



# NEW ORLEANS

BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

ANSWERING GOD'S CALL

## HIST 6235/6335 AMERICAN DENOMINATIONS

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary  
Division of Theological and Historical Studies  
Spring 2020 - Internet

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This course begins on **January 21, 2020**, and, by that date, students should have access to Blackboard, where they will find information and instructions about the course. Prior to that time, students should purchase the texts and be ready to participate in the course. The reading schedule is included in this syllabus so that, once students have secured the textbooks, they can begin reading their assignments.

### Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

### Core Value Focus

The seminary has five core values: Doctrinal Integrity, Spiritual Vitality, Mission Focus, Characteristic Excellence, and Servant Leadership. The core value focus for this academic year is *spiritual vitality*. We want everything we do to be characterized by offering the utmost of our abilities and resources as a testimony to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

### Curriculum Competencies

All graduates of NOBTS are expected to have at least a minimum level of competency in each of the following areas: Biblical Exposition, Christian Theological Heritage, Disciple Making, Interpersonal Skills, Servant Leadership, Spiritual and Character Formation, and Worship Leadership. The curriculum competencies addressed in this course are:

Theological and Historical Heritage – comprehensive overview of the formation and development of Christian denominations in America

Disciple Making – use the people from our past to model Christ-like behavior

Servant Leadership – use the people from our past to model servant leadership

Spiritual and Character Formation – model Christian character in relating to those in the Christian family with whom we disagree

Biblical Exposition – demonstrate the biblical foundation for each denomination

Worship Leadership – examine the variety of worship styles and practices used by American Christians

## Course Description

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the various Christian denominations existing in the United States. The history, polity and theology of each denominational family (Lutheran, Methodist, etc.) will be studied. Current denominational trends and future viability will be discussed.

## Student Learning Outcomes

In order to understand and interpret Christian theological heritage for the church, students, by the end of the course, should:

1. Be able to apply their knowledge and understanding of the distinctive characteristics of different Christian denominations in America to the process of interpreting Christian theological heritage for the church.
2. Value the ideas, individuals, movements, and institutions that form denominational diversity in America.
3. Be able, with the help of resources, to accomplish the following:
  - Practice the historical method and historiography in order to interpret American Christian heritage for the local church.
  - Distinguish between different polity structures.
  - Articulate and defend the varying denominations' positions on specific theological issues.
  - Place individuals, movements, and ideas in their proper context in American Christian history.

## Course Teaching Methodology

Web-based courses are, by nature, a different kind of learning experience than courses taught in the traditional classroom. Because of this structure, this web-based course is more reading and writing intensive than traditional classroom courses. Rigorous study of the deep things of God can be a rewarding experience for anyone who participates in it, but it also calls for extra diligence and integrity in completing the work. This reality does not mean that a web-based course cannot be successful in equipping you, the student, for effective, God-honoring ministry. It simply means utilizing a different strategy. Internet courses allow room for independent learners to thrive—to work at a responsible pace, to engage in student-led discussions, and to take ownership of the learning of course content. Note that your instructors are praying for your success.

## Textbooks

[R] Rhodes, Ron. *The Complete Guide to Christian Denominations*. Updated and expanded. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2015. ISBN: 978-0736952910

[H] Hannah, John D. *Invitation to Church History: American*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2019. ISBN-13: 978-0825443855

Recommended texts:

Finke, Roger and Rodney Stark. *The Churching of America, 1776-2005: Winners and Losers in Our Religious Economy*. Second Edition, New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2005. ISBN-13: 978-0813535531

Mead, Frank S., Samuel S. Hill and Craig D. Atwood. *Handbook of Denomination in the United States*. 13th edition. Nashville: Abingdon Press: 2010. ISBN-13: 978-1426700484

House, H. Wayne. *Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992. ISBN-13: 978-0310416616

Oden, Thomas C. *Turning Around the Mainline: How Renewal Movements are Changing the Church*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006. ISBN-13: 978-0801065767

## Course Requirements

Students enrolled in the two-hour course will complete assignments A through D. Students enrolled in the three-hour course will also complete assignment E, research paper.

**A. Book Review:** Each student will write a review of either *The Churching of America, 1776-2005* or *Turning Around the Mainline*. Books will be assigned after the first week of class. The review will be written as though for an academic magazine or journal. It should:

- 1) include bibliographical information (see above),
- 2) identify each book's main thesis or purpose,
- 3) give a brief summary of the contents,
- 4) include an evaluation of the work's strengths and weaknesses,

All quotations and direct references to sections in the book should be indicated by page numbers within parentheses. Citations or paraphrases from other sources should be noted and documented using either footnotes or endnotes. Reviews should be 2-3 pages in length, single-spaced and are worth 40 points. **Due February 3.**

**B. Worksheets:** Students will complete fifteen (15) worksheets, each worth 10 points. One worksheet will cover each of the denominational families (except Fundamentalists/Bible). The worksheet consists of two (2) parts.

The first part is a general description of the denominational family's beliefs, structure and worship style. These are the things common to the entire branch under consideration.

The second part provides detailed information on the three (3) largest groups within the denominational family. The data in the text may be out of date. Be sure to evaluate it in light of the most recent data you can find. See the sample worksheet to use as a guide. Include:

- Address of home office
- Website
- Membership
- Number of congregations
- Seminaries connected with the group
- Beliefs or practices important to, or unique with, this group

Worksheets may be submitted early, but must be completed before 11.59 pm (Central Time) on the date below. All due dates are **Mondays**. No late worksheets will be accepted. Submit the worksheets in the appropriate unit in the Assignment area.

**Unit 1 - February 17**

**Unit 2 - March 9**

**Unit 3 - April 13**

**Unit 4 - May 11**

**C. Discussions:** There will be four discussions. Three will be graded, each worth 15 points. Each student will participate in four (4) threaded discussions. During the time the unit containing the interactive discussion required, you will enter the discussion at least three times: once near the beginning of the unit and twice toward the end as you respond to your classmates' comments (see above for unit completion dates). Your initial comments express your opinion on the topic. You must then respond to **at least** two (2) people, but **not more** than five (5) in any one discussion. This means that for each discussion you will have a minimum of 3 entries and a maximum of 6 entries. Each posting should be about a paragraph in length.

There must be **at least** two days time span between your initial comments and your response to your classmates. Be sure to plan accordingly so that you leave enough time to respond before the end of the unit. Failure to do so will affect your grade.

You will be graded on your contributions to the discussion **and** on your interaction with what other students have said. It is **EXTREMELY** important that students remember to use courtesy when critiquing the ideas of their fellow students. Speak truth, but only in love and let your conversations be characterized by grace. The first interactive discussion will not be graded. This will allow you to become familiar with the program. The others are worth 15 points each. The graded discussions will be on the following topics:

**Unit 1** (not graded): Please describe yourself. Please include your educational background (where you went to school, major), current degree plan, desire for future ministry, and information about your family (married/children/unique experience growing up, etc.). Include only information that you feel comfortable sharing with the class.

**Unit 2** (graded): What are the advantages and disadvantages of the three different polity styles (hierarchical, representative, congregational)? Be sure to list at least one advantage and one disadvantage for each polity style.

**Unit 3** (graded): Is it appropriate to fellowship with pastors and congregations of other denominations (e.g. community Thanksgiving service, pulpit exchanges, ministerial alliance)? Why or why not?

**Unit 4** (graded): What is the future of denominations in the US? Include a consideration of mainline and evangelical components within denominations.

**D. Worship Service Evaluation:** Each student will attend two (2) worship services from a polity tradition different from his/her own. The student will write a 2-3 page single-spaced description of the service. This will include a detailed order of worship; the activities and participation of the worshipers (active participants or passive observers); and the student's impressions of the service. What elements drew you into worship? What elements distracted you? Each evaluation is worth 30 points. The first evaluation is due **March 30** and the second one is due **May 4**.

**E. Research Paper (required for 6335 only):** Each student will write a paper describing the historical development of a denominational family within the United States that is different from the one of which you are a part (e.g. a Baptist cannot write about Baptists). Post the subject of your paper in the “Research Paper Topic” area in Blackboard. The link will not be active until the first day of class. Duplication of topics will not be allowed and topics will be available on a first come/first served basis. Since fundamentalism encompasses multiple denominations, it will not be one of the options. The instructor will assign topics if one has not been chosen by **February 10.**

Papers **require** a title page, a table of contents, a bibliography, and footnotes or endnotes (parenthetical citations are not acceptable). It must be double spaced and follow Turabian, eighth edition, for style. However, **do not use** chapters to separate sections of your paper (chapters require a new page for each new chapter and the project is not long enough to justify this). Use section headings instead. The timeline is an appendix and should come before the bibliography and be single spaced. The text of your paper (not counting table of contents, appendix, or bibliography) should be 12-15 pages in length (no more, no less). Use 5 - 10 sources with a minimum of three (3) books (do not use only Internet sources). For free help with format, writing style, and plagiarism concerns, contact the Writing Center at [www.nobts.edu/writing/default.html](http://www.nobts.edu/writing/default.html).

Students will post their paper in two places. First, submit your paper through SafeAssign, located in the “Assignments” area. This is the paper that will be graded. Second, post a copy of your paper in the “Discussion Board” area on Blackboard as a .pdf document. This will allow the rest of the class to read your paper in its original format. Failure to post your paper on Blackboard in the correct format will result in a **5 point penalty**. A late paper will be assessed an initial **10 point penalty**. Each calendar day after the due (excluding Sunday) an **additional 10 point penalty** will be assessed. Projects will be graded on clear organization, spelling, and grammar as well as content. For examples of Turabian form, see the Turabian Tutor on Blackboard. The paper is worth 100 points. **Due April 20.**

Your grade will be determined as follows:

|                                       |           |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| History                               | 20 points |
| Summary of Doctrine                   | 20 points |
| Denominational structure/organization | 20 points |
| Ministry and missions focus           | 20 points |
| Timeline                              | 10 points |
| Form/Grammar                          | 10 points |

## Evaluation of Grade

The student's grade will be computed as follows:

| <u>Possible Points</u>        | <u>Grading Scale</u><br>6235 | <u>Grading Scale</u><br>6335 |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Book Review:                  | 40 pts                       |                              |
| Discussions (3 x 15):         | 45 pts                       | A = 274-295 pts.             |
| Worship Evaluations (2 x 30): | 60 pts.                      | B = 250-273 pts.             |
| Worksheets (15 x 10):         | 150 pts.                     | C = 228-249 pts.             |
| <u>Project:</u>               | <u>100 pts.</u>              | D = 207-227 pts.             |
|                               | 395 pts.                     | F = 206- ↓ pts.              |
|                               |                              | A = 367-395 pts.             |
|                               |                              | B = 336-366 pts.             |
|                               |                              | C = 304-335 pts.             |
|                               |                              | D = 276-303 pts.             |
|                               |                              | F = 275- ↓ pts.              |

## Technical Assistance

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

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.

## Penalties

- A. Worksheets:** No late worksheets will be accepted.
- B. Interactive Discussions:** Failure to adequately participate in the threaded discussions and to do so in a timely manner will affect the amount of points awarded.
- C. Book Review, Worship Reviews and Research Paper:** A late review or paper will be assessed an initial **10 point penalty**. For each calendar day after the due date an **additional 10 point penalty** will be assessed.
- D. Plagiarism:** A high standard of personal integrity is expected of all students at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Copying another person's work, submitting downloaded material without proper references, submitting material without properly citing the source, and committing other such forms of dishonesty are strictly forbidden. Although anything cited in three sources is considered public domain, we require that all sources be cited. Any infraction may result in failing the assignment and the course. Any infraction will be reported to the Dean of Students for further action. **See the Graduate Catalog for more information on the Definition of Plagiarism and Consequences for Violations of Plagiarism.**

## Submission of Assignments

- A. Worksheets and Worship Evaluations** should be submitted through their respective course links. Your work **must** be posted as a .pdf document. [WordPerfect can save a document in .pdf and you can download a program from the [Software Downloads to be used in NOBTS Blackboard Courses](#) link that will work for MS Word documents (MS Works is not acceptable)]. Posting your paper in .pdf format preserves your margins and spacing. Failure to post your paper in a .pdf format will result in a **5 point penalty**.
- B. Discussion Threads** will be conducted on Blackboard. Follow the link in each Unit to add your comments. Click on a thread to respond to it.
- C. Research Papers** should be **posted twice**. First, submit it through SafeAssign in the Research Paper folder. This allows you to check how well you have cited your research. Secondly, submit your paper through the appropriate final edition link. Attach your paper by clicking on the Browse button and finding the copy of your paper. Remember to click Submit or the paper will not post properly. This allows the rest of the class to read your paper and learn from your research. I want you all to be able to benefit from the others' research and writing. Your paper

**must** be posted a .pdf document. [WordPerfect can save a document in .pdf and you can download a program from the [Software Downloads to be used in NOBTS Blackboard Courses](#) link that will work for MS Word documents (MAC Pages is not acceptable)]. Posting your paper in .pdf format preserves your margins and spacing. Failure to post your paper in a .pdf format will result in a **5 point penalty**.

Please do not send your assignments to me as email attachments unless I request you to do so or unless there is a compelling reason. You may send me an email announcing that you have submitted an assignment, but, if you follow the correct procedures, I will find it. I enjoy hearing from my students, but my Inbox fills up pretty quickly with attachments, and then I have to shift them over to the proper location.

### **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 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.

In addition, check Blackboard for instructions related to this class. Because this class is available on Blackboard, 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.

## Reading Schedule

[R] Rhodes, Ron. *The Complete Guide to Christian Denominations*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House Publishers, 2005.

[H] Hannah, John D. *Invitation to Church History: American*. Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Academic, 2019. This book gives the overall history of denominational development in the United States in chronological order as a companion to Rhodes.

| Unit | Due Date    | Subject               | Reading                                     |
|------|-------------|-----------------------|---|
| [1]  | February 17 | Eastern Orthodox      | <b>H:</b> 48-115<br><b>R:</b> 7-20; 291-310 |
|      |             | Roman Catholic        | <b>R:</b> 95-113                            |
|      |             | Lutheran              | <b>R:</b> 211-37                            |
|      |             | Reformed/Presbyterian | <b>R:</b> 341-76                            |
| [2]  | March 9     | Mennonite/Anabaptist  | <b>H:</b> 120-240<br><b>R:</b> 237-63       |
|      |             | Episcopal             | <b>R:</b> 137-156                           |
|      |             | Congregational        | <b>R:</b> 127-36                            |
|      |             | Baptist               | <b>R:</b> 35-70                             |
| [3]  | April 13    | Friends (Quakers)     | <b>H:</b> 244-367<br><b>R:</b> 157-170      |
|      |             | Brethren              | <b>R:</b> 71-94                             |
|      |             | Methodist             | <b>R:</b> 263-90                            |
|      |             | Holiness              | <b>R:</b> 193-210                           |
| [4]  | May 14      | Christian             | <b>H:</b> 372-418<br><b>R:</b> 113-26       |
|      |             | Adventist             | <b>R:</b> 21-34                             |
|      |             | Pentecostal           | <b>R:</b> 311-40                            |
|      |             | Fundamentalist/Bible  | <b>R:</b> 171-92                            |



## American Denominations Bibliography

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- Askew, Thomas A. and Richard V. Pierard. *The American Church Experience: A Concise History*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004.
- Blankman, Drew and Todd Augustine, eds. *Pocket Dictionary of North American Denominations*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004.
- Brumbaugh, Martin Grove. *A History of the German Baptist Brethren in Europe and America*. 2d Edition. Elgin, IL: Brethren Publishing House, 1907.
- Clark, Elmer T. *The Small Sects in America: An Authentic Study of Almost 300 Little-Known Religious Groups*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1965.
- Good, Merle and Phyllis. *20 Most Asked Questions about the Amish and Mennonites*. Lancaster, PA: Good Books, 1979.
- Hamilton, Adam. *Christianity's Family Tree: What Other Christians Believe and Why*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007.
- Handy, Robert Theodore. *A History of the Churches of the United States and Canada*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1977.
- House, H. Wayne. *Charts of Christian Theology and Doctrine*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1992.
- Hudson, Winthrop S. and John Corrigan. *Religion in America: An Historical Account of the Development of American Religious Life*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1998.
- Janzen, Rod. *The Prairie People: Forgotten Anabaptists*. Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1999.
- Langton, Edward. *History of the Moravian Church: The Story of the First International Protestant Church*. London: George Allen & Unwin, 1956.
- Leith, John H., ed. *Creeds of the Churches: A Reader in Christian Doctrine from the Bible to the Present*. 3d ed. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982.
- Marty, Martin E. *Pilgrims in Their Own Land: 500 Years of Religion in America*. New York: Penguin Books, 1984.
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- Noll, Mark A., Nathan O. Hatch, George M. Marsden, David F. Wells, and John D. Woodbridge, eds. *Eerdmans' Handbook to Christianity in America*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1983.
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- Sweet, William Warren. *The Story of Religion in America*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 1930. Enlarged Reprint, 1939.
- Toews, Paul, ed. *Mennonites & Baptists: A Continuing Conversation*. Hillsboro, KS: Kindred Press, 1993.
- Vandeman, George E. *What I Like About . . .* Boise, ID: Pacific Press, 1986.
- Wentz, Richard E. *American Religious Traditions: The Shaping of Religion in the United States*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003.