

**HERESY & ORTHODOXY IN THE EARLY CHURCH**  
**HIST 6327/THEO 6327**  
**SPRING 2016**  
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One of the reasons I love teaching is the opportunity to relate to students. Please feel free to email me, call me, or come see me at home or at my office. I want to help you in any way I can. **Call me if you have a problem or a question. Do not wait until it is too late for me to help!** This syllabus is subject to minor, necessary or beneficial changes during the semester.

I. 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.

II. Core Values Focus

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has five core values: Doctrinal Integrity, Spiritual Vitality, Mission Focus, Characteristic Excellence, and Servant Leadership. The Core Value for the academic year 2015-2016 is Missions Focus.

III. Curriculum Competencies Addressed

The Seminary has seven key competencies in its academic program. They are: Biblical Exposition, Christian Theological Heritage, Discipleship Making, Interpersonal Skills, Servant Leadership, Spiritual and Character Formation, and Worship Leadership. The key competency addressed in this course is Christian Theological Heritage

IV. Course Description for the Catalog:

This course covers early heresies, the initial responses of the church, later Christological heresies, and the ecumenical councils. Topics include Gnosticism and the Gnostic Gospels, Marcion, Monarchianism, Montanism, canonization, creeds, apostolic succession, Arianism, and the Council of Nicaea. Attention also is given to contemporary critics of traditional orthodoxy and to modern expressions of early heresies with the intention of developing an effective apologetic response.

V. Recommendation

It is recommended but not required that students for this course should have completed HIST 5200.

## VI. Student Learning Outcomes:

- The student demonstrates an understanding of significant individuals, movements, and doctrines involved in heresy and orthodoxy in the early church.
- The student demonstrates an ability to apply principles learned from the study of the heresy and orthodoxy in the early church to church and ministry today.
- The student demonstrates an ability to communicate understanding and application of principles learned from the study of heresy and orthodoxy in the early church.

## VII. Required Texts:

These are required textbooks for this class:

Bettensen, Henry and Chris Maunder, eds. *Documents of the Christian Church*. 3<sup>d</sup> ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Brown, Harold O. J. *Heresies: Heresy and Orthodoxy in the History of the Church*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998.

Bird, Michael F., et. al. *How God Became Jesus: The Real Origins of Belief in Jesus' Divine Nature – A Response to Bart Ehrman*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014.

Ehrman, Bart D. *How Jesus Became God: The Exaltation of a Jewish Preacher from Galilee*. New York: HarperCollins, 2014.

There will be additional required reading from primary sources that are available on the Internet.

## VIII. Requirements:

A. *Background Papers:* These papers are intended to be prepared by students and presented in class as teaching tools. Each paper will be eight to ten pages long and written according to standard guidelines (Turabian; Times New Roman 12 pt. font; double-spaced; standard margins, etc.) and include a bibliography of at least ten resources (textbooks, reference books, and the Internet are allowed, but you must consult a minimum of three monographs as well).

All Background Papers are due on **February 16**. Presentation dates will be set later. Students will present their papers with Power Point lectures.

The topics for these papers will be assigned by the end of the first day of class:

- Ebionism (Judaizing Christianity)
- Gnosticism
- Gnostic Gospels: *Gospel of Thomas; of Mary; of Philip & of Judas*
- Marcion
- Monarchianism (Adoptionism & Patripassionism)
- Montanism
- Apostolic Fathers: Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp

- Canonization
- Creeds & Apostolic Succession
- Irenaeus (re: Gnosticism, Canon & Apostolic Succession)
- Tertullian – **Rex Butler**
- Origen (re: the doctrine of Eternal Generation)
- Hippolytus, Novation (Rome)
- Arianism
- Athanasius (re: his treatise *On the Incarnation*)
- The Council of Nicea
- The Councils of Constantinople & Ephesus
- The Council of Chalcedon

- B. *Greer-Heard Point-Counterpoint Forum*: Attendance is required at the Greer-Heard Point-Counterpoint Forum, which takes place at the NOBTS Campus on **February 12-13**. More details about the Forum are available at the website: <http://www.greer-heard.com/>.

The report on the Forum should be six double-spaced typewritten pages in length, written as an informal, first-person response. The report must reflect on the entire Forum and should conclude with what you learned from the guest scholars.

**Due March 8.**

- C. *Major Research Paper*: Each student will consult with the professor to select a topic that relates to one or more of the emphases of this course. The topic *could be* a development and expansion of the student's research in the background paper. Fifteen to twenty pages in length, the paper should demonstrate the student's ability to think clearly and critically, engage in responsible research, dialogue objectively with differing viewpoints, reach defensible conclusions, and write in an acceptable style (Turabian; Times New Roman 12 pt. font; double-spaced; standard margins, etc.). A selected bibliography should accompany the paper.

Submit the paper to me under Assignments and post it on the Discussion Board so that your fellow students will have access to your research and writing. **Due April 5.**

The research paper will be evaluated as follows:

- a. Grammar and style: Spelling, sentence and paragraph development; punctuation; and conformity to the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> edition of Turabian. (20 points)
- b. Clarity and Coherence: Balance; thoroughness; organization; logical development; overall sense of the paper. (20 points)
- c. Research: Bibliography; type and variety of sources (primary, secondary, monographs, journal articles, websites, etc.); most bibliographic entries should be accompanied by footnote citations. (20 points)
- d. Historical Awareness and Insight: Factual accuracy; awareness of historical connections (continuity/discontinuity, cause/effect, contrasts/comparisons); sensitivity to historical context; awareness of the historical impact of a person. (20 points)
- e. Analysis and Evaluation: Going beyond the mere reporting of facts to include explanation, interpretation, analysis of material; evaluation of strengths and

weakness of a person; demonstration that you have thought about the material that you have researched. Give strong and insightful introduction and conclusion. (20 points)

- D. *Book Review*: Every student will write a review of a recent book written on one of the themes of this course. The review should be six to eight double-spaced typewritten pages in length. Bibliographical information should appear at the top of the first page of the review. The review also should contain 1) a brief biographical sketch of the author, 2) a brief summary [two to three pages] of the contents of the book, 3) a statement of the author's purpose and the extent to which the purpose was realized, 4) a statement regarding the book's uniqueness, 5) a description of the author's style, 6) a description of the author's biases, and 7) a concluding evaluation. **Due April 26.**

Books to be reviewed include but are not limited to:

- Darrell L. Bock & Daniel B. Wallace, *Dethroning Jesus*
- Robert Bowman, J. Ed Komoszewski & Darrell L. Bock, *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Christ*
- John Dominic Crossan, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*
- James D. G. Dunn, *A New Perspective on Jesus: What the Quest for the Historical Jesus Missed*
- Bart D. Ehrman, *Jesus Interrupted: Revealing the Hidden Contradictions in the Bible (And Why We Don't Know About Them)*
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Lost Christianities: The Battles for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew.*
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Lost Scriptures: Books that Did Not Make It into the New Testament*
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why.*
- Bart D. Ehrman, Rodolphe Kasser, and Marvin Meyer, eds. *The Gospel of Judas*
- Craig A. Evans, *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels*
- Larry Hurtado, *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God? Historical Questions about Earliest Devotion to Jesus*
- J. Ed Komoszewski, M. James Sawyer, and Daniel B. Wallace. *Reinventing Jesus: How Contemporary Skeptics Miss the Real Jesus and Mislead Popular Culture*
- Andreas Kostenberger and Michael Kruger, *The Heresy of Orthodoxy: How Contemporary Culture's Fascination with Diversity Has Reshaped Our Understanding of Early Christianity.*
- Alister McGrath, *Heresy: A History of Defending the Truth.*
- Ben Witherington III, *What Have They Done with Jesus?*
- N. T. Wright, *The Challenge of Jesus*
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Judas and the Gospel of Jesus: Have We Missed the Truth about Christianity?*

- D. *Assigned Reading & Class Discussion*: Students are expected to read the assigned pages listed for each class period as well as the others' papers. Our class meetings will be conducted seminar-style, and all students will participate in the discussions of the readings and students' papers.

## IX. Writing Assistance

- A. *The Write Stuff Writing Center*: NOBTS has established a writing center as one strategy in our Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP) – **Improve English Writing at the Graduate Level**. The center is located in the Hardin Student Center, upstairs next to the Information Technology Center. Students are encouraged to seek assistance from the staff of the writing center in order to improve their research papers and book reviews. If you choose to take advantage of this opportunity, be sure to submit your draft in time to receive feedback and make improvements to your writing assignments.
- B. *Safe Assignment*: Blackboard offers a service known as “SafeAssignment.” If you click on “Assignments” on the left menu, you will be directed to Major Research Papers and another link that says “View/Complete.” Follow the instructions there to submit a draft of your paper for review.

A paper submitted through this service will be compared to other papers in the database and checked for the percentage of copying from other sources. Your work will not be used for any purpose other than preventing plagiarism in the Seminary and other participating institutions. Ownership of the intellectual property contained in your written work will not be transferred to any third party.

Your paper will be assessed for the amount of material copied from other sources and returned to you. The highlighted passages do not indicate plagiarism necessarily, but they point out the percentage of your paper that can be found in other sources. You need to be sure that you properly quote and cite such passages, and you may need to put more of your paper in your own words.

By the way, you probably will find that your footnotes and bibliographical entries are highlighted. That should be expected, since the papers in the database also cite the same sources that you use.

## X. Penalties:

*Attendance*: No student who misses more than nine classroom hours – or the equivalent of three class meetings – can receive credit for this course. Three occasions of arriving late for class or leaving early will count as one absence. For more information, see the online Graduate Catalog: <http://www.nobts.edu/resources/pdf/GraduateCatalog.pdf>

*Late Work*: A late project assignment will be assessed a **10 percent penalty if it is submitted after the deadline and a 20 percent penalty after five days. No assignment will be accepted after one week past the deadline.**

*Plagiarism*: New Orleans Baptist Seminary maintains high academic standards and is not tolerant of plagiarism. If you copy another author’s work and present it as your own, you will be caught, and the penalty could be failure on that assignment or the course or expulsion from the Seminary.

## XI. Grading:

Background Paper:	20%
Greer-Heard Response:	20%
Major Research Paper:	30%
Book Review:	20%
Reading:	5%
Discussion:	<u>5%</u>
	100%

## XI. Need technical assistance? Contact the ITC today!

**Selfserve@nobts.edu** - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)

**BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu** - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System NOBTS.Blackboard.com.

**ITCSupport@nobts.edu** - Email for general technical questions/support requests.

**504.816.8180** - Call for any technical questions/support requests.

**www.NOBTS.edu/itc/** - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

## XIII. Emergency Plan

In case of hurricane or any other emergency, go to the seminary web site for information: [www.nobts.edu](http://www.nobts.edu)

The administration will communicate information that relates to the seminary: the nature of the emergency, instructions for responses, evacuation, contingency plans, duration of the emergency, and plans to return to campus and/or resume the schedule.

Also, check Blackboard for instructions related to this class. Because this class is conducted on the Internet as well as in the classroom, there should be minimal disruption unless the emergency affects electrical power and connection to the Internet.

In any emergency, communication is important, and our best means of staying connected is through the seminary's web site and Blackboard.

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