its theological convictions is also necessary for developing a mature Christian perspective. Utilizing these basic building blocks of Christianity [including Christian Scriptures], informed engagement with other disciplines is encouraged across the college. We advise caution in reducing the number of hours required in the Christian Tradition area although increasing the number of hours might be entirely appropriate, perhaps in interdisciplinary courses at the junior and senior level.” (Italics added)

Sub-Committee: Building on the due circumspection of the oversight-integration working group, we strongly recommend maintaining the current number of hours (3) in Christian Heritage.

VIII. Principal author(s) of the proposal: Doug Weaver

IX. Subcommittee supporting recommendation: Christian Tradition