

## **Doctrine of God in Christianity and Islam (THEO6332/HIST6332)**

Spring 2016

Dr. James C. McElrath

Student consultation may be arranged by phone or email

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### **Seminary Mission Statement**

The mission of the 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.

### **Course Purpose, Core Value Focus, and Curriculum Competencies**

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has five core values: Doctrinal Integrity, Spiritual Vitality, Mission Focus, Characteristic Excellence, and Servant Leadership. This workshop addresses Doctrinal Integrity and helps each student understand the essential historic and biblical values of the doctrine of God especially in contrast to the Islamic doctrine of God. Annually, the President will designate a core value that will become the focus of pedagogy for the year. For 2015-2016 academic year that Core Value is *Mission Focus*. The students in this course have opportunity to employ the content of the course in personal witness with a Muslim for extra credit.

### **Course Description**

This course provides students with the context and comparison of Christian/Biblical and Islamic/Qur'anic doctrinal presentations of God. The student will be exposed to historical, theological and apologetic realities in the contrasts and compatibilities of Christian and Islamic doctrines.

### **Student Learning Outcomes:**

Upon completion of the workshop the student will

- Be familiar with the major historical and contemporary facets of Christian and Muslim views of God.
- Be competent to discuss major trends of changes in the presentation of the doctrine within the two faith communities.
- Appreciate differences between Islamic and Christian doctrines of God.
- Be better equipped to engage in respectful Christian apologetics with Muslims based on the doctrine of God.

## Course Teaching Methods

The course will involve the following methodologies:

- Respond to classroom lectures and discussion with coherent interaction.
- Students will conduct guided research on an aspect of the comparison of Christian and Islamic doctrines of God.
- Students will read and interact with written and electronic resources from Christian and Muslim perspectives on the Doctrine of God. Students will synthesis this material into coherent discussion and debate.

## Textbooks

Bloesch, Donald G. *God the Almighty* Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 1995

George, Timothy. *Is the Father of Jesus the God of Muhammad?* Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2002

Aslan, Reza. *No god but God* New York, New York: Random House, 2006.

<http://www.allah.org>

<http://www.islamreligion.com/articles/195/>

[www.thesabiil.com](http://www.thesabiil.com) (Topic 1: The Nature of God)

## Requirements

1. **Attendance, Participation and Examination:** Individual participation in discussions and debates along with reading of required text including Christian and Islamic scriptural citations will be evaluated by the Professor. Should written examination be required to evaluate student progress towards accomplishing the four student learning outcomes a 3 week notice and study guide will be issued. **29%**
2. **BF & M Reflection paper: 15%**  
Students will write a one-page reflection paper on Article Two: God, in *The Baptist Faith and Message 2000*.

3. **Research Project: 35%**

The student will research a selected theme. Theme topics must be submitted to the professor (by email only) by February 1, 2016. No two students will be allowed to research the same theme and approval for the theme may be granted after registration for the course is completed. The 1-page proposal must contain the following:

- Student name, course number and date.
- Subject to be researched and proposed title.
- One sentence thesis (What are you trying to investigate? What is your theory or hypothesis?)
- One paragraph rationale (Why is this interesting to you? What sources exist for this research?)

**The rubric for grading research papers:**

Content 35%

Coherent and Concise

Clearly organized structure of thought

Sources 35%

Appropriate to the topic

Major scholars preferred

Style and Form 10%

Word choice and polish

Turabian or API alignment, but be consistent

**4. Combined Book Review (3 Required Texts): 21%**

Students will write a maximum 2,500 word (10 page) book review including the 3 required texts of the class. Spend around 500 words (2 pages) per book, followed by 1000 words (4 pages) of synthesis and personal interaction with the topic of “The Doctrine of God in Christianity and Islam”.

**NOTE:** All deadlines are firm. Missed deadlines will result in 1 lost point per day after the assigned date.

**Schedule of Course content:**

Week 1 (Begins Jan 21: Orientation and Unit 1: Review of the biblical doctrine of God

Week 2 (Jan 28): Complete Unit 1: Review of the biblical doctrine of God.

**BF&M Reflection Paper due (Requirement 3)**

**Feb 1 Research Proposal Due**

Week 3 (Feb 4): Unit 2: Ways and Aspects in which Allah of Islam resembles God.

Week 4 (Feb 11): Complete Unit 2

Week 5 (Feb 18): Unit 3 Contrasts between the living God and Allah, the god of Islam

Week 6 (Feb 25): Complete Unit 3

Week 7 (March 3): Unit 4 God’s relationship with prophets compared and contrasted to Allah’s relationship with Muhammad as the seal of Islamic prophesy

Week 8 (Mar 10): Complete Unit 4

Spring Break (Mar 14-18)

Easter Week (Mar 21-25):

Week 9 (Mar 24): Unit 5 Religious impact in Christianity and Islam of the doctrine of God

Week 10 (Mar 31): Complete Unit 5

Week 11 (Apr 7): Unit 6 God’s sovereignty compared and contrasted to Allah’s determinism

Week 12 (Apr 14): Complete Unit 6. **Research project due April 18.**

Week 13 (Apr 21): Unit 7 Apologetic and Missiological challenges and opportunities found in the Biblical and Qur'anic doctrines of God.

Week 14 (Apr 28): Complete Unit 7

Week 15 (May 5) Finals week.

## Selected Bibliography

### Primary Sources

The Holy Bible

The Qur'an

Baqi, Fuwad Abdul, ed. *Al-Lu'Lu' Wal Marjan: A collection of Agreed Upon Ahadith from Al-Bukhari and Muslim vol 1 & 2*. Arabic and English translated by Muhammad Muhsin Khan, Lahore, Pakistan: Kazi Publications, 1990.

### Secondary Sources

Algar, Hamid. *Wahhabism: A Critical Essay*. Oneonta, New York: Islamic Publications International, 2002.

Armour, Rollin, Sr. *Islam, Christianity, and the West: A Troubled History*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2002.

Armstrong, Karen. *Islam: A Short History*. Toronto, Canada: Random House, Inc., 2002

\_\_\_\_\_. *Muhammad: A Biography of the Prophet*. New York, New York: HarperCollins Publishers, Inc., 1993

Bramsen, Paul. *The Way of Righteousness: Good News for Muslims*. Spring Lake NJ: CMML. 1998.

Daniel, Norman. *Islam and the West* Oxford, England: Oneworld Publications, 1993.

DeLong-Bas, Natana J. *Wahhabi Islam from Revival and Reform to Global Jihad*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Garlow, James L. *A Christian's Response to Islam*. Tulsa, OK: RiverOak Publishing. 2002.

Geisler, Norman L.; Abdul Saleeb. *Answering Islam: The Crescent in Light of the Cross* Baker Book House 2002

- Gregorian, Vartan. *Islam a Mosaic, Not a Monolith* Washington, DC: Brookings Institution, 2003
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- Lewis, Bernard. *Cultures in Conflict: Christians, Muslims, and Jews in the Age of Discovery*. New York, New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 1995
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- McCurry, Don M., ed. *The Gospel and Islam: A Compendium*. Monrovia, California: Missions Advanced Research and Communication Center, 1979.
- Miller, Dave. *The Qur'an Unveiled: Islam and New Testament Christianity in Conflict*. Montgomery, Alabama: Apologetics Press, Inc, 2005.
- Miller, Roland E. *Muslims and the Gospel: Bridging the Gap*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Lutheran University Press, 2005.
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- Murata, Sachiko and William C. Chittick, *The Vision of Islam*. St. Paul, Minnesota: Paragon House, 1994.
- Nigosian, S.A. *Islam: Its History, Teaching, and Practices*. Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2004
- Qutb, Sayyid. *Social Justice in Islam*. Translated by John B. Hardie. Oneonta, New York: Islamic Publications International, 2000.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Basic Principles of the Islamic Worldview*. Translated by Rami David. North Haledon, New Jersey: Islamic Publications International, 2006

Ur-Rahim, Muhammad 'Ata. *Jesus: Prophet of Islam*. Elmhurst, NY.: Tahrike Tarsile Qur'an, Inc., ND

Shipp, Glover. *Christianity and Islam: Bridging the Two Worlds*. Webb City, Missouri: Covenant Publishing, 2002.

Swartley, Keith E., ed. *Encountering The World of Islam*. Littleton, Colorado: Authentic Media, 2005.