



**NEW ORLEANS**  
BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY



**LEAVELL**  
COLLEGE

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**Metaphysics: PHIL6308-01 with FLEX Section**

**Fall 2023**

**Wed: 8-10:50a – Location: TBD**

James K. Dew, Jr., PhD  
President  
Professor of Christian Philosophy

Frost Building  
jdew@nobts.edu

Teaching Assistant:

Alex Oakley

[aoakley@nobts.edu](mailto:aoakley@nobts.edu)

*Note: Please contact Alex Oakley for all Canvas-related questions and myself for all content-related questions. ALWAYS include your name, Student ID, and Course Code (PHIL6308-01) in every email.*

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

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A philosophical examination of the major issues and debates in metaphysics. This course will range from historical to contemporary views on metaphysical issues. Concepts such as being and existence, properties and substances, space and time, causality, the nature of human persons and the human mind/soul, and others will be covered in this course.

**COURSE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES**

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

1. Identify the major issues, debates, and viewpoints relevant to the historical and contemporary discipline of philosophical metaphysics.
2. Explain and provide arguments for and against major views in ontology and philosophical anthropology.
3. Demonstrate robust critical thinking skills and logical argumentation through research and writing.

**COURSE TEXTS**

The following textbooks are required:

1. (WITTCM) Garrett, Brian. *What Is This Thing Called Metaphysics?* Third edition. What is this thing called? London ; New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2017. ISBN 9781138832251
2. (ItO) Effingham, Nikk. *Introduction to Ontology*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2013. ISBN: 978-0745652559

3. (PoM) Feser, Edward. *Philosophy of Mind (A Beginner's Guide)*. Oneworld Publications, 2006. 280 pages.  
ISBN: 978-1851684786
4. (ISotS) Green, Joel B., Stuart L. Palmer, and Kevin Corcoran, eds. *In Search of the Soul: Four Views of the Mind-Body Problem*. Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 2005.  
ISBN: 978-0830827732

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Reading. Along with the lectures, students will read three textbooks and be quizzed on them (see below).
2. Quizzes (25%). Each week students will take two quizzes, one on the reading, one on the lectures for that week. All quizzes are cumulative. At least 4 quizzes will be dropped, but no missed quiz can be made up. Quizzes are due Tuesday nights at 11:55 PM.
3. Exams (25%). There is a mid-term and a final exam. The final is cumulative.
4. Research Paper (25%). Each student will write a 12-15 page (no more, no less) research paper wherein students must formulate and argue logically and cogently (and from substantial research) for a particular thesis relevant to metaphysics or philosophy of mind/anthropology.
5. Critical Book Review (15%). Students will write a book review on *In Search of the Soul* and provide a critical analysis of its contents and arguments AND state which view the student agrees with and provide reasons and arguments for your chosen view. 6 pages in length.
6. Participation (10%). All or nothing—talk and interact or miss all 10 of these percentage points.

### GRADING SCALE

- A: 93 – 100  
B: 85 – 92  
C: 77 – 84  
D: 70 – 76  
F: below 70

### COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week (Class week): Begins on Wed and ends Tue 11:59 PM		Lecture(s)	Reading Assignments	Assignments (Due Tues nights at 11:55 PM)
1	August 16	Lecture 1 - Intro to metaphysics  Lecture 2 - History of Metaphysics	WITTCM: Preface & Introduction	Lecture Quiz 1 Reading Quiz 1

			ItO: Preface + Chapter 2 "Methodology"	
2	August 23	Lecture 3 Properties & Universals	WITTCM: Chapter 5 "Objects & Properties"  ItO: Chapter 3 "Properties"	Lecture Quiz 2 Reading Quiz 2
3	August 30	Lecture 4 - Realism vs. Nominalism... The Case for and Against Universals	WITTCM: Chapter 3 "Existence"  ItO: Chapters 1 "The Basics"	Lecture Quiz 3 Reading Quiz 3
4	September 6	Lecture 5 - Composition, Parts & Wholes	ItO: Chapter 8 "Mereology"	Lecture Quiz 4 Reading Quiz 4
5	September 13	Lecture 6 - Identity and constitution	ItO: Chapter 9 "Material Constitution"	Lecture Quiz 5 Reading Quiz 5
6	September 20	Lecture 7 -Identity, Change & Persistence	WITTCM: Chapter 11 "Puzzles of Material Constitution..."	Lecture Quiz 6 Reading Quiz 6
7	September 27	Lecture 8 - The Metaphysics of Time  Lecture 9 - What things exist in time	WITTCM: Chapters 7 & 8 "Time: the fundamental issue" & "Time: four puzzles"  ItO: Chapter 7 "Time"	Lecture Quiz 7 Reading Quiz 7
	October 4	FALL BREAK – NO CLASS		
8	October 11	Lecture 10 - Possibility, necessity, and possible worlds  Lecture 11 - Causation	WITTCM: Chapters 4 & 6 "Modality" & "Causation"  ItO: Chapter 5: Possible Worlds	Lecture Quiz 8 Reading Quiz 8 MIDTERM DUE 10.17.23
9	October 18	Lecture 12 - Free Will (Pt 1)  Lecture 13 Free Will (Pt 2)	WITTCM: Chapters 9 & 10 "Fatalism" & "Free Will and Determinism"	Lecture Quiz 9 Reading Quiz 9
10	October 25	Lecture 14 - Mind-Body Dualism	WITTCM: Chapter	Lecture Quiz 10 Reading Quiz 10

			2 "What Are We?"  PoM: Preface & Chapter 2	
11	November 1	Lecture 15 - Mind-body dualism problems and solutions	PoM: Chapters 1 & Chapter 3	Lecture Quiz 11 Reading Quiz 11
12	November 8	Lecture 16 – Behaviorism  Lecture 17 Identity Theory & Functionalism	PoM: Chapters 4	Lecture Quiz 12 Reading Quiz 12
13	November 15	Lecture 18 – Consciousness  Lecture 19 - Materialism & the problem of consciousness	PoM: Chapters 5 & 6	Lecture Quiz 13 Reading Quiz 13 BOOK REVIEW DUE: ISotS
	November 22	THANKSGIVING BREAK – NO CLASS		
14	November 29	Lecture 20 - Christian Anthropology	PoM: Chapters 7 & 8	Lecture Quiz 14 Reading Quiz 14 <b>FINAL EXAM DUE BY 11:55 PM ON WED 12.06.23</b>

#### ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

1. 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.
2. Policy for Late Submissions: There are no make-up quizzes or exams. Students are given very large windows of time before the close of quizzes and exams. Students may turn papers in up to two weeks late of the due day, with a letter grade and a half per week they are late.
3. Plagiarism Policy: A high standard of personal integrity is expected of all NOBTS 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 Graduate Studies for further action.
4. Classroom and Online Decorum: Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of the others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity is expected at all times. Electronic devices should be used only for classroom purposes as indicated by the professor.

5. Special Needs: If you need accommodations for a disability, please set up a meeting with the professor for consideration of any modifications you may need.
6. Emergency Plan: In the event the NOBTS schedule is impacted due to a natural event, go to the seminary's website for pertinent information. Class will continue as scheduled through the Canvas site. Please note announcements and assignments on the course's Canvas site.
7. Technical Assistance: For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:
  1. [Selfserve@nobts.edu](mailto:Selfserve@nobts.edu) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the [Selfserve.nobts.edu](http://Selfserve.nobts.edu) or [My.nobts.edu](http://My.nobts.edu) site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
  2. [Canvas@nobts.edu](mailto:Canvas@nobts.edu) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Canvas Learning Management System (Faculty/Students/Staff) [Canvas.NOBTS.edu](http://Canvas.NOBTS.edu).
  3. [Bluejeanshelpdesk@nobts.edu](mailto:Bluejeanshelpdesk@nobts.edu) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Bluejeans & NOBTS Bluejeans classrooms (On and Off-Campus)
  4. [TelephoneHelpDesk@nobts.edu](mailto:TelephoneHelpDesk@nobts.edu) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS On-Campus Phone system.
  5. [ITCSupport@nobts.edu](mailto: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/](http://www.NOBTS.edu/itc/) - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.
8. NOLA2U FLEX: 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 Canvas 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.