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.

**Purpose of the Course**
The purpose of this course is to equip students to think critically and to apply critical thought to the decision-making process.

**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. The doctrinal statements used in our evaluations are our Articles of Religious Belief and the Baptist Faith and Message Statement.

*Spiritual Vitality* – We are a worshiping community, with both personal spirituality and gathering together as a Seminary for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in His Word.

*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.

*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.

*Servant Leadership* – We follow the model of Jesus and exert leadership and influence through the nurture and encouragement of those around us.

Annually, the President will designate a core value that will become the focus of pedagogy for the year. For 2013-2014 academic year that Core Value is *Doctrinal Integrity*.

**Curriculum Competencies Addressed**
This course will address the following curriculum competencies:
1. **Personal Skills:** Develop and consistently implement a Christian work ethic; see the need for and be able to stay refreshed spiritually.

2. **People Skills:** Build relationships with teenagers and help teenagers build relationships with their peers, their families, and their leaders; provide short-term counseling for teenagers and adults and understand the processes of helping individuals and groups in crisis, including referral; help youth leaders and teenagers develop coping skills.

3. **Leadership:** Understand and interpret the youth culture; design and implement need based, ongoing, educational program, which through adult volunteers addresses the basic functions of the church, which includes Bible study discipleship, ministry, worship, evangelism and fellowship; discern both perceived and felt needs among youth in their church region in order to direct relevant ministry.

4. **Administration:** Develop potential leadership in youth and adults.

5. **Biblical, Theological, Pastoral:** Study and interpret the Scripture using various study tools; communicate scriptural truth in large/small groups; appreciate the urgency and necessity of pastoral care in the church, especially in the youth ministry; and embrace and articulate right doctrine as part of mission and strategy.

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**Course Description**

This course is designed to help church leaders understand that their relationship with Christ must permeate every part of their life as a disciple, including priorities, decisions, and lifestyle. With studies on God's truth, Satan's techniques, God's provisions, choices, and the consequences, it focuses on teaching students how to determine right from wrong in their everyday lives, specifically applying the decision-making process to moral questions about lying, cheating, getting even, and premarital sex.

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**Learning Objectives**

The student involved in this course should be able to accomplish the following:

**Cognitive**
- Students will identify principles of critical thought including current theories.
- Students will understand the decision-making process.
- Students will identify cultural tendencies (postmodernism) that preclude critical thought.

**Affective**
- Students will appreciate the difference between critical thought and typical herd mentality
- Students will grasp the urgency of equipping youth for critical thought.

**Psychomotor**
- Students will be able to lead youth to a discussion of critical thought.
- Students will be able to articulate practical application of critical thinking principles in decision making.

**Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:**

1. Evaluate one’s relationship with Christ, by examining life’s priorities.
2. Describe the basic disciplines of the Christian life and list ways they are related to decision-making.
3. Determine right from wrong in their everyday lives and teach students to do the same.
4. Understand the decision making process.
5. Apply the decision making process to moral questions about lying, cheating, getting even, and pre-marital sex.
6. Challenge teens to develop a life-long habit of making right moral choices by comparing each decision to the very nature of God.
7. Apply what they learn to real-life situations.

**Required Readings**

The following texts and resources are required reading for class discussions and are to be read in their entirety unless otherwise specified.

**Required Texts: (provided)**

*Complete: A Life of Purity*

*Critical Decisions: Surviving in Today’s World, Student*

*Critical Decisions: Surviving in Today’s World, Leader*

*Decision Making and the Will of God, Garry Friesen*

*Is God Calling Me? Jeff Iorg*

*Complete: A Life of Purity, Pam Gibbs and Mike Wakefield*

*Setting You Free to Make Right Choices, Jr. High/Sr. High Edition Student,* Josh McDowell


*They Call Him Jesus, Student*

*They Call Him Jesus, Leader*

*Vital Character: Encouragement*

*Vital Skills How to Have a Balanced Life*

*Vital Truths: God’s Will*

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**Course Teaching Methodology**

**Introduction**

- Syllabus, registration, get acquainted
- **BASIC DISCIPLINES OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE: BIBLE STUDY, SCRIPTURE MEMORIZATION, SHARING FAITH**
- Everyday in America…Alarming Findings Right From Wrong Survey

**Decision Making and the Will of God**

- In Search of the Missing Dot, Decision Making and The Will of God, *Chapters 5-8*
- *Living Pure Inside Out, and When True Love Doesn’t Wait*
- **Video Excerpts: Finding Clear Guidance**
- Report on pre-assignment – *Make Up Your Mind*
• Critical Decisions Session 1
• Competent to Choose and The Sovereignty of God, Decision Making and
• The Will of God (Chapters 11-13)
• Determining Life’s Priorities, How I spend my Time
• Bioethical Issues
• Wisdom Guidance and Principles of Decision Making, Decision Making and The Will of God (Chapters 14-16 and Conclusion)

Research and Report

• Group 1: Vital Skills: How to Have a Balanced Life
• Group 3: God’s Call
• Case Study: Controversy over Capital Punishment
• Discuss an Implementation Plan
• Group 4: Vital Truths: God’s Will
• Case Studies: To what extent is the use of narcotics a moral issue? But how do you explain it to these guys?

Teaching Method. Methodology is experiential which includes: lectures, video tapes, small and large group discussions, power point presentations, demonstrations and pre and post assignments, several assignments in required texts.

Assignments and Evaluation Criteria

Pre-Assignments: Prior to the first class of the weekend, each student will have:
1. Read and written a half-page summary of the following books:
2. Vital Character: Encouragement and Complete: A Life of Purity
4. Review They Call Him Jesus, Student and Leader with two youth and two leaders. Compile input from youth and adults and write a two page summary/evaluation.
5. Read and written a three-page evaluation of: Is God Calling Me? and Critical Decisions:
6. Surviving in Today’s World, Student (a total of three pages for both resources) include their relevancy to your calling and use in your ministry

A pre-class packet will be provided with resources.

During the Course
1. Attend each session of the Understanding Discipleship and Decision Making weekend.
2. Complete each of the assignments made during the weekend.

Post Assignments
1. Read Decision Making and The Will of God, Vital Skills How to Have a Balanced Life and Vital Truths: God’s Will. Using lecture notes and the pre-assignment texts, submit a ten-page paper evaluating the content of each resource: include readability, usability.
personal reflection, and an implementation plan describing the potential use of each resource with youth and youth leaders.

2. Electronic Submissions are not acceptable. Hard copy must be submitted on or before the due date. If you wish your reports to be returned, a stamped, self-addressed envelope must accompany your post assignments. Otherwise, your reports will be destroyed.

**Course Policies**

**Course Due Dates:**
All course requirements must be completed and written work submitted to Dr. Jackson’s office, New Orleans Seminary no later than four weeks after the completion of the course. A letter grade will be issued.

_A $60.00 materials fee will be required in addition to the matriculation fee._
_All texts and other materials are included in this fee._

**Course Evaluation:**
1. Completion of the weekend assignments including pre assignments 30%
2. Critique and Implementation: _Decision Making and the Will of God_ 35%
3. Class Participation 35%

**Netiquette:**
Appropriate Online Behavior. Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior when working online on Discussion Boards or whenever interaction occurs through web, digital, or other electronic medium. 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 is expected at all times in the online environment.

**Academic Honesty Policy**
All graduate and undergraduate NOBTS students, whether on-campus, internet, or extension center students, are expected to adhere to the highest Christian standard of honesty and integrity when completing academic assignments for all courses in every delivery system format. The Bible provides our standard for academic integrity and honesty. This standard applies whether a student is taking tests, quizzes, exams, writing papers, completing Discussion Boards, or any other course requirement.

**Course Schedule**
The following schedule is for the weekend format. It can be adjusted for a five-day; model.

**Thursday**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5:30</td>
<td>6:00 (30) Registration/Get Acquainted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:00</td>
<td>6:45 (45) Leader Introductions/Course Overview/Course Requirements</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Participant Introductions – <em>Your Religious Autobiography</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:45</td>
<td>7:45 (60) <em>The Youth Ministry Strategy and The Biblical Basis of Discipleship</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7:45 - 8:00  (15) Break
8:00  9:15  (75)  *Decision Making and the Will of God*, Introduction and Chapters 1-4
9:15  9:30  (15)  Group Report Planning. Use the following assignments:

*For Friday:*

Divide class into four discussion groups. Assign a leader. Each group reviews and leads class in discussing assigned resources:

*For Saturday:*


**Group 1:** Vital Skills: How to Have a Balanced Life

Group 1: Plans on Thursday/Friday and Reports on Friday.

**Group 2:** Living Pure Inside Out, and When True Love Doesn’t Wait

Group 2: Plans on Thursday and Reports on Friday.

**Group 3:** God’s Call, Group 3: Plans on Friday and Reports on Saturday.

**Group 4:** Vital Truths: God’s Will, Group 4: Plans on Friday and Reports on Friday.

9:30 Adjourn

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**Friday**

8:00 - 9:00  (60)  **Quiet Time and Bible Study:** Basic Disciplines of the Christian Life: Bible Study Scripture Memorization, Sharing Faith As We Begin the Day…Think on These Things: Everyday in America…Alarming Findings Right From Wrong Survey

9:00 - 10:00  (60)  **In Search of the Missing Dot, Decision Making and The Will of God, Chapters 5-8**

10:00  10:15  (15) Break

10:15 --10:45  (30)  **Group 2:** Living Pure Inside Out, and When True Love Doesn’t Wait

10:45 - 12:00  (75)  **Video Excerpts:** Finding Clear Guidance – Charles Stanley with Listening Guide Report on pre-assignment – Make Up Your Mind

12:00 -1:30  (60)  Lunch

1:30 -1:50  (20) Planning Session for Critical Decisions - Demonstration

1:50 -2:10  (20) Planning Session by Groups

2:10 - 2:25  (15) Break

2:25 - 3:30  (65) Competent to Choose and The Sovereignty of God, Decision Making and The Will of God (11-13)

3:30 - 4:30  (60)  **Case Studies:** To what extent is the use of narcotics a moral issue? But how do you explain it?
4:30 – 5:00  (30)  **Group 1:** Vital Skills: How to Have a Balanced Life

5:00  Adjourn for Dinner

7:00 – 8:30  (90)  Demonstration and Debriefing: Critical Decisions Session 1

8:30 – 9:00  (30)  **Group 4:** Vital Truths: God’s Will

9:00  Adjourn

***Saturday***

8:00 - 9:00  (60)  *Quiet Time and Bible Study:* Determining Life’s Priorities, How I spend my Time  
Basic Disciplines of the Christian Life; Prayer, (The Five Fingers of Prayer) Churchmanship, and 
Encouragement.  
*As We Begin the Day... Think on These Things:* Bioethical Issues

9:00 - 9:15  (15)  Break

9:15 - 10:15  (60)  Wisdom Guidance and Principles of Decision Making, Decision Making and The Will of God (Chapters  
14-16 and Conclusion)

10:15- 10:45  (30)  **Group 3:** God’s Call

10:45 - 11:15  (30)  *Case Study:* Controversy over Capital Punishment

11:15 - 11:45  (30)  Discuss an Implementation Plan

11:45 - 12:15  (30)  Course Evaluation

12:30  Adjourn

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**Selected Bibliography**


Nashville: LifeWay Press


Payne, David. *True Love Waits Takes a Look at Courting, Dating, and Hanging Out.* Nashville:  
LifeWay Press.


Yeary, Dan. *Make Up Your Mind*, Nashville: LifeWay Press,

*See* [www.youthministryinstitute.org](http://www.youthministryinstitute.org) *for a comprehensive Bibliography of Youth Ministry Resources.*