



## **THEO5300 Systematic Theology I**

**New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary**  
**Division of Theological and Historical Studies**  
**Spring 2019**

### **Professor: Michael Steinmetz, ThM**

Office: HSC 290 (in the ITC)

Phone: (504) 816-8166

Email: [ctl@nobts.edu](mailto:ctl@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**

**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.

### **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.
- 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. The curriculum competencies addressed in this course are: Biblical Exposition and Christian Theological Heritage.

### **Course Description**

This first course in systematic theology introduces the student to the methodology of theology (Prolegomena) and the doctrines of revelation, God, humanity, and the person of Christ. The biblical foundations and the relevant historical developments are considered in construction of a Christian understanding of each doctrine.

## Student Learning Outcomes

The student, by the end of the course, should:

1. Be able to understand theological method and the doctrines of revelation, God, humanity, and the person of Christ biblically, historically, and systematically.
2. Be able to apply theology by integrating these doctrines into a coherent, comprehensive, and consistent Christian worldview.
3. Be able to communicate these doctrines in the particular ministry calling and context of the learner.

## Biblical Authority

The instructors of this course operate 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:

- Lectures
- Online discussions
- Written assignments
- Assigned reading
- Ministry task

## A Note about Web-Based Learning

Web-based courses are, by nature, a different kind of learning experience than courses based in the traditional classroom. 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 your own pace, to engage in student-led discussions, and to take ownership of the course content. Because of this structure, this web-based course is more **reading and writing intensive** than traditional classroom settings. 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. Note that your instructors are praying for your success.

## Required Texts

**Allison, Gregg R. *Historical Theology: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.** Dr. Allison designed his textbook to be a companion to Wayne Grudem's *Systematic Theology*. This book contains valuable background information about the historical development of doctrines treated in this course. **It is recommended that you read your assignments from this text AFTER READING GRUDEM AND/OR ERICKSON.**

**Erickson, Millard. *Christian Theology*. 3d ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013.** Millard Erickson's text is one of the best contemporary Baptist treatments of Christian doctrine available presently. This textbook is slightly more challenging than Grudem's text because it includes more philosophical and apologetic content. Erickson writes from a modified Calvinistic perspective.

**Grudem, Wayne.** *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000. Grudem's text is a very readable introduction to Christian doctrine. It is also practical and helpful in a number of ways. It includes devotional content, a glossary of terms, and a great bibliography for research papers. Grudem writes from a more traditional five-point Calvinistic perspective.

**Harwood, Adam.** *The Spiritual Condition of Infants*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2012.

**Putman, Rhyne.** *In Defense of Doctrine: Evangelicalism, Theology, and Scripture*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2015. Dr. Putman's book about theological method and the need for Christian doctrine.

## Recommended Texts

Elwell, Walter A. *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology*. 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001.

Garrett, James Leo. *Systematic Theology*. Vols. 1-2. North Richland Hills, TX: BIBAL Press, 2006, 2007.

McKim, Donald K. *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed. Rev. Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007.

## Course Requirements

### **1. Reading Quizzes (15%)**

Students will take weekly quizzes based on the assigned readings from Erickson, Grudem, and Allison. The quizzes draw on key terms, the theological ideas of the authors, and significant figures and movements in the history of theology. Quizzes can consist of multiple choice, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, short answer, and matching questions. **Students are strongly encouraged to read ALL of the assigned reading materials before beginning the quiz.** These are **NOT open-book quizzes.**

### **2. Biweekly Discussion Board Questions (20%)**

Students will be required to answer discussion board questions on a **biweekly basis**. These discussion questions will be based on the assigned reading and additional resources located in Course Documents. Students are required to make at least three (3) substantive posts each week to each question.

- a. The **first post** will be the answer to the question posed. This post should be longer and more detailed than the remaining posts. **The initial post is due Thursday of the week of the unit.**
- b. The other two posts should be offered in response to other student posts. **These posts are more than a mere "good job" or "I like what you said."** A substantive post is defined as a post that both exhibits a thoughtful response based upon the class material and that, in the case of response posts (see above), furthers the discussion thread by posing new questions or thoughts to which other students may respond.

### **3. In Defense of Doctrine Ministry Project (10%)**

Theology done well should result in faithful Christian ministry. After reading *In Defense of Doctrine*, students will be required to do a ministry project related to the importance of Christian doctrine for the life of the church. Students must write a full-length sermon or Bible study manuscript about the importance of Christian doctrine and *present it in a church or Bible study group*. These projects should be between **3-5 double spaced pages**.

### **4. Critical Book Review (20%)**

All students are required to read and review Adam Harwood's *The Spiritual Condition of Infants*. The review should include:

1. a bibliography entry,
2. a **brief** biographical data about the author(s) (e.g., his position, degrees, research interests, and other works),
3. an assessment of the main purpose and/or thesis of the book,
4. a **concise** summary of the book's contents (**No more than 1/3 of the total review should be summary**),
5. a **thorough** critical analysis of the book (see the questions below for ideas),
6. a discussion of the relevance of the book to one's particular ministry, and
7. a conclusion with a recommendation or dismissal.

The reviews should be between **2000-4000 words** and should conform to **Turabian** or **SBL** style guides. Because book reviews are primarily about one source, use **parenthetical citations** for the primary text and footnotes only for external sources.

A few questions to consider when preparing for a critical book review: What is the main purpose or thesis of this book? To whom is this book written? Did the author(s) fulfill his or her purpose? What are some of the author's working assumptions (e.g., his or her denominational background, field of research, or view of Scripture)? Does the author provide strong biblical, philosophical, and historical support for his or her positions? Are there any points of contact between this book/writer and other texts read during the course of the semester? How might the content of this book affect ministry in the local church or ministry within your particular calling? Are there any ideas that changed your particular way of thinking on the subject matter at hand? Would you recommend this book to someone else?

- **A papers (93-100)** clearly state the book's thesis, successfully and succinctly outline its argument in its own terms, demonstrate advanced critical engagement with the argument and content of the book, make clear and well structured arguments, and exhibit a proficient grasp of grammar, spelling, and style.
- **B papers (85-92)** clearly state the book's thesis, show an attempt to understand the book on its own terms and critically reflect on the issues at hand, make arguments, and show sufficiency in grammar, spelling, and style.
- **C papers (77-84)** state the book's thesis, present the content of the book, raise preliminary critical questions for further evaluation, limit evaluation to approval or

disapproval of the author’s arguments, and make repeated mistakes in grammar, spelling, and style.

- **D (70-76) and F (0-69) papers** lack evidence of grasping the book’s thesis and content, limit evaluation to preformed judgments without serious consideration of the book’s ideas, contain major grammatical, spelling, and stylistic errors, and demonstrate little or no attempt to proofread.

**5. Theological Research Paper (25%)**

All students are required to write a brief research paper (12-15 double-spaced pages in length) on a particular doctrinal topic/question. Students may choose from the following topics or seek approval from the professor on another topic.

**The research paper topic and thesis statement are due at the end of Unit 5!**

**PLEASE READ THE DOCUMENTS IN THE “PAPER WRITING RESOURCES” SECTION BEFORE WRITING**—particularly John Frame’s paper “How to Write a Theological Research Paper” and the research paper grading rubric.

A more focused paper is usually a better product than an overly broad paper (e.g., like trying to cover all the doctrine of Christ in ten pages!). Students may select a doctrinal topic and seek to investigate how a particular theologian in history addressed that issue, or one may start with a particular theologian and investigate his or her unique theological perspectives (e.g., Calvin’s understanding of imputation or Karl Barth’s doctrine of inspiration). Students may also feel free to pick one of the doctrinal topics below and offer a biblical, philosophical, and historical analysis of the doctrine.

<b>Possible Paper Topics (or Mix and Match)</b>	
The Inspiration of Scripture	Anselm of Canterbury
The Authority of Scripture	Arminius, James
Biblical Inerrancy	Athanasius
General Revelation and World Religions	Augustine
Arguments for God’s Existence	Barth, Karl
God’s Incommunicable Attributes	Brunner, Emil
God’s Communicable Attributes	Bultmann, Rudolf
The Trinity	Calvin, John
Creation	Cappadocian Fathers, The
Providence	Edwards, Jonathan
God and Evil	Hodge, Charles
The Image of God	Justin Martyr
The Imputation of Adam’s Sin	Kierkegaard, Søren
Total Depravity	Luther, Martin
The Age of Accountability	Mullins, E. Y.
The Historical Jesus	Origen
The Humanity of Christ	Schleiermacher, Friedrich
The Peccability/Impeccability of Christ	Thomas Aquinas
The Hypostatic Union	Wesley, John

	Zwingli, Huldruch
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**6. Embedded Assignment (5%)**

All students enrolled in every section of Systematic Theology I have a common Embedded Assignment utilized in evaluating our projected Student Learning Outcomes. The assignment, listed below, is one of the discussion board questions.

1. Using the materials from your assigned systematic theology textbook and other theological resources (like commentaries, other theological textbooks or monographs), briefly explain your understanding of the doctrine of general revelation, highlighting the differences between general and special revelation.
2. What impact does the doctrine of general revelation have on your understanding of missions and evangelism?
3. Describe how the doctrine of general revelation can affect your communication of the Gospel.
4. This assignment should be 800-1200 words in length.

The rubric below shows how the question will be evaluated in terms of addressing Student Learning Outcomes. Students may use this rubric as a guide for how they answer other questions in the Theological Reflections Question Sets.

DOMAIN	LEVEL	INADEQUATE (0 PTS)	BASIC (1 PT)	COMPETENT (2 PTS)	GOOD (3 PTS)	EXCELLENT (4PTS)
UNDERSTANDING	Able to understand the doctrinal topic.					
APPLICATION	Able to apply knowledge by relating it to the broader Christian worldview.					
COMMUNICATION	Able to communicate the doctrine to a ministry audience.					

**7. Reading Report (5%)**

Students will complete the semester by giving a reading report of the total percentage of reading completed.

**Evaluation of Grade**

Grades will be determined on the basis of the NOBTS grading scale—an A for 93-100, B for 85-92, C for 77-84, D for 70-76, and F for 69 or below.

Vocab Quizzes	15%
Discussion Board Questions	20%
Critical Book Review	20%
Ministry Project	10%
Theological Research Paper	25%
Embedded Assignment	5%
Reading Report	5%

Borderline grades will normally be determined by the numerical grade received (I round up from .5), 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 only apply when the student is fractionally close to the next highest grade.

**Class Policies****1. Late Work**

Because life and ministry happens, late work will be accepted—but with a penalty. For every day an assignment is late, five points will be deducted. No assignment over two weeks late will be accepted.

**Failure to submit every assignment will result in failure of the course.**

**2. Plagiarism**

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).

**3. Lectures, Readings, and Assignments Schedule**

The schedule runs Mondays through Saturdays. Though materials will be available on Sunday, the course instructor encourages (but does not require) students to take a day of rest and worship on Sundays.

Book reviews, ministry projects, and research papers are due Saturday at 11:59 PM CST at the end of the unit week (units begin on Monday).

**4. Blackboard**

- a. All assignments are submitted using Blackboard SafeAssign (anti-plagiarism) technology.
- b. Tests are conducted in Blackboard. Because this technology is accessible at home or office, there is a **trust policy** in place that the student will not compromise his or her integrity by looking at

notes or books during the test. And as the proverb notes, “Whoever walks in integrity will be delivered” (Prov. 28:18).

c. **SUBMIT ALL ASSIGNMENTS IN .PDF FORMAT.** If you need help with converting your files to .PDF, contact the ITC for assistance (see contact information below).

d. Blackboard tends to work best with Mozilla Firefox. Download and use it for the best compatibility: <https://www.mozilla.org/en-US/>

e. Discussion Board tip: Type responses in Microsoft Word first, and then paste them into the discussion board when ready to submit.

## **5. Netiquette Statement on Appropriate Online Behavior**

Appropriate Conduct in Discussions is especially important so that all students can have a chance to participate meaningfully. In a theology class with potentially contentious topics, it is essential to treat each other with love and kindness. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity will be expected at all times in the online environment.

## **Technical Assistance**

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.

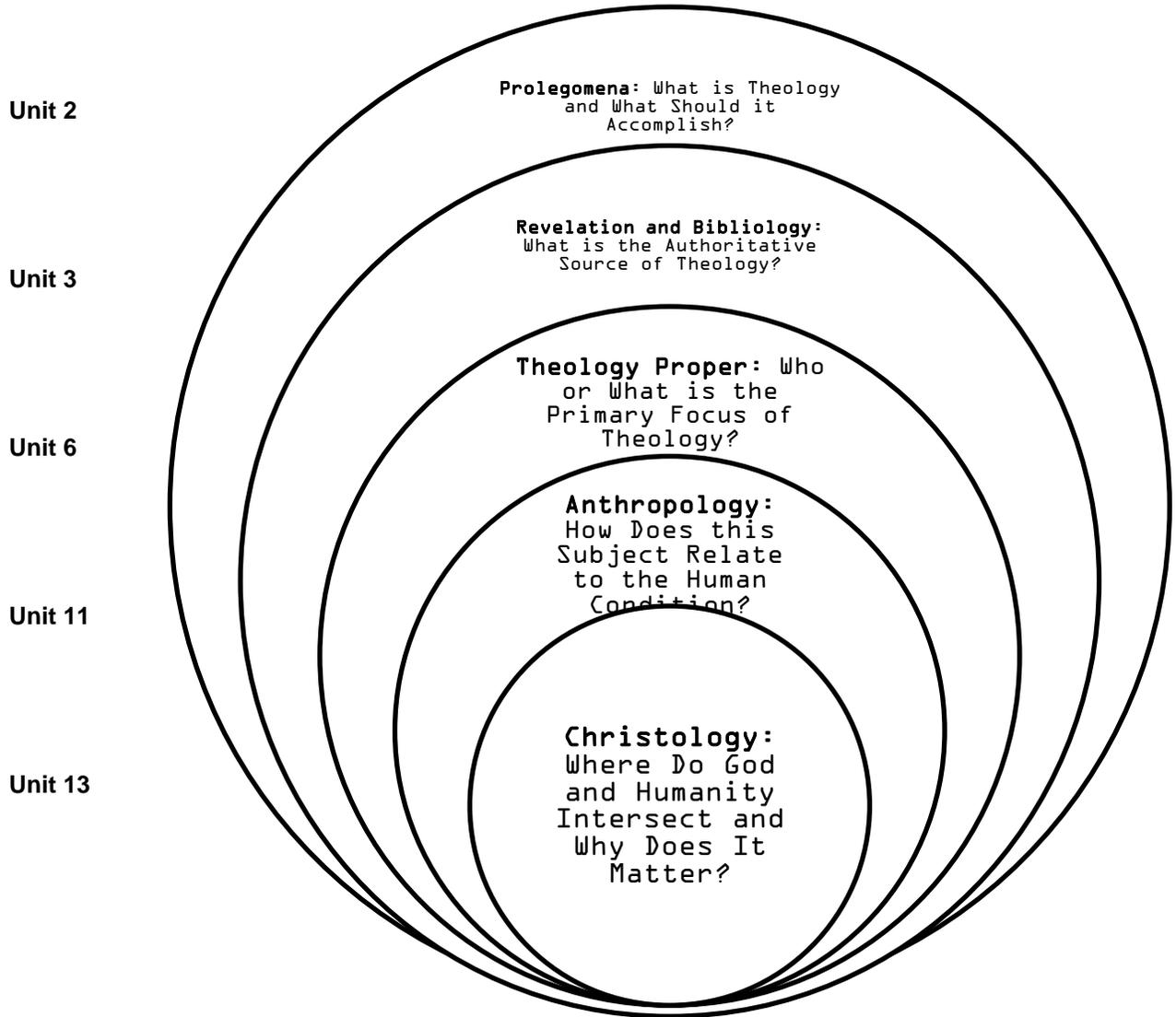
## **Writing Helps**

### **1. “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. Please contact them to secure help with writing: <http://nobts.edu/writing/>

### **2. Grammarly Download**

Grammarly is a free grammar, form, and spell checker. It works better than the standard spell in Microsoft Word. It is a free download. Students should take advantage of it to improve their writing! <https://www.grammarly.com/office-addin/windows>



<b>THEO5300 NOBTS Internet Edition Lectures, Readings, and Assignments Schedule</b>			
<b>Unit</b>	<b>Class Topic</b>	<b>Assignments</b>	<b>Readings/Quiz Materials</b>
1 1/21-1/26	Introduction	Introduce yourself Watch Grudem videos	Read Syllabus
2 1/28-2/2	Prolegomena and Theological Method	Prolegomena Quiz	Erickson, chs. 1, 3-5 Grudem, ch. 1
3 2/4-2/9	General Revelation and Natural Theology	Discussion Board General Revelation Quiz	Erickson, ch. 6 Allison, ch. 9
4 2/11-2/16	Special Revelation and Bibliology, pt. 1	Scripture, Pt. 1 Quiz	Erickson, chs. 7-8, 10 Grudem, chs. 2, 4 Allison, chs. 3-4
5 2/18-2/23	Special Revelation and Bibliology, pt. 2	Discussion Board Scripture, Pt. 2 Quiz <b>Research Paper Topic/Thesis Due (2/23)</b>	Erickson, ch. 9 Grudem, chs. 5-8 Allison, ch. 5, 7, 8
6 2/25-3/2	God's Attributes, pt. 1	God, Pt. 1 Quiz <b>Book Review Due (3/2)</b>	Erickson, chs. 11-13 Grudem, ch. 11 Allison, ch. 10
7 3/4-3/9	God's Attributes, pt. 2	Discussion Board God, Pt. 2 Quiz	Erickson, ch. 12 Grudem, chs. 12-13
8 3/11-3/16	The Trinity	Trinity Quiz <b>Paper Topics Due (3/16)</b>	Erickson, ch. 14 Grudem, ch. 14 Allison, ch. 11
3/18	<b>Spring Break</b>		
9 3/25-3/30	Creation	Discussion Board Creation Quiz	Erickson, ch. 16 Grudem, ch. 15 Allison, ch. 12
10 4/1-4/6	Providence	Providence Quiz <b><i>In Defense of Doctrine</i> Project Due (4/6)</b>	Erickson, chs. 17-18 Grudem, ch. 16 Allison, ch. 13
11 4/8-4/13	Theological Anthropology	Discussion Board Anthropology Quiz	Erickson, chs. 21-23 Grudem, chs. 21-23 Allison, ch. 15
12 4/15-4/10	Hamartiology	Hamartiology Quiz	Erickson, chs. 25-29 Grudem, ch. 24 Allison, ch. 16
13 4/22-4/27	Christology, pt. 1	Christology, Pt. 1 Quiz Disc. Board; Watch Videos	Erickson, chs. 30, 32 Grudem, ch. 26A
14 4/29-5/4	Christology, pt. 2	<b>Research Paper Due (5/4)</b> <b>Reading Report Due (5/4)</b>	Erickson, chs. 31, 33 Grudem, ch. 26B-C Allison, ch. 17

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