



**THSR9301 Systematic Theology Reading Colloquium**  
**New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary**  
**Theological and Historical Studies Division**  
**Fall 2016 • Thursdays 6:00-8:00 p.m. (9/1, 10/6, 11/3, 12/1)**

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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 worshipping 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.

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- 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 colloquium is designed for and led by resident Doctor of Philosophy and Masters of Theology students under the supervision of the faculty of Theological and Historical Division, with focused readings on contemporary Systematic Theology..

### Student Learning Outcomes

In this course, the student should

1. Become familiar with works in systematic theology from a wide array of traditions and perspectives.
2. Assess these works critically from within an evangelical framework.
3. Clearly communicate understanding and critical evaluation of the works read.

### Biblical Authority

In order to develop competent theological researchers for the twenty-first century church and academy, students in this course will be exposed to seminal works in Christian theology from a wide array of theological perspectives, including the influential works of many prominent non-evangelical theologians. Students are expected to become familiar with and demonstrate advanced, biblically guided critical engagement with the works of these thinkers.

The instructor of this course operates 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:

- Reading Assignments
- Book Reviews
- Student Presentations

### Required Textbooks

Brunner, Emil, and Karl Barth. *Natural Theology: Comprising "Nature and Grace" by Professor Dr. Emil Brunner and the Reply "No!" by Dr. Karl Barth*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002.

Cobb, John B., Jr. *Jesus' Abba: The God Who Has Not Failed*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2016.

Cone, James H. *A Black Theology of Liberation*. Rev. ed. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2010.

Gladd, Benjamin L. and Matthew S. Harmon. *Making All Things New: Inaugurated Eschatology for the Life of the Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016.

Gunton, Colin. *A Brief Theology of Revelation*. New York: T&T Clark, 2005.

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Jenson, Robert W. *A Theology in Outline: Can These Bones Live?* Edited by Adam Eitel. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Johnson, Keith L. *Theology as Discipleship*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2015.

Leithart, Peter J. *Delivered from the Elements of the World: Atonement, Justification, Mission*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016.

Lindbeck, George. *The Nature of Doctrine*. Rev. ed. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2009.

McCall, Thomas. *An Invitation to Analytic Theology*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2015.

Newbigin, Leslie. *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989.

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

Smith, James K. A. *How (Not) To Be Secular: Reading Charles Taylor*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2014.

Vanhoozer, Kevin J. and Daniel Treier. *Theology and the Mirror of Scripture: A Mere Evangelical Account*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2015.

Webster, John. *Holy Scripture: A Dogmatic Sketch*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003.

Westphal, Merold. *Overcoming Onto-Theology: Toward a Postmodern Christian Faith*. Bronx, NY: Fordham Press, 2001.

### Course Requirements & Evaluation

#### Reading Assignments (100%)

All students will read every text in the course and should be prepared to discuss every book assigned. For each class meeting, students will prepare and present a **critical book review** based on the text assigned to them. These book reviews should be 3-6 single-spaced pages in length (with spaces between paragraphs) and should include a bibliographic entry, brief biographical data about the author (including dates, degrees, theological tradition, academic positions held, research interests, and significant works), a **brief** summary, **critical analysis**, and **discussion questions**.

Every student will be required to bring **a set of four to five discussion questions** drawn from every book read, even books on which they are not presenting.

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

#### **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.

#### **Technical Assistance**

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

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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

#### Meeting #1— Reflections on the Theological Task (9/1)

<b>Gunton, <i>A Brief Theology of Revelation</i></b> (144 pp)	Steinmetz
<b>Jenson, <i>A Theology in Outline: Can These Bones Live?</i></b> (152 pp)	Doughty
<b>Johnson, <i>Theology as Discipleship</i></b> (192 pp)	Todd
<b>Vanhoozer and Treier, <i>Theology and the Mirror of Scripture: A Mere Evangelical Account</i></b> (301pp)	Munoz Bueno

#### Meeting #2—Theology and the Philosophers (10/6)

<b>Brunner and Barth, <i>Natural Theology</i></b> (128pp)	Simmons
<b>Lindbeck, <i>The Nature of Doctrine</i></b> (142 pp)	Bryant
<b>McCall, <i>An Invitation to Analytic Christian Theology</i></b> (192 pp)	Steinmetz
<b>Westphal, <i>Overcoming Onto-Theology: Toward a Postmodern Christian Faith</i></b> (306 pp)	Doughty (chs. 1-7) Munoz Bueno (chs. 8-14)

#### Meeting #3—Contextual Theologies (11/3)

<b>Cobb, <i>Jesus' Abba: The God Who Has Not Failed</i></b> (181 pp)	Simmons
<b>Cone, <i>A Black Theology of Liberation</i></b> (189 pp)	Doughty
<b>Smith, <i>How (Not) to Be Secular: Reading Charles Taylor</i></b> (160 pp)	Steinmetz
<b>Newbigin, <i>The Gospel in a Pluralist Society</i></b> (252 pp)	Todd (chs. 1-10) Bryant (chs. 11-20)

#### Meeting #4—Monographs on Doctrines (12/1)

<b>Leithart, <i>Delivered from the Elements of the World: Atonement, Justification, Mission</i></b> (368pp)	Todd (chs. 1-7) Simmons (chs. 8-13)
<b>Gladd and Harmon, <i>Making All Things New: Inaugurated Eschatology for the Life of the Church</i></b> (178 pp)	Bryant
<b>Webster, <i>Holy Scripture: A Dogmatic Sketch</i></b> (105 pp)	Munoz Bueno