



**HIST 6327 / THEO 6327 / APOL 6327
HERESY & ORTHODOXY IN THE EARLY CHURCH
TUESDAY/THURSDAY 9:30-10:50
FALL 2023 NOLA2U FLEX**

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We hope that you are as excited about the study of Heresy & Orthodoxy in the Early Church as we are! One of the reasons we love teaching is the opportunity to relate to students. Please feel free to contact us by email or phone or to come by our offices. We want to help you in any way we can. **Call us if you have a problem or a question. Do not wait until it is too late for us to help!** This syllabus is subject to minor, necessary or beneficial changes during the semester.

I. Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

II. Course Description

This course covers early heresies, the initial responses of the church, later Christological heresies, and the ecumenical councils. Topics include Gnosticism and the Gnostic Gospels, Marcion, Monarchianism, Montanism, canonization, creeds, apostolic succession, Arianism, and the Council of Nicaea. Attention also is given to contemporary critics of traditional orthodoxy and to modern expressions of early heresies with the intention of developing an effective apologetic response.

III. Objectives:

By the completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of significant individuals, movements, and doctrines involved in heresy and orthodoxy in the early church.
- Demonstrate an ability to apply principles learned from the study of the heresy and orthodoxy in the early church to church and ministry today.
- Demonstrate an ability to communicate understanding and application of principles learned from the study of heresy and orthodoxy in the early church.

IV. Required Texts:

These are required textbooks for this class:

Bettensen, Henry and Chris Maunder, eds. *Documents of the Christian Church*. 3^d ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 1999.

Kostenberger, Andreas J. and Michael J. Kruger. *The Heresy of Orthodoxy*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010.

Wilhite, David E. *The Gospel According to Heretics: Discovering Orthodoxy through Early Christological Conflicts*. Grand Rapids, MI: Bake Academic, 2015.

There will be additional required reading from primary sources that are available on the Internet.

V. Requirements:

- A. *1st Book Review*: Every student will write a review of Andreas J. Kostenberger and Michael J. Kruger, *The Heresy of Orthodoxy*. The review should be six to eight double-spaced typewritten pages in length. Bibliographical information should appear at the top of the first page of the review. The review also should contain 1) a brief biographical sketch of the author, 2) a brief summary [two to three pages] of the contents of the book, 3) a statement of the author's purpose and the extent to which the purpose was realized, 4) a statement regarding the book's uniqueness, 5) a description of the author's style, 6) a description of the author's biases, and 7) a concluding evaluation and personal application. **Due September 5.**
- B. *Major Research Paper*: Each student will consult with the professor to select a topic that relates to one or more of the emphases of this course. Twelve to fifteen pages in length, the paper should demonstrate the student's ability to think clearly and critically, engage in responsible research, dialogue objectively with differing viewpoints, reach defensible conclusions, and write in an acceptable style (Turabian; Times New Roman 12 pt. font; double-spaced; standard margins, etc.). A selected bibliography of at least fifteen sources should accompany the paper. **Due October 10.**

The research paper will be evaluated as follows:

1. Grammar and style: Spelling, sentence and paragraph development; punctuation; and conformity to the most recent edition of Turabian. (20 points)
 2. Clarity and Coherence: Balance; thoroughness; organization; logical development; overall sense of the paper. (20 points)
 3. Research: Bibliography; type and variety of sources (primary, secondary, monographs, journal articles, websites, etc.); most bibliographic entries should be accompanied by footnote citations. (20 points)
 4. Historical Awareness and Insight: Factual accuracy; awareness of historical connections (continuity/discontinuity, cause/effect, contrasts/comparisons); sensitivity to historical context; awareness of the historical impact of a person. (20 points)
 5. Analysis and Evaluation: Going beyond the mere reporting of facts to include explanation, interpretation, analysis of material; evaluation of strengths and weakness of a person; demonstration that you have thought about the material that you have researched. Give strong and insightful introduction and conclusion. (20 points)
- C. *2nd Book Review*: Every student will write a review of a recent book written on one of the themes of this course. **Due November 2.**

Books to be reviewed include but are not limited to:

- Khaled Anatolios, *Retrieving Nicaea: The Development and Meaning of Trinitarian Doctrine*
- Michael Bird, *Jesus the Eternal Son*
- Michael Bird, *What Christians Ought to Believe: An Introduction to Christian Doctrine through the Apostle's Creed*
- Darrell L. Bock, *The Missing Gospels: Unearthing the Truth behind Alternative Christianities*
- Darrell L. Bock & Daniel B. Wallace, *Dethroning Jesus*
- Robert Bowman, J. Ed Komoszewski & Darrell L. Bock, *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Christ*
- John Dominic Crossan, *Jesus: A Revolutionary Biography*
- James D. G. Dunn, *A New Perspective on Jesus: What the Quest for the Historical Jesus Missed*
- Bart D. Ehrman, *Lost Christianities: The Battle for Scripture and the Faiths We Never Knew*
- _____. *Misquoting Jesus: The Story Behind Who Changed the Bible and Why.*
- Bart D. Ehrman, Rodolphe Kasser, and Marvin Meyer, eds. *The Gospel of Judas*
- Craig A. Evans, *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels –*
- Timothy George, ed., *Evangelicals and Nicene Faith: Reclaiming the Apostolic Witness*
- Paul Hartog, ed., *Orthodoxy and Heresy in Early Christian Contexts*
- Arland J. Hultgren, *The Rise of Normative Christianity*
- Larry Hurtado, *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God? Historical Questions about Earliest Devotion to Jesus*
- J. Ed Komoszewski, M. James Sawyer, and Daniel B. Wallace, *Reinventing Jesus: How Contemporary Skeptics Miss the Real Jesus and Mislead Popular Culture*
- Alister McGrath, *Heresy: A History of Defending the Truth*
- R. Albert Mohler, *The Apostles Creed: Discovering Authentic Christianity in an Age of Counterfeits*
- Elaine Pagels, *The Gnostic Gospels*
- Todd Miles, *Superheroes Can't Save You: Epic Examples of Historic Heresies.*
- William Tabbernee, *Prophets and Gravestones: An Imaginative History of Montanists and Other Early Christians*
- Ben Witherington III, *What Have They Done with Jesus?*
- N. T. Wright, *The Challenge of Jesus*
- N. T. Wright, *Judas and the Gospel of Jesus: Have We Missed the Truth about Christianity?*

D. *Personal Reflection:* Each student will prepare a personal reflection paper. **Due November 28.**

- a. The personal reflection paper should be 3-5 double-spaced pages.
- b. Personal reflections will be presented during the last seminar meeting
- c. Reflections may be driven by the following questions:
 - i. What determines orthodoxy and heresy, and why does it matter? Why is some variation allowed, thus denominations and some variation not allowed?
 - ii. What distinguishes biblical authority, confessions of faith, systematic theology, dogma, and tradition?
 - iii. What is the nature of doctrine, theological formulation or confessions of faith, in relation to Scripture, historical moments and movements, and culture?

- iv. How do doctrines, theology, or confessions of faith develop so that they preserve fidelity with biblical truth?
- v. How does one apply biblical truth or theology to the apologetic task in your culture?

E. *Assigned Reading & Class Discussion:* Students are expected to read the assigned pages listed for each class period as well as the others' papers. Our class meetings will be conducted seminar-style, and all students will participate in the discussions of the readings and students' papers.

VI. Penalties:

Late Work: A late project assignment will be assessed a **10 percent penalty if it is submitted after the deadline and a 20 percent penalty after five days. No assignment will be accepted after one week past the deadline.**

Plagiarism: New Orleans Baptist Seminary maintains high academic standards and is not tolerant of plagiarism. If you copy another author's work and present it as your own, you will be caught, and the penalty could be failure on that assignment or the course or expulsion from the Seminary.

VII. NOLA2U Flex Section:

If you are taking this course as a NOLA2U Flex student, please note the following attendance policies:

1. You are required to be in class either through viewing the lectures live or viewing the recorded lectures on Canvas. When you view the recorded lecture, you will be considered present for that class. Regardless of if you watch the class live or recorded, you are only allowed to miss the amount of class time specified in the NOBTS attendance policy as stated in this syllabus.
2. You will be asked to certify that you have been present for the live session or have viewed the recorded session. This certification will be done through **[assignment by professor]** after having watched the class live or viewing the recorded session.
3. All video lectures are available for 7 days after the video is posted. If you are unable to view the video within that time frame, you will be considered absent for that class session.
4. Technical issues will not be considered a valid reason for missing a lecture.

VIII. Grading:

1 st Book Review:	25%
Major Research Paper:	30%
2 nd Book Review:	25%
Personal Reflection:	10%
Reading:	<u>10%</u>
	100%

IX. Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to attend and participate in the class sessions. Any student missing more than nine hours may receive an automatic grade of "F" for the course. Three tardies will count as one absence.

X. Emergency Plan:

In case of hurricane or any other emergency, go to the seminary web site for information: www.nobts.edu

The administration will communicate information that relates to the seminary: the nature of the emergency, instructions for responses, evacuation, contingency plans, duration of the emergency, and plans to return to campus and/or resume the schedule.

Also, check Blackboard for instructions related to this class. Because this class is conducted on the Internet as well as in the classroom, there should be minimal disruption unless the emergency affects electrical power and connection to the Internet.

In any emergency, communication is important, and our best means of staying connected is through the seminary's web site and Blackboard.

XI. Technical Assistance:

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu or My.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. Canvas@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Canvas Learning Management System (Faculty/Students/Staff) Canvas.NOBTS.edu.
3. Bluejeanshelpdesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Bluejeans & NOBTS Bluejeans classrooms (On and Off-Campus)
4. TelephoneHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS On-Campus Phone system.
5. ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests in the Flex classrooms and for general technical questions/support requests. If you are not sure who to contact, use this email address!
6. [504.816.8180](tel:504.816.8180) - Call for any technical questions/support requests. (Currently available Mon-Thurs 7:00am-9:00pm & Fri 7:00-7:00pm Central Time)
7. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

Potential Research Paper Topics in Heresy & Orthodoxy in the Early Church

General topics:

Comparison of an Ancient Heresy with a Modern-Day Cult or Movement

Gnosticism & Scientology

Gnosticism & Mormonism

Gnosticism & the New Age Movement

Arianism & Jehovah's Witnesses

Christological Heresies & Progressive or Liberal American Christianity

Montanism & Pentecostalism

Modalism & Oneness Pentecostalism

Specific topics:

Connecting Ebionites to Early Jewish Believers in Jesus

The Lingering Impact of Modalism in Historic Views of the Atonement

Marcion's Exclusion of the Pastoral Epistles

Simon Magus as the Father of Gnosticism

Gnostic Anthropology and Transgenderism

A Comparison of the Gnostic Gospels to the Canonical Gospels

The Development of the Canon to the End of the Second Century

Selected Early Christian Writings that Are Orthodox yet Non-canonical

Preservation of Early Christian Orthodoxy and the Issue of Authority

Apokatastasis: From Origen to Rob Bell

Origen's Influence on the Arian Controversy

To Whom Did Mary Give Birth? The Nestorian Controversy

The Impact of Christian Trinitarian Heresies on the Muslim Understanding of Christianity in the Development of Islam

Heresy, Orthodoxy and Antisemitism

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- Bowman, Robert M. and J. Ed Komoszewski. *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Christ*. With foreword by Darrell L. Bock. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007.
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- Chadwick, Henry. *The Early Church*. New York: Dorset, 1967.
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