



THTH 8304 The Christian Worldview
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Spring Trimester: March 27-29, 2017

Dr. Page Brooks
Associate Professor of Theology and Culture
Office: Dodd 108
Phone: 504-282-4455, ext. 1180
Email: pbrooks@nobts.edu

Dr. Rhyne Putman
Assistant Professor of Theology and Culture
Office: Dodd 106
Phone: 504-282-4455, ext. 3247
Email: rputman@nobts.edu

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 department.

The core value focus for this academic year is **Characteristic Excellence**.

Course Description

The seminar is designed to involve students in researching, understanding, and communicating the Christian Worldview and its implications for ministry. Issues addressed include the nature of worldviews, the uniqueness of the Christian worldview in comparison to other worldviews, and the reasonableness of the Christian worldview. Special attention is given to issues related to communicating and defending the Christian worldview in the context of contemporary ministry. The seminar also prepares students to engage in worldview reflection in other professional doctoral seminars, the final project proposal, and the final project report.

Student Learning Outcomes

Students successfully completing the seminar will demonstrate

- foundational knowledge of the methods and tasks of Christian worldview and apologetic methodology;
- awareness of the critical significance of worldview for the church and biblical communication;
- knowledge of philosophical foundations that contribute to worldview studies;
- appreciation of various approaches for communicating to contemporary audiences;
- ability to develop strategies for communicating the Christian worldview in a variety of settings;
- commitment to attentive reading, solid research, sound reasoning, and clear and substantive writing.

Competencies Addressed

Christian Theological Heritage, Spiritual and Character Formation, and Biblical Exposition

Required Readings and Textbooks

Colson, Chuck and Nancy Pearcey. *How Now Shall We Live?* Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1999.

Craig, William Lane and J. P. Moreland, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2003.

Naugle, David K. *Worldview: The History of a Concept*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2002.

Penner, Myron Bradley, *The End of Apologetics Christian Witness in a Postmodern Context*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2013.

Other Suggested Texts

Budziszewski, J. *What We Can't Not Know*. Dallas: Spence, 2003.

Colson, Charles and Nancy Pearcey. *Developing a Christian Worldview of the Problem of Evil*. Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale, 2001.

Eswine, Zack. *Preaching to a Post-Everything World: Crafting Sermons that Connect with Our Culture*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2008.

Geivett, Douglas and Gary R. Habermas. *In Defense of Miracles: A Comprehensive Case for God's Action in History*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1997.

Erickson, Millard J. *Truth or Consequences: The Promise & Perils of Postmodernism*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2001.

Lescalzo, Craig. *Apologetic Preaching in a Postmodern World*. Grand Rapids: IVP Academic, 2000.

McGrath, Alister. *Science and Religion: An Introduction*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1999.

Quinn, Philip L. and Charles Taliaferro. *A Companion to Philosophy of Religion*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1997.

Sire, James. *Naming the Elephant: Worldview as a Concept*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2004.

Stiver, Dan R. *The Philosophy of Religious Language: Sign, Symbol and Story*. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 1996.

Walsh, Brian and Richard Middleton. *The Transforming Vision*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 1984.

Seminar Assignments

Please note all assignments may be turned in via Blackboard

Reading Schedule

The following selected chapters from Craig and Moreland should be read before the workshop: 1, 2, 5, 6, 7, 8, 31.

All other books should be read before the first day of the seminar. A reading report will be turned in stating that all reading, or what percentage of the reading, was completed. The reading report is due on the last day of the seminar.

Book Reviews

Prepare written reviews of Colson, Naugle, and Penner. Each book review should be at least 8 pages in length. The text of each review should be written (Times New Roman 12pt, double spaced, Turabian format), reflect serious study and analysis, and include the following sections:

- biographical sketch of author(s)
- author's purpose
- author's thesis or major arguments
- summary of contents
- significant teachings or insights
- strengths and weaknesses
- contributions to ministerial formation
- five questions related to the book for seminar discussion

The reviews are due the first day of the seminar.

Reflection Paper

Using Craig and Moreland and Penner as your primary sources, write a personal reflection paper (8-10 pages, double spaced, Turabian format) concerning how a person may effectively communicate the Christian worldview in a variety of situations. Students should consider audience, content, Bible references, and various sermonic and apologetic styles. Special attention should be given to the specific topic and audience. While sermonic methodologies needs to be considered, students should also reflect on the variety of other settings in which a Christian worldview may be communicated (debate, evangelistic events, coffee shops, etc.). The paper is due 2 weeks after the workshop.

Final Project

The final project is a paper (18-20 pages, double spaced, Turabian format) addressing the following:

Part 1: Definition of a worldview

Part 2: Philosophical and worldview trends in contemporary culture

Part 3: Communication principles and methodologies to address contemporary culture

Part 4: A sample communication in which the Christian worldview is communicated to an audience. This may be in the form of a sermon outline, debate manuscript, evangelistic dialogue, etc.

The final project should be written in Turabian format. Students may use the required books of the course, as well as others to have a minimum of 10 sources. The project is due 4 weeks after the workshop.

Evaluation

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|-----------------------|----------------|
| • Reading Assignments | 10% |
| • Seminar Discussions | 10% |
| • Book Reviews | 45% (15% each) |
| • Reflection Paper | 15% |
| • Final Project | 20% |

Course Policies

Netiquette and Appropriate Online Behavior:

Appropriate Online Behavior. Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior when working online on Discussion Boards or whenever interaction occurs through web, digital, or other electronic medium. The student is expected to interact with others students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity is expected at all times in the online environment.

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be based on your total accumulation of points as indicated under the Evaluation section of this syllabus according to the grading scale in the NOBTS 2016-2017 catalog.

A 93-100 B 85-92 C 77-84 D 70-76 F Below 70

Technical Assistance

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

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

Policy Regarding All Assignments

All assignments should be submitted in either .doc (Microsoft Word) or .wpd (WordPerfect) on Blackboard unless otherwise stated.

Policy on Late Assignments

All work is due on the assigned day and at the assigned time. The grade for late assignments will automatically be reduced by 10 points. **Assignments that are over one week late will not be accepted.**

Academic Policies

Academic policies related to absences, examinations, and other topics can be found in the *New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Academic Catalog 2016-2017*.

Academic Honesty Policy

All graduate and undergraduate NOBTS students, whether on-campus, internet, or extension center students, are expected to adhere to the highest Christian standard of honesty and integrity when completing academic assignments for all courses in every delivery system format. The Bible provides our standard for academic integrity and honesty. This standard applies whether a student is taking tests, quizzes, exams, writing papers, completing Discussion Boards, or any other course requirement.

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.

Emergency Plan

In the event of a hurricane or other emergency, go to the seminary web site for information: www.nobts.edu. Also, students should use Blackboard to follow any announcements that may be posted. Students should ensure their current email address is updated on Blackboard.

Selected Bibliography

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- Bloom, Allan. *The Closing of the American Mind*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987.
- Budzeszewski, J. *Written on the Heart*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1997.
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- Campolo, Anthony. *A Reasonable Faith: Responding to Secularism*. Waco, TX: Word Books, 1983.
- Caputo, John D. *Deconstruction in a Nutshell: A Conversation with Jacques Derrida*. New York: Fordham University Press, 1997.
- Chang, Curtis. *Engaging Unbelief*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000.
- Chappell, Bryan. *Christ-Centered Preaching*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994.
- Clark, David. *Dialogical Apologetics: A Person-Centered Approach to Christian Defense*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993.
- Clark, Kelly James, ed. *Philosophers Who Believe*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1993.
- Clarke, Andrew and Bruce W. Winter. *One God, One Lord: Christianity in a World of Religious Pluralism*. Grand Rapids: Paternoster Press, 1992.
- Clendenin, Daniel. *Many Gods, Many Lords: Christianity Encounters World Religions*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995.
- Colson, Chuck and Nancy Pearcey. *How Now Shall We Live?* Wheaton: Tyndale House, 1999.
- Copan, Paul. *True For You, But Not For Me: Deflating the Slogans that Leave Christians Speechless*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1998.
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- Corduan, Winifried. *Reasonable Faith*. Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 1993.
- Craig: William Lane. *No Easy Answers: Finding Hope in Doubt, Failure and Unanswered Prayer*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1990.
- . *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 1994.
- Crockett, William V. and James G. Signountos., ed. *Through No Fault of Their Own? The Fate of Those Who Have Never Heard*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1991.
- Dembski, William A. *Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science and Theology*. Downers
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