



## THEO5300 Systematic Theology I

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary  
Theological and Historical Studies Division  
Fall 2016 Saturday Hybrid (8/27, 9/24, 10/15, 11/12)

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### Mission Statement

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

### Core Value Focus

The seminary has five core values.

1. **Doctrinal Integrity:** Knowing that the Bible is the Word of God, we believe it, teach it, proclaim it, and submit to it. This course addresses Doctrinal Integrity specifically by preparing students to grow in understanding and interpreting of the Bible.
2. **Spiritual Vitality:** We are a worshiping community emphasizing both personal spirituality and gathering together as a Seminary family for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in His Word. Spiritual Vitality is addressed by reminding students that a dynamic relationship with God is vital for effective ministry.
3. **Mission Focus:** We are not here merely to get an education or to give one. We are here to change the world by fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries. This course addresses Mission Focus by helping students understand the biblical foundations for fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments.
4. **Characteristic Excellence:** What we do, we do to the utmost of our abilities and resources as a testimony to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Characteristic Excellence is addressed by preparing students to excel in their ability to interpret Scripture, which is foundational to effective ministry.
5. **Servant Leadership:** We follow the model of Jesus and exert leadership and influence through the nurture and encouragement of those around us. Servant Leadership is modeled by classroom deportment.

The core value focus for this academic year is **characteristic excellence**.

### Curriculum Competencies

NOBTS faculty members realize that all ministers need to develop specific competencies if they are going to have an effective ministry. To increase the likelihood of NOBTS graduates having an effective ministry, the faculty developed a competency-based curriculum after identifying seven essential competencies necessary for effective ministry. All graduates are expected to have at least a minimum level of competency in all of the following areas:

1. **Biblical Exposition:** to interpret and communicate the Bible accurately.
2. **Christian Theological Heritage:** To understand and interpret Christian theological heritage and Baptist polity for the church.
3. **Disciple Making:** To stimulate church health through mobilizing the church for missions, evangelism, discipleship, and church growth.

4. **Interpersonal Skills:** To perform pastoral care effectively, with skills in communication and conflict management.
5. **Servant Leadership:** To serve churches effectively through team ministry.
6. **Spiritual and Character Formation:** To provide moral leadership by modeling and mentoring Christian character and devotion.
7. **Worship Leadership:** To facilitate worship effectively.

### Course Description

This first course in systematic theology introduces the student to the methodology of theology (Prolegomena) and the doctrines of revelation, God, humanity, and the person of Christ. The biblical foundations and the relevant historical developments are considered in construction of a Christian understanding of each doctrine.

### Student Learning Outcomes

The student, by the end of the course, should:

1. Be able to understand theological method and the doctrines of revelation, God, humanity, and the person of Christ biblically, historically, and systematically.
2. Be able to apply theology by integrating these doctrines into a coherent, comprehensive, and consistent Christian worldview.
3. Be able to communicate these doctrines in the particular ministry calling and context of the learner.

### Biblical Authority

The instructors of this course operate under the assumption that the Bible is the inspired, totally true and trustworthy Word of God. While history, tradition, and reason play no small role in the theological task, the Bible holds ultimate authority in Christian doctrine and practice. *The Baptist Faith and Message* (2000) provides the structure of this course's content.

### Course Teaching Methodology

The course will involve the following methodologies:

- Lectures
- Online discussions
- Written assignments
- Assigned reading
- Ministry task

### Required Textbooks

Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. 3d ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013.

Putman, Rhyne. *In Defense of Doctrine: Evangelicalism, Theology, and Scripture*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2015.

Yarnell, Malcolm. *God the Trinity*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016.

### **Free Digital Textbooks from LifeWay (Fall 2016 students only)**

Students enrolled in this course this semester will have access to free digital copies of Erickson, Yarnell, and other books. LifeWay's corporate office has created a special code for students enrolled in this section (not to be shared with students from other classes) that will give them access to some of the required texts for this course (**Putman's *In Defense of Doctrine* is not available in this format**). Students who use this code will also receive copies of other systematic theology textbooks as well.

1. Simply visit [www.mywsb.com](http://www.mywsb.com) and sign in or register for an account.
2. On the left hand toolbar, there is a link to redeem a code. Click on that link and enter **LDDCH78Q56** in the box and click redeem.
3. Then click on the library link where you can find your new digital resources as well as 27 other resources you receive for signing up for an account.
4. You can access your books via the web address or by downloading the WORDsearch Bible app available in iOS or Android.

## Course Requirements

### 1. Online Discussions (15%)

Students in this section will participate in a **closed Facebook discussion group**. The course instructors will guide the discussions with questions related to required reading materials and other items they find pertinent to the course. Students are also welcome to make posts in the group they believe may be beneficial to the whole class.

The instructors will create the secret Facebook group and invite all students to participate in it. Students who do not have a Facebook account or who do not wish to create one for this course may contribute an additional set of **Theological Reflection Questions** in place of this assignment (see details of Theological Reflection Questions below).

### 2. Trinity Ministry Project (15%) Due 10/29

Theology done well should result in faithful Christian ministry. After reading the course materials on the doctrine of the Trinity and Malcolm Yarnell's *God the Trinity*, students will be required to do a ministry project related to the doctrine of the Trinity. Students may either write (1) a full-length sermon or Bible study manuscript on the doctrine of the Trinity and present it in a church or Bible study group or (2) share the gospel with a member of a cult that denies the doctrine of the Trinity (e.g., Jehovah's Witnesses or Mormons) and write a detailed report of the witnessing encounter. Whatever option the student chooses, he or she must write a brief reflection on the value of doctrinal study for completing these tasks. These reports should be between 3-5 double spaced pages.

### 3. Theological Reflection Questions (60%)

Every student will give **twelve** 2-3 page (double-spaced, Times New Roman 12 pt.) answers to the following questions based on reading assignments in four sets of questions. In each of these assignments, students should demonstrate (1) reading comprehension of the assigned materials, (2) critical reflection on the ideas and content in the reading, and (3) the student's ability to apply the theological content to vocational ministry.

#### **Question Set #1 (due 9/24) — Theological Method**

1. Read Putman 1-39. **Do we need some sort of systematic theological formulation of doctrine in addition to the interpretation of the Bible? Why or why not?**
2. Read Putman 175-207. **Describe Kevin Vanhoozer's theological method. How does he relate *theology and the mission of the church*?**
3. Read Erickson, ch. 10; Putman 209-55. **Describe how the use of authorities like the Bible shape the formation of doctrine.**

#### **Question Set #2 (due 10/15) — Revelation and Bible**

4. Read Erickson, ch. 6, Douglas Moo and Leon Morris's sections on Romans 1:18-32. **Using the materials from your assigned systematic theology textbook and other theological resources (like commentaries, other theological textbooks or monographs), briefly explain your understanding of the doctrine of general revelation, highlighting the differences between general and special revelation. What impact**

**does the doctrine of general revelation have on your understanding of missions and evangelism? Describe how the doctrine of general revelation can affect your communication of the Gospel.**

5. Read Erickson, ch. 9; Putman 257-324. **Explain and defend the doctrine of biblical inerrancy.**
6. Read Putman 374-401. **What practical implications does a doctrine of biblical inerrancy have for the way we address contemporary theological issues?**

**Question Set #3 (due 11/12) — Doctrine of God**

7. Read Erickson, ch. 11. **Does God change his mind? How do you explain Scriptures that seem to indicate that he does?**
8. Read Putman 325-73. **Suppose a skeptic were to tell you that many of the doctrines you hold dear—such as the doctrine of the Trinity or the doctrine of inerrancy—are not explicitly stated in the Bible and therefore not valid theological positions by our own standards. What would you say?**
9. Read Erickson, ch. 14. **Explain the doctrine of the Trinity as you would to a student in a youth group. Be careful to avoid bad analogies that implicitly reflect trinitarian heresies.**

**Question Set #4 (due 12/3) — Creation, Anthropology, Christology**

10. Read Erickson, ch. 17. **How do you make sense of the “days of creation” in Genesis 1. Explain your position.**
11. Read Erickson, ch. 28. **How do you understand the “age of accountability” doctrine?**
12. Read Erickson, ch. 32. **The Scriptures repeatedly affirm the sinlessness of Jesus, but the question of whether Jesus could have sinned has significant implications for understanding the relationship between his human nature and his divine nature. Could Jesus have sinned? Is he impeccable? Why or why not?**

**Question Set #5 (OPTIONAL ASSIGNMENT for students who do not participate in Facebook group, due 12/10)**

13. **Read Erickson, ch. 8.** Briefly survey the various theories on the authority (inspiration) of the Bible. What is the primary emphasis that each of these theories makes? Identify strengths and weaknesses of each position. Which of the theories do you advocate and why?
14. **Read Erickson, ch. 34.** One of the more debated issues regarding the person of Christ is the doctrine of the virgin birth. What does the Bible teach on this matter? How important is this doctrine to Christian theology?
15. **Read Erickson ch. 35 and carefully study Philippians 2:5-11.** What does this passage teach us about the person of Christ? His deity? His humanity? What was Paul’s intention in giving us this insight about Jesus of Nazareth? Did Jesus give up his divinity in the incarnation? Defend your answer.
16. **Read Erickson, ch. 31.** Give a brief overview of the four major Christological heresies regarding the person of Jesus Christ. What was each position trying to assert about Christ? What are the theological shortcomings of each position?
17. What does the expression “communication of attributes” mean? How does this expression inform our understanding of the person of Christ?
18. **Read Erickson, ch. 22.** Survey the various positions on the constituent elements of human nature. What are the strengths and weaknesses of each position. Which position do you support, and why? What implications does this issue have for a philosophy of ministry?
19. How would you describe/define sin to a person who knows nothing about the Bible? Your answer should minimize as much as possible “religious” or theologically technical words.
20. “Jesus never said in so many words, ‘I am God.’” Read the following passages regarding who Jesus understood himself to be: Matthew 25:31-46; Mark 2:1-12; Luke 6:1-5; John 8:48-59; John 10:24-39. In light of these texts, what conclusions could one draw regarding Jesus’ self-perception?

**4. Attendance and Participation (10%)**

Students are expected to participate in classroom discussion and to read all required materials prior to class attendance. Note taking is strongly encouraged. *The instructors reserve the right to use pop quizzes to assess*

**THEO5300 Systematic Theology 1 Fall 2016 Hybrid 5**

*reading assignments and lecture participation.*

Students who attend all four class sessions will be rewarded an additional three points on their final grade.

**Evaluation of Grades**

1. Online Discussions (or 5th Theological Reflection Question set for those who opt out)	15%
2. Trinity Ministry Project	15%
3. Theological Reflection Question Sets (x4 at 15% each)	60%
4. Attendance and Participation	10%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>

All assignments must be submitted to pass the course. Students who fail to complete an assignment will not receive a passing grade.

**Embedded Assignment**

All students enrolled in every section of Systematic Theology I have a common Embedded Assignment utilized in evaluating our projected Student Learning Outcomes. The assignment, listed below, is one question one of the Theological Reflection Question sets listed above. The

**Embedded Assignment (from Question Set #2 of the Theological Reflections)**

- Using the materials from your assigned systematic theology textbook and other theological resources (like commentaries, other theological textbooks or monographs), briefly explain your understanding of the doctrine of general revelation, highlighting the differences between general and special revelation.
- What impact does the doctrine of general revelation have on your understanding of missions and evangelism?
- Describe how the doctrine of general revelation can affect your communication of the Gospel.
- This assignment should be 800-1200 words in length.

The rubric below shows how the question will be evaluated in terms of addressing Student Learning Outcomes. Students may use this rubric as a guide for how they answer other questions in the Theological Reflections Question Sets.

DOMAIN	LEVEL	INADEQUATE (0 PTS)	BASIC (1 PT)	COMPETENT (2 PTS)	GOOD (3 PTS)	EXCELLENT (4PTS)
UNDERSTANDING	Able to understand the doctrinal topic.					
APPLICATION	Able to apply knowledge by relating it to the broader Christian worldview.					
COMMUNICATION	Able to communicate the doctrine to a ministry audience.					

## Extra Credit Opportunities

### 1. Additional Theological Reflection Questions

Students may earn up to five points on their final grade simply by participating in all Facebook discussion questions AND submitting the optional Theological Reflection Question Set #5.

### 2. Book Review

Students may write one **(1)** critical book review of a book related to the course and **pre-approved by the professor**. Students can earn up to **five (5) points** on their final grade with a quality critical book review. Extra credit book reviews are due the week of the final exam.

### 3. ETS Report

Students attending the annual national meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society in San Antonio, TX on November 15-17, 2017 may write a 1000-word report on papers attended (at least three). Students can earn up to seven points on their final grade with submission. For registration information, please visit <http://www.etsjets.org>.

## Class Behavior

As noted above, attendance and class participation are necessary for meeting the requirements of this class. Students are expected to be attentive and prepared for each class session. Students who are engaged in private conversations or doing work for other classes may be asked to leave the class; repeat violations may result in removal from the course. Rude or disruptive behavior is also not permitted.

## Laptop Guidelines

Laptops are permitted in class as long as they are used for taking notes or accessing Blackboard materials related to this particular course. *Students using laptops are requested to sit in the front of the classroom for accountability purposes.* Gaming, e-mail, social networking, and web browsing of any kind are strictly prohibited. Failure to heed this policy *will* result in dismissal from the class session; repeat violations may result in removal from the course. *Any student using Facebook during a class meeting may be asked to leave the class, repeat offenders for the remainder of the semester.*

## Late Work

Because life and ministry happens, late work will be accepted—but not without penalty. For every day an assignment is late, five points will be taken off. *No assignment over two weeks late will be accepted.* Failure to submit every assignment will result in failure of the course.

## Technical Assistance

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. [Selfserve@nobts.edu](mailto:Selfserve@nobts.edu) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the [Selfserve.nobts.edu](http://Selfserve.nobts.edu) site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. [BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu](mailto:BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System [NOBTS.Blackboard.com](http://NOBTS.Blackboard.com).
3. [ITCSupport@nobts.edu](mailto:ITCSupport@nobts.edu) - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
4. [www.NOBTS.edu/itc/](http://www.NOBTS.edu/itc/) - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

### Help for Writing Papers at “The Write Stuff”

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer.

### Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

Remember the words of the proverb: *“Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out”* (Prov. 10:19).

### Course Schedule

THEO5300 Fall 2016 Saturday Hybrids Lectures, Readings, and Assignments Schedule		
<u>Date</u>	<u>Class Topic</u>	<u>Readings/Assignments</u>
8/22-8/27	<b>Unit 1</b> Introduction  <i>On-campus meeting 8/27</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accept Facebook Group Invitation (optional)</li> <li>Introduce yourself</li> </ul>
8/29-9/3	<b>Unit 2</b> What is Systematic Theology?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erickson, chs. 1-4</li> <li>Read Lecture notes</li> <li>Facebook Discussion Question</li> </ul>
9/5-9/10	<b>Unit 3</b> General Revelation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erickson, ch. 6</li> <li>Read lecture notes</li> <li>Facebook Discussion Question</li> </ul>
9/12-9/17	<b>Unit 4</b> Scripture: Inspiration and Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erickson, chs. 7-8, 10</li> <li>Read lecture notes</li> <li>Facebook Discussion Question</li> </ul>
9/19-9/24	<b>Unit 5</b> Scripture: Inerrancy  <i>On-campus meeting 9/24</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erickson, ch. 9</li> <li>Read lecture notes</li> </ul> <p><b>Theological Reflections Question Set #1 Due 9/24</b></p>
9/26-10/1	<b>Units 6, 7</b> God: Attributes of Greatness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erickson, chs. 11-13</li> <li>Read lecture notes</li> <li>Facebook Discussion Question</li> </ul>
10/3-10/8	<b>Unit 8</b> Trinity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erickson, ch. 14</li> <li>Read lecture notes</li> <li>Facebook Discussion Question</li> </ul>

THEO5300 Systematic Theology 1 Fall 2016 Hybrid 8

THEO5300 Fall 2016 Saturday Hybrids Lectures, Readings, and Assignments Schedule		
Date	Class Topic	Readings/Assignments
10/10-10/15	<b>Unit 9</b> Creation  <i>On-campus meeting 10/15</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erickson, ch. 16</li> <li>Read lecture notes</li> </ul> <b>Theological Reflections Question Set #2 Due 10/15</b> – Remember that the embedded assignment for the course is contained within this assignment. Use rubric above to help you answer the question.
10/17-10/22	<b>FALL BREAK</b> <i>“...give him rest from days of trouble...” (Psalm 94:13)</i>	
10/24-10/29	<b>Unit 10</b> Providence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erickson, chs. 17-18</li> <li>Read lecture notes</li> <li>Facebook Discussion Question</li> </ul> <b>Trinity Ministry Project Due 10/29</b>
10/31-11/5	<b>Unit 11</b> Theological Anthropology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erickson, chs. 20-23</li> <li>Read lecture notes</li> <li>Facebook Discussion Question</li> </ul>
11/7-11/12	<b>Unit 12</b> Hamartiology  <i>On-Campus Meeting 11/12</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erickson, chs. 26-29</li> <li>Read lecture notes</li> </ul> <b>Theological Reflections Question Set #3 Due 11/12</b>
11/14-11/19	<b>Unit 13</b> Christology: Key Issues and the Humanity of Christ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erickson, chs. 30, 32</li> <li>Read lecture notes</li> <li>Facebook Discussion Question</li> </ul>
11/21-11/26	<b>THANKSGIVING BREAK</b> <i>“Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations” (Psalm 100:1-5).</i>	
11/28-12/3	<b>Unit 14</b> Christology: The Deity and Virgin Conception of Christ	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Erickson, chs. 31, 33-34</li> <li>Read lecture notes</li> <li>Facebook Discussion Question</li> </ul> <b>Theological Reflections Question Set #4 Due 12/3</b>

THEO5300 Fall 2016 Saturday Hybrids Lectures, Readings, and Assignments Schedule		
Date	Class Topic	Readings/Assignments
12/5-12/10		<b>Theological Reflections Question Set #5 (OPTIONAL) Due 12/10</b>
12/12-12/17	<b>Graduation (12/17)</b>	

### Selected Bibliography

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**THEO5300 Systematic Theology 1 Fall 2016 Hybrid 12**

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