



LEAVELL COLLEGE

NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THCM4321 -30: Contemporary Theological Issues

Spring 2019, Term 193

Mondays (6 pm -8 pm)

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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

Each academic year, a core value is emphasized. This academic year, the core value is *Doctrinal Integrity*. —“Knowing that the Bible is the Word of God, we believe it, teach it, proclaim it, and submit to it. Our confessional commitments are outlined in the Articles of Religious Belief and the Baptist Faith and Message 2000.”

Course Description

The purpose of this course is to expose students to recent trends in theological studies. The course will focus upon new theological issues as well as the interaction between theology and culture. Special emphasis will be given to theology’s relationship to popular culture. *Prerequisite: Christian Doctrine*

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 GECs #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:

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

This course addresses BACM PSLO #3.

Course Student Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of the semester, the student will be able to demonstrate:

1. Identify and define contemporary theological doctrines
2. Differentiate biblical doctrine and traditional orthodoxy from deviant concepts
3. Analyze popular culture for any theological themes
4. Analyze theology for any influence culture has exerted upon it.

Course Texts

Turnau, Ted. *Popologetics: Popular Culture in Christian Perspective*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R Publishing, 2012. ISBN 978-1-59638-389-0

Course Requirements and Grading

1. School policies concerning absences and tardiness will be strictly enforced. Any student missing more than one-fourth of the classroom hours (9 hours) will automatically receive a grade of "F" for the course. Every three occasions of arriving late for class or leaving early from class will be counted as one absence. Roll will be taken at the beginning of each period. It is the responsibility of the student to contact the professor if he/she is tardy and the roll has already been taken.
2. Each student is required to complete a current events portfolio. Students must choose three of the following topics: World Religions, Popular Culture's View of God, Racial Reconciliation, LGBTQ, Immigration, or the Impact of Social Media on Theology. You should find five articles, podcasts, blog posts, news reports, or other items to include in the portfolio for each topic for a total of 15 items. If you have questions about the inclusion of a resource, please contact the professor as early as possible. Included with each source should be a one-paragraph summary of the item including why the item is pertinent to the topic. The project should be submitted in a three-ring binder with tabs separating the different topics as well as each item within the topics. If you have questions about the assignment, please do not wait until the end of the semester to ask them. Class time will be devoted to discussing each student's portfolio; each student will share one event from the portfolio, paying attention to what learned about that current event as related to theology. The portfolio is due on **April 1, 2019**. *This assignment relates to GEC #1; BACM PSLO #3; CSLOs #1, #2, #3 and #4.*
3. Each student will attend one popular culture event and write a 3-4 page analysis of that event. Acceptable events include a movie presentation (at a movie theater), a play, a musical concert, a museum tour, or a visit to an art gallery. The analysis will note the various theological themes reflected in the event, answering the five questions to ask of pop culture (see chapters 10-11 of the assigned text) Class time will be devoted to discussing each student's event and analysis of the event. This analysis will be graded for its content and form, which is to follow the guidelines outlined in the most recent edition of Turabian. The grade will be counted off five points for every day the paper is late. This assignment will be due on **April 29, 2019**. *This assignment relates to GECs #1 and #3; BACM PSLOs #3; and CSLOs #1, #2, #3 and #4.*
4. Each student is expected to read all of the assigned material. Therefore, notes of the reading should be recorded for all the assigned readings. **On the days designated on the course schedule, reading notes over each assigned section will be turned in at the beginning of class.** These notes may be in outline form, summarizations, or direct quotations taken from the reading with a comment as to why the quotations impacted you. Reading notes will not be accepted late. The notes will be graded and returned to the student. *This assignment relates to GEC #1; BACM PSLO #2; and CSLOs #1 and #2.*
5. Two examinations will be given through the course of the semester. These tests will cover both materials covered in class and in the readings. These tests will consist of objective sections (matching, true/false, fill-in-the-blank, and multiple-answer questions) and subjective sections

(identification and essay questions). Each exam will cover only the material from that particular section, including the final exam. Any student who misses the mid-term exam is expected to schedule a make-up exam within one week of the missed exam. Any exam not made up within two weeks of the original exam date will be given a grade of zero. *This assignment relates to GEC #1; BACM PSLO #3; and CSLOs #1, #2, #3 and #4.*

The Final Grade for the course will consist of the following:

Current Events Portfolio	25%
Pop Culture Event Analysis	25%
Reading Notes	20%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	15%

The coursework will be assessed as follows:

- 100 extraordinary work; extremely thorough, demonstrating a masterful grasp of the concepts addressed.
- 95 excellent work; thorough and neat, demonstrating a good grasp of the concepts addressed; very strong effort, well above average
- 90 good work; fairly thorough, showing good effort, though more work is needed in areas; above average; may be somewhat messy
- 85 average work; basic assignment completed but seemed rushed with only basic effort and thought given; may be messy
- 80 below average work; assignment only partially completed; little effort; may be messy; OR a very good assignment turned in late
- 75 poor work; bare minimum effort; may be messy
- 60 inadequate; OR an average assignment turned in late
- 0 assignment not turned in

Additional Course Information

1. Computer/Phone usage policy: Using computers, smart phones, tablets, or other electronic devices is a privilege rather than a right, and student abusing the privilege will be asked to turn off such devices. Students should place electronic devices on silent mode during class time. Students needing to make or receive texts or calls should arrange to do so outside of class time. At no time during class hours should students use computers or tablets for anything other than class notes or assignments. The professor reserves the right to ask students to leave electronic devices at home. **Unless given permission, students are not to quote the instructor, guest speakers, or students on social media sites.**

2. Plagiarism Policy: A high standard of personal integrity is expected of all Leavell College students. Copying another person's work, submitting downloaded material without proper references, submitting material without properly citing the source, submitting the same material for credit in more than one course, 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 Leavell College for further action.

Course Outline

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Readings (to be read prior to class, with notes due at the beginning of the class period)</u>
January 28	<i>Syllabus, Introduction to the Course</i>	
February 4	<i>Popular Culture and Worldview</i>	<i>Chapter 1</i>
	<i>The Influence of Popular Culture on Worldview</i>	<i>Chapter 2</i>
February 11	<i>What is a Worldview Apologetic?</i>	<i>Chapter 3</i>
February 18	<i>Creation, Fall, Redemption and Popular Culture</i>	<i>Chapter 4</i>
February 25	<i>“What, Me Worry?” Approach</i>	<i>Chapter 5</i>
	<i>“Ew-Yuck” Response</i>	<i>Chapter 6</i>
March 4	<i>“We’re Above All That” Approach</i>	<i>Chapter 7</i>
March 11	<i>Imagophobia</i>	<i>Chapter 8</i>
March 18	<i>Postmodernism</i>	<i>Chapter 9</i>
	<i>Review for Midterm Exam</i>	
March 25	MIDTERM EXAM	
April 1	Current Events Portfolio Due	<i>Due at the beginning of class</i>
	Class Discussion of Current Events Portfolios	
April 8	<i>Responding to Popular Culture: Five Questions to Ask of Popular Culture</i>	<i>Chapter 10</i>
April 15	<i>A Christian Reading of Popular Culture: Part 1</i>	<i>Chapter 11, pp. 247-280</i>
April 22	<i>A Christian Reading of Popular Culture: Part 2</i>	<i>Chapter 11, pp. 281-312</i>
April 29	Pop Culture Event Analysis due	<i>Due at the beginning of class</i>
	Class discussion of Pop Culture Event Analyses	
May 6	<i>Objections and Conclusions</i>	<i>Chapter 12</i>
	<i>Review for Final Exam</i>	
May 13	FINAL EXAM	

Please note the schedule above is subject to change based on current events that might provide pertinent commentary or discussion for the course.

Selected Bibliography

Open-Theism

Boyd, Gregory. *The God of the Possible: A Biblical Introduction to the Open View of God*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000.

Geisler, Norman L. *Creating God in the Image of Man: The New "Open" View of God*. Minneapolis: Bethany House, 1997.

Pinnock, Clark H. *Most Moved Mover: A Theology of the Divine Openness, Scripture, Tradition, Reason, Experience*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001.

Pinnock, Clark H. *The Openness of God: A Biblical Challenge to the Traditional Understanding of God*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1994.

Sanders, John. *The God Who Risks: A Theology of Providence*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1998.

Ware, Bruce. *God's Lesser Glory: The Diminished God of Open Theism*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2001.

Modern Views of Hell and Salvation

Crockett, William, ed. *Four Views on Hell*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1992.

Fudge, Edward. *The Fire that Consumes: The Biblical Case for Conditional Immortality*. Revised Edition. Carlisle, United Kingdom: Paternoster Press, 1994.

Fudge, Edward, and Robert Peterson. *Two Views of Hell: A Biblical and Theological Dialogue*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2000.

Okholm, Dennis, and Timothy Phillips, eds. *Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996.

Post-Modernism

Adam, A.K.M. *Faithful Interpretation: Reading the Bible in a Postmodern World*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006.

Adam, A.K.M. *Handbook of Postmodern Biblical Interpretation*. Atlanta: Chalice Press, 2000.

Erikson, Millard. *Truth or Consequences: The Promise & Perils of Postmodernism*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003.

Greer, Robert. *Mapping Postmodernism: A Survey of Christian Options*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003.

Grenz, Stanley J. *A Primer on Post-Modernism*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.

Theology and Culture

Begbie, Jeremy. *Beholding the Glory: Incarnation Through the Arts*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2000.

Dyrness, William A. *Visual Faith: Art, Theology, and Worship in Dialogue*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001.

Harries, Richard. *Art and the Beauty of God*. London: Mowbray, 1993.

Johnston, Robert. *Reel Spirituality: Theology and Film in Dialogue*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000.

Romanowski, William D. *Eyes Wide Open: Looking for God in Popular Culture*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2001.

Whitehead, John. *Grasping for the Wind*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.

General Works

Carter, Craig A. *Rethinking and Christ and Culture*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2006.

Kilner, John F. *Dignity and Destiny: Humanity in the Image of God*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015.

Niebhur, H. Richard. *Christ and Culture*. New York: HarperOne, 1951.

Pearcey, Nancy. *Saving Leonardo*. Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2010.

Turner, Steve. *Popcultured: Thinking Christianly About Style, Media, and Entertainment*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2013.

Welker, Michael. *The Depth of the Human Person*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014.

Yarnell III, Malcom B. *God the Trinity: Biblical Portraits*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016.