



LEAVELL COLLEGE

NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THCM 3330-30: Introduction to Christian Apologetics
Spring 2019 (Term 193)

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The mission of Leavell College 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

The course will address the core value of *Doctrinal Integrity* and *Mission Focus* directly and *Spiritual Vitality* indirectly. Reflection on the philosophical issues is intimately related to reflection on the nature of God, Scripture, Christian faith, evangelism, and the doctrine of Creation. For the Christian, philosophy is ultimately a matter of loving God with the mind (Matthew 22:37-40). **The core value for the 2018-2019 academic year is Doctrinal Integrity.**

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to explore world religions and logic as building blocks for developing an apologetic methodology and using apologetics in evangelism. Special attention will be drawn to classical arguments for theism and especially the biblical God in the presence of postmodern worldviews.

General Education Competencies (GECs)

Leavell College has identified four General Education Competencies:

1. Critical Thinking
2. Oral Communication
3. Written Communication
4. Quantitative Reasoning

This course addresses GEC #1 and #3.

Bachelor of Arts in Christian Ministry Program Student Learning Outcomes (BACM PSLOs) AND Bachelor of Arts in Music with an Emphasis in Worship Program Student Learning Outcomes (BAM PSLOs)

Leavell College has identified three Program Student Learning Outcomes for the BACM and three Program Student Learning Outcomes for the BAM:

1. Biblical Interpretation (BACM PSLO #1)
1. Worship Leadership (BAM PSLO #1)
2. Service and Leadership (BACM PSLO #2 and BAM PSLO #2)
3. Historical and Theological Interpretation (BACM PSLO #3 and BAM PSLO #3)

This course addresses BACM PSLO # 3.

Course Student Learning Outcomes (CSLOs)

In order to obey the biblical mandate found in 1 Peter 3:15, by the end of the course the student will:

1. Understand the basics of Christian theology and be able to recognize concepts that are inconsistent with orthodox Christianity.
2. Value the following concepts:
 - ◆ Intellectual accountability in relation to the issues of ultimate concern to Christian faith.
 - ◆ Convincing presentations of Christian faith.
 - ◆ Insightful and effective defenses of the Christian faith.
 - ◆ Clear ways of stating the Christian hope to those who either reject or question the truth claims of Christian theology.
3. Be able to present and defend the Christian faith clearly and rationally.

Accordingly:

- 4 Students will read broadly on issues in Christian apologetics.
- 5 Students will become familiar with issues related to Christian apologetics by completing course assignments.
- 6 Students will demonstrate basic understanding of an issue related to the subject by writing a book review on a particular apologetic issue.

Course Texts

The following textbooks are required:

Josh McDowell and Sean McDowell, *Evidence That Demands a Verdict: Life-Changing Truth for a Skeptical World*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2017.

Robert Stewart, ed., *Can Only One Religion Be True?: Paul Knitter and Harold Netland in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013.

The following texts are optional:

Craig L. Blomberg, *The Historical Reliability of the New Testament: Countering the Challenges to Evangelical Christian Beliefs*. B&H Studies in Christian Apologetics. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016.

- Robert M. Bowman, Jr., Ed Komoszewski, and Darrell L. Bock, *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Jesus Christ*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007.
- Francis S. Collins, *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*. New York: Free Press, 2007.
- Paul Copan, *True for You But Not for Me: Deflating the Slogans That Leave Christians Speechless*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.
- Paul Copan, *When God Goes to Starbucks: A Guide to Everyday Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.
- Craig A. Evans, *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006.
- Jeremy A. Evans, *The Problem of Evil: The Challenge to Essential Christian Beliefs*. B&H Studies in Christian Apologetics. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2013.
- Stewart E. Kelly, *Truth Considered and Applied: Examining Postmodernism, History, and Christian Faith*. B&H Studies in Christian Apologetics. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2011.
- Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*. New York: Dutton, 2008.
- C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001.
- C. S. Lewis, *Miracles*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001.
- Alister E. McGrath. *Mere Apologetics: How to Help Seekers and Skeptics Find Faith*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012.
- Robert B. Stewart, *The Resurrection of Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and N. T. Wright in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006.
- Robert B. Stewart, *The Reliability of the New Testament: Bart Ehrman and Daniel B. Wallace in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011.
- Robert B. Stewart, *The Message of Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and Ben Witherington III in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013.
- J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity: A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels*. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2013.
- Tawa J. Anderson, W. Michael Clark, and David K. Naugle, *An Introduction to Christian Worldview: Pursuing God's Perspective in a Pluralistic World*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2017.

The following texts are recommended:

- Norman Geisler, *Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.
- Steven B. Cowan, *Five Views on Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.
- Ken Boa and Robert M. Bowman, Jr., *Faith Has Its Reasons: An Integrative Approach to Defending Christianity*. Carlisle: Paternoster, 2006.

W. C. Campbell-Jack and Gavin McGrath, *New Dictionary of Christian Apologetics*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006.

Course Requirements and Grading

Absences may not exceed 9 hours of class time if the student is to receive credit for the course, according to the NOBTS catalog.

Make-up Exams are not permitted, except in *extreme* situations, to insure that all students have approximately equal time to prepare for exams. The instructor has the final decision regarding the legitimacy of excuses in cases of missed exams. The student who misses the exam bears the responsibility for explaining the absence and arranging for a make-up exam within the prescribed two-week period.

Late Work will be penalized 10 points per office day late up to 5 days. No assignment may be submitted after 5 office days without prior permission of the professor.

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

Quizzes will cover the readings assigned in the primary text and class lectures. The form of the quizzes will be objective. There will also be class discussion over material in the text on quiz days—but not as part of the quiz. ***Under no circumstances will any quiz ever be given in advance or as a make-up!*** This assignment relates to BACM PSLO #3 and CLSOs #1, 2, 3, and 5.

Book Review. Book review(s) should include: (1) professional biographical data concerning the author; (2) a summary and identification of the major elements of content; (3) an assessment of the author's aim or purpose; (4) an evaluation of the degree of its fulfillment; and (5) a critical evaluation of the book *which includes some documented research on the general topic*. Students should cite the work of others in the critique section. Parenthetical page numbers are sufficient for quotations from the book being reviewed. All other citations should conform to Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th edition. *This assignment relates to GECs #1 and #3; BACM PSLO #3, and CSLOs #1-#6.*

Exams will be a combination of objective questions and take-home questions. The take-home question should be answered as thoroughly as possible in 2-3 typed pages. The take-home portion will be roughly 50% of the grade for each exam. **The take-home question(s) will be distributed in class one week before the exams. The exams will be announced at least one class session before the take-home question is distributed.** *This assignment relates to GECs #1 and #3, BACM PSLO #3, and CSLOs #1-3, 5.*

Each test will be limited to the material in that unit. Guidance may be given in advance concerning the material to be covered and the direction of the questions asked. The exams will test both mastery of content (significant thinkers and their contributions, summaries of apologetic methods, philosophical vocabulary, etc.) and critical thinking skills (the ability to articulate and defend a position in an essay). **If a review sheet is given, it does not mean that**

only the material on the review sheet will be covered or that all the material on the review sheet will be covered. Review sheets are simply aids to preparation, not restrictions upon the professor.

Read Report for Required Texts. Students must read the required texts during the semester. A statement as to what students have read will be included as part of the final exam. Students who have read all the assigned reading will receive 5 points toward the final grade. Students who have not read all the assigned reading will receive 0 points toward the final grade. *This assignment relates to GEC #1, BACM PSLO #3, and CSLOs #1-5.*

Grading:

The final grade will be determined accordingly:

Reading Report	5%
Quiz Average	10%
Book Review	20%
First exam	30%
<u>Final exam</u>	<u>35%</u>
	100%

Borderline Grades will be determined by the numerical grade received, unless the student's promptness and faithfulness in class attendance, positive attitude and contribution in class discussions, and preparedness and attentiveness in class warrants special consideration. These factors will only apply when the student is within one or two points of the next highest grade.

Extra Credit may be earned as listed below. All extra credit will be added to the final grade.

(1) ***Additional Reading.*** Consideration for extra credit will be given for significant reading over and above the class assignments within the field. Consideration will be given not only to the amount, but also to the quality, of the material read. Students must read all of the assigned readings in order to be eligible to earn extra credit for additional reading.

(2) ***Book Reviews*** may be done for extra credit. The review must be of a book listed by the instructor for reading reviews unless the instructor has approved another book. The review should include: (1) some biographical data concerning the author; (2) an identification of the major elements of content; (3) an assessment of the author's aim or purpose and of the degree of its fulfillment; and (4) a critical evaluation of the book *which includes some documented research on the general topic.* The reviews should follow Turabian form.

(3) ***Special Events*** sponsored by various NOBTS divisions may also be considered for extra credit with the approval of the professor.

Reading Inventories listing all required and optional reading done for the course will be due at the final exam. As stated above exceptional additional reading may add to the final score for the course. Failure to read all assigned readings will result in a decrease in the final score for the course.

TENTATIVE schedule allows for Spring Break (March 18-22) and a Final Exam depending on course tempo

PROLEGOMENA		
CLASS SCHEDULE	CLASS DISCUSSION TOPIC	READING ASSIGNMENT
1	Introduction to the Course	Introduction
	The Biblical Basis for Christian Apologetics	
2	Worldviews: What They Are and How They Work	
	Faith and Reason	
3	Postmodernism and Truth	Chapters 27-29
	A Little Lesson in Logic	
4	Abductive Reasoning	
	Knowledge: The Basics	Chapter 30

THE TRUSTWORTHINESS OF SCRIPTURE

5	Has Jesus Been Misquoted?: Textual Reliability	Chapter 3
	What About Those Other Gospels? Canonical Issues	Chapters 2 & 5
6	Understanding New Testament Critical Methods: Source, Form, and Redaction Criticism	
	Did Jesus Really Exist?	Chapter 6 & 11
7	The Historical Jesus	
	The Historical Basis of the Resurrection	

CHRISTIAN THEISM AND NATURALISM

Spring break

9	Understanding Atheism: A Colorless Worldview	
	What's Wrong with the New Atheism	
	Arguments for God's Existence: Uses and Limitations; Teleological Arguments	Prologue: A Theistic Universe
	Cosmological Arguments	
	Ontological and Moral Arguments	
	Pragmatic and Other Arguments	
10	Apologetic Method	
	The Problem of Evil	
11	Different Approaches to the Problem of Evil	
	Can I Trust a God Who Would Command Genocide?	

CHRISTIANITY AND SCIENCE

12	Miracles	Chapter 31
	Do You Have to Choose Between Science & Faith?	

MIRACLES AND THE EXCLUSIVITY OF CHRIST

13	Is Jesus Really the Only Savior?	
	What About People Who Never Hear of Jesus?	
14	FINAL EXAM	

Important Dates

Spring 2019

New Year's Day (offices closed)	January 1, 2019
Final Day for Tuition Payment	January 18, 2019
Registration Deadline for Spring Internet Courses	January 18, 2019
Martin Luther King Day (No classes; offices closed)	January 21, 2019
Late Student Registration	January 22, 2019
Semester Begins (Including Internet classes)	January 22, 2019
Last Day to Drop/Add	February 1, 2019
Last Day to Apply Spring Graduation	February 15, 2019
Mardi Gras (Offices closed; no classes on main campus; no CIV classes from NOLA)	March 5, 2019
Spring Break (Offices open)	March 18-22, 2019
Good Friday (Offices closed, no classes)	April 19, 2019
Graduation for Leavell College	May 17, 2019
Graduate School Spring Graduation (10:00am)	May 18, 2019

Suggested Bibliography

- Adams, Marilyn, and Adams, Robert, eds. *The Problem of Evil*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Anderson, Tawa J., W. Michael Clark, and David K. Naugle, *An Introduction to Christian Worldview: Pursuing God's Perspective in a Pluralistic World*. Downers Grove:

InterVarsity, 2017.

- Bowman, Robert M. Jr., Ed Komoszewski, and Darrell L. Bock, *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Jesus Christ*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007.
- Brooks, Christopher W. *Urban Apologetics: Why the Gospel is Good News for the City*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2014.
- Brown, Colin. *Christianity and Western Thought*. Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 1990.
- . *Miracles and the Critical Mind*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984.
- . *Philosophy and the Christian Faith*. Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 1968.
- Bush, L. Russ. *Classical Readings in Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Academie, 1983.
- Clark, Kelly James. *Return to Reason*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.
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- Davis, Stephen T., ed. *Encountering Evil: Live Options in Theodicy*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1973.
- Dyrness, William. *Christian Apologetics in a World Community*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1983.
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- . *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.
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- Keller, Timothy. *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*. New York: Dutton, 2008.
- Kreeft, Peter. *Making Sense out of Suffering*. Ann Arbor: Servant, 1986.
- Lewis, C. S. *Mere Christianity*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001.
- Lewis, C. S. *Miracles*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001.
- McGrath, Alister E. *Why God Won't Go Away: Is the New Atheism Running on Empty*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2011.
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- Mitchell, Basil. *The Justification of Religious Belief*. New York: Seabury Press, 1974.
- Moreland, J. P. *Christianity and the Nature of Science*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989.
- . *Scaling the Secular City: A Defense of Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987.
- Nash, Ronald. *Faith and Reason*. Grand Rapids: Academie, 1988.
- Pearcey, Nancy. *Finding Truth: 5 Principles for Unmasking Atheism, Secularism, and Other God Substitutes*. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2015.
- . *Saving Leonardo: A Call to Resist the Secular Assault on Mind, Morals, and Meaning*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010.
- . *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2004.
- Ramm, Bernard. *Varieties of Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1961.
- Spitzer, Robert J. *New Proofs for the Existence of God: Contributions of Contemporary Physics and Philosophy*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.
- Sproul, R.C., Gerstner, John, and Lindsley, Arthur. *Classical Apologetics: A Rational Defense of the Christian Faith and a Critique of Presuppositional Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984.
- Stewart, Robert B. *Can Only One Religion Be True?: Paul Knitter and Harold Netland in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013.
- . *The Future of Atheism: Alister McGrath and Daniel Dennett in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008.
- . *The Resurrection of Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and N. T. Wright in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006.
- . *The Reliability of the New Testament: Bart Ehrman and Daniel B. Wallace in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011.
- . *The Message of Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and Ben Witherington III in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013.
- Strobel, Lee. *The Case for Faith: A Journalist Investigates the Toughest Objections to Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.
- Swinburne, Richard. *The Concept of Miracle*. London: Macmillan, 1970.
- Wallace, J. Warner. *Cold-Case Christianity: A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels*. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2013.