

Systematic Theology I

THEO5300 • M 1:00 – 2:50 p.m.

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New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary

Fall 2015

The Mission of the Seminary

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.

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.

Core Value Focus

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary has five core values: Doctrinal Integrity, Spiritual Vitality, Mission Focus, Characteristic Excellence, and Servant Leadership. These values shape both the context and manner in which all curricula are taught, with “doctrinal integrity” and “mission focus” especially highlighted in this course. The core value focus for the 2015-16 academic year is **mission focus**.

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

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.

Primary Texts

Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. 3d ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013.

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

Recommended Texts

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. Attendance and Participation (10%)

Students are expected to participate in classroom discussion and to read all required materials prior to class attendance. *Students will be required to hand in a reading report at the end of the semester.*

2. Theological Reflections (40%)

Students are required to write four (4) theological reflections (10% each) across the semester based on assigned readings from Erickson and other books and commentaries. Each of these papers should be 3-4 pages in length (double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt.) and should demonstrate (1) *reading and comprehension of the appropriate passages and sources*, (2) critical reflection on the ideas and content, (3) appropriate Scriptural support of the student's view, and (4) the student's ability to apply the theological content to vocational ministry.

The schedule below has the reading assignments and questions asked for each theological reflection. One of these theological reflections (TR #2) is an **embedded assignment that will be completed by all students for all sections of this course. The rubric for grading this assignment is attached to this syllabus. Please complete the assignment according to this rubric.**

3. Discussion Board Interactions (20%)

Students are required to participate in four (4) online discussion boards centered on the theological reflections. Each student will respond to three (3) other students in each of the four (4) discussion boards for a total of twelve (12) responses. These discussion board responses need to engage the student's theological reflection assignment by demonstrating comprehension, agreeing or disagreeing with the position with supporting argumentation from Scripture and outside sources, and critiquing the overall theological reflection assignment. Each of the twelve (12) responses must be between 100 and 200 words and include proper citation of sources.

3. Mid-Term Exam (15%)

Every student will complete a mid-term exam online in the middle of the semester that covers assigned readings and class lecture notes from the beginning of the semester through the day of the exam.

4. Final Exam (15%)

Every student will complete a final exam at the end of the semester that covers all assigned readings and class lecture notes since the mid-term exam.

Course Evaluation

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. 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.

• Attendance and Course Participation	10%
• Theological Reflections (x4)	40%
• Discussion Board Responses	20%
• Mid-Term Exam	15%
• Final Exam	15%
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Total	100%

Blackboard

An important instrument in the implementation of this course is the Blackboard Learning System. *All assignments will be submitted using Blackboard SafeAssign technology.* Tests will also be 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.

Class Policies

1. Attendance and Class Participation

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. Rude or disruptive behavior is not permitted.

2. Late Work

Because life and ministry happens, late work will be accepted—but not without penalty. For every day an assignment is late, five points will be taken off. *No assignment over one week late will be accepted and no assignments will be accepted after the last day of the course.*

3. Plagiarism

The instructor calls attention to the policy on plagiarism found in the NOBTS Graduate Catalog and Student Handbook.

Week 1

Prolegomena: What is Theology and
What Should it Accomplish?

Week 3

Revelation and Bibliology: What is
the Authoritative Source of Theology?

Week 5

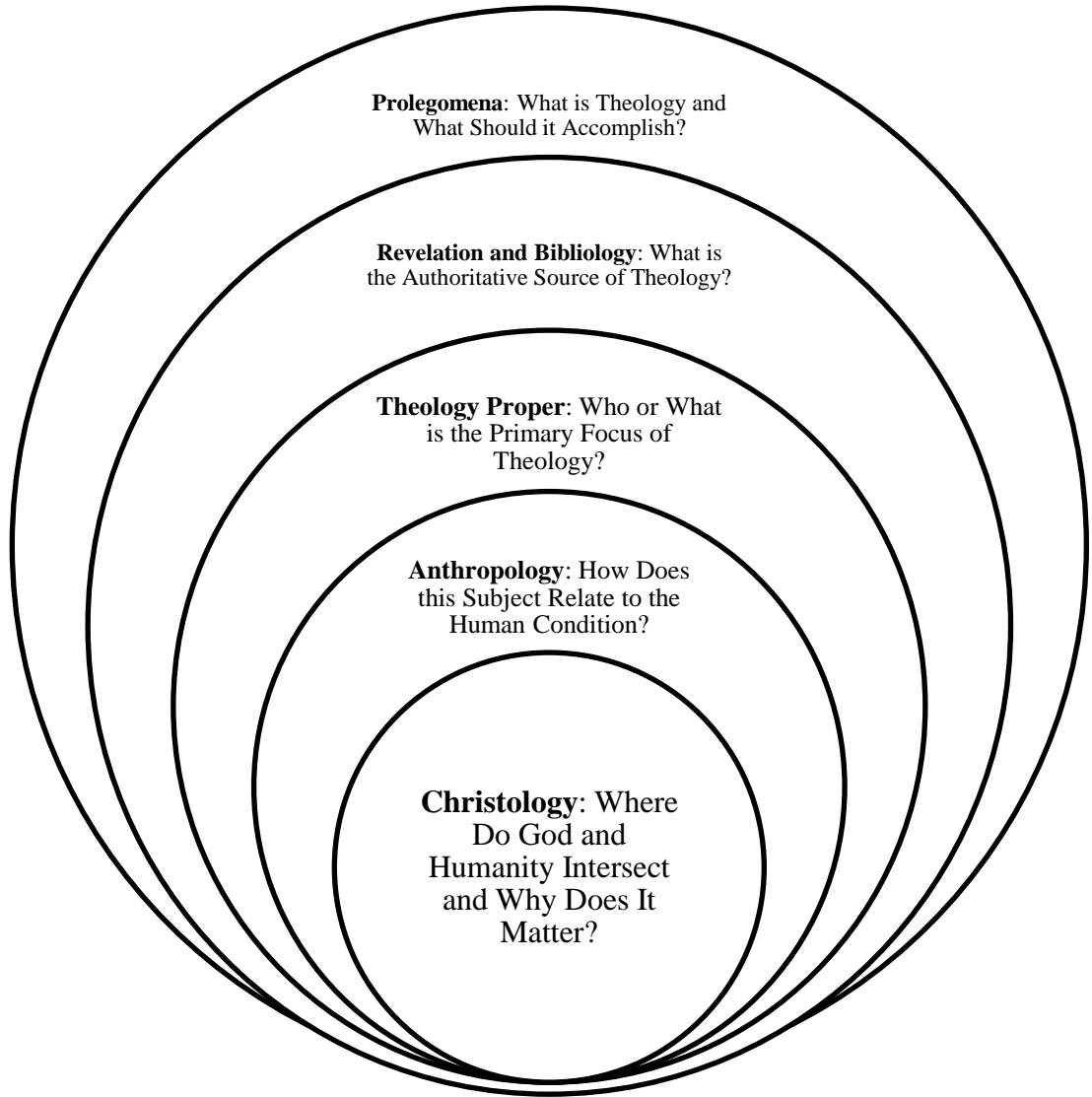
Theology Proper: Who or What
is the Primary Focus of
Theology?

Week 10

Anthropology: How Does
this Subject Relate to the
Human Condition?

Week 12

Christology: Where
Do God and
Humanity Intersect
and Why Does It
Matter?



THEO5300 Fall 2015 // M 1:00 – 2:50 pm Lectures, Readings, and Assignments Schedule		
Date	Class Topic / Assignments	Readings
8/31	<p>Introduction Prolegomena and Theological Method</p> <p>Theological Reflection #1 Using the definition of systematic theology given by B.A. Demarest in Elwell's <i>Evangelical Dictionary of Theology</i>, explain how it relates to three other disciplines of theology: biblical theology, historical theology, and philosophical theology. Which of the four approaches is the most important in your current or future ministry context?</p> <p>Due 9/14 at 11:59 p.m.</p>	Erickson, 3–120
9/14	<p>The Nature of Revelation General and Natural Theology Special Revelation and Bibliology</p> <p>Discussion Board 1 Responses Due 9/21 at 11:59 p.m.</p>	Erickson, 121–209
9/28	<p>Theology Proper (Attributes of God) Theology Proper (Trinity)</p> <p>Theological Reflection #2</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 	Erickson, 233–316

THEO5300 Fall 2015 // M 1:00 – 2:50 pm Lectures, Readings, and Assignments Schedule		
Date	Class Topic / Assignments	Readings
	<p>4. This assignment should be 800-1200 words in length.</p> <p>This assignment is an embedded assignment that will be completed by all students for all sections of this course. The rubric for grading this assignment is attached to this syllabus. Please complete the assignment according to this rubric.</p> <p>(The rubric is located on page 12 of this syllabus.)</p> <p>Due 10/12 at 11:59 p.m.</p>	
10/12	<p>Creation Providence</p> <p>Discussion Board 2 Replies Due 10/19 at 11:59 p.m.</p> <p>Mid-term Exam Due 10/19 at 11:59 p.m.</p>	Erickson, 317–422
10/26	<p>Anthropology</p> <p>Theological Reflection #3 In light of the recent Supreme Court ruling on gay marriage, explain God’s design for marriage from a biblical and theological perspective. Use Scriptural support for your view of the image of God (Genesis 1–2), the impact of sin on the world in relation to this topic (Genesis 3; Romans 1, 3), and how we as Christians should engage our culture on the topic of homosexuality. Due 11/9 at 11:59 p.m.</p>	Erickson, 423–493
11/09	<p>Hamartiology</p> <p>Discussion Board 3 Replies Due 11/16 at 11:59 p.m.</p>	Erickson, 514–547

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Class Topic / Assignments</u>	<u>Readings</u>
11/30	<p>Christology</p> <p>Theological Reflection #4</p> <p>Select five passages that you believe teach some aspect of the classical doctrine of the Trinity. What does each passage contribute to our understanding of this doctrine? What are the essential theological elements of the doctrine of the Trinity? Explain why these elements are crucial for an orthodox understanding.</p> <p>How would you explain the doctrine of the Trinity to an elementary school-aged child? Be careful not to slip in the errors identified in class.</p> <p>Due 12/14 at 11:59 p.m.</p>	<p>Erickson, 548–694</p>
12/14	<p>Christology</p> <p>Discussion Board 4 Replies Due 12/18 at 11:59 p.m.</p> <p>Final Exam Due 12/18 at 11:59 p.m.</p>	<p>Erickson, 643–694</p>

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY I EMBEDDED ASSIGNMENT AND RUBRIC

Embedded Assignment

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.

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.					

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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