

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
HIST9416/THEO9416 Christology in the Early Church
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Seminary 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.

Course Description

The seminar advances the student's knowledge of Christology in the early church, particularly as related to historical and theological context. The issues treated in the seminar include the person and work of Christ and the Trinity. Primary attention will be given to selected Church Fathers, controversies, and church councils.

Objectives

1. Students will demonstrate familiarity with issues related to Christology in the early church by: (1) reading primary sources from the selected theologians; (2) reading selected secondary studies; (3) writing reports on assigned readings; and (4) leading the seminar in discussion of issues related to their reading.
2. Students will demonstrate familiarity with relevant issues involved in studying Christology in the early church by: (1) writing a research paper; and (2) writing a formal response to the paper of another student.
3. Students will formalize and express their own conclusions on the field of study by writing personal perspectives on Christology in the early Church.

Core Values Addressed

The course will address the core values of *Doctrinal Integrity*, *Characteristic Excellence*, and *Mission Focus* most directly. Reflection on a core Christian doctrine—Christology—is central to the course. Special attention is given to clear thinking and critical reflection on the nature of history and the task of the historian—something that is a must for academic *excellence* in this field of study. Students in the course will be called upon to work in several disciplines in order to critique and construct a view of the historical Jesus, again leading to academic excellence. *Spiritual Vitality* is also in view in that the study of Jesus is ultimately undertaken in order to know Jesus Christ more fully.

Methodology

The seminar will utilize reading assignments, written reading reports, class discussion of the reading, a research paper, a formal response to another student's paper, and personal perspectives. The professors will also provide a critique of each paper individually for each student. Students will be expected to revise their papers accordingly. The primary methodology will be individual research and writing, guided by the professors.

Grading

Grades will be assigned on the basis of the NOBTS grading scale.

Evaluation

Reading Report #1	10%
Reading Report #2	15%
Research Paper	50%
Formal Response	20%
Personal Perspective	5%
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	100%

Texts

- J. N. D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines*. New York: Continuum, 2000.
 Harold O. J. Brown, *Heresies: Heresy and Orthodoxy in the History of the Church*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998.
 Richard A. Norris, *The Christological Controversy*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980.
 Edward Rochie Hardy, *Christology of the Later Fathers*. Library of Christian Classics. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1977.

Optional Texts

- Arland J. Hultgren and Steven A. Haggmark, eds. *The Earliest Christian Heretics: Readings from Their Opponents*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1996.
 R. P. C. Hanson, *The Search for the Christian Doctrine of God: The Arian Controversy 318-381*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005.

Christology in the Early Church
A Selected Bibliography

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- Bethune-Baker, James Franklin. *An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine: to the Time of the Council of Chalcedon*. London: Methuen, c1949
- Bettenson, Henry and Chris Maunder, ed. *Documents of the Christian Church*. 3rd ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Brown, Harold O.J. *Heresies: Heresy and Orthodoxy in the History of the Church*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1998.
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- Danielou, Jean. *Origen*. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955.
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- Dunn, James D. G. *Unity and diversity in the New Testament : an inquiry into the character of earliest Christianity*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1977.
- Fairborn, Donald. *Grace and Christology in the Early Church*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Frend, W. H. C. *The Rise of Christianity*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.
- González, Justo L. *A History of Christian Thought*, vols. 1 & 2. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970.
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- Johnson, Douglas W. *The Great Jesus Debates: Four Early Church Battles About the Person and Work of Jesus*. Concordia Publishing House, 2006.
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- Luttenberger, Gerard H. *An Introduction to Christology: In the Gospels & Early Church*. Twenty-Third Publications, 1998.
- Meyer, Marvin, ed. *The Nag Hammadi Scriptures: The International Edition*. New York: HarperCollins, 2007.
- Murray, David Christie. *History of Heresy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976.
- Nichols, Stephen J. *For Us and for Our Salvation: The Doctrine of Christ in the Early Church*. Good News & Crossway, 2007.
- Norris, Richard A. *The Christological Controversy*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980.
- Osborn, Eric. *Irenaeus of Lyons*. Cambridge: The Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Pagels, Elaine. *The Gnostic Gospels*. Random House, Inc. New York: Random House, Inc., 1979
- Pelikan, Jaroslav. *The Emergence of the Catholic Tradition (100-600)*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1971.
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- Raven, Charles E. *Apollinarianism: An Essay on the Christology of the Early Church*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2004
- Roberts, Alexander and James Donaldson, eds. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 10 vols. Peabody, Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1994.
- Samuel, Vilakuvel Cherian. *The Council of Chalcedon Re-Examined*. British Orthodox Press, 2001.

- Sanders, Fred and Klaus Issler. *Jesus in Trinitarian Perspective: An Introductory Christology*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2007.
- Schaff, Philip, ed. *The Creeds of Christendom*. Revised by David S. Schaff. Vol. 2: *The Greek and Latin Creeds*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2007; reprint, Harper and Row, 1931.
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- Widdicombe, Peter. *The Fatherhood of God From Origen to Athanasius*. Oxford Theological Monographs, eds. J. Day, P.B. Hinchliff, K.T. Ware, P. Fiddes, R.C. Morgan, M. Wiles. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994.
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- Young, Frances M. *From Nicaea to Chalcedon : a guide to literature and its background*. Philadelphia : Fortress Press, 1983.