

Christian Apologetics PHIL5301
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
***Defend 2019* Apologetics Conference**
January 7-11, 2019
Robert B. Stewart
Office: Dodd 112, extension #3245
rstewart@nobts.edu

Seminary Mission Statement

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.

Core Values Addressed

The course will address the core values *Doctrinal Integrity* and *Mission Focus* by giving attention to defending and presenting Christian beliefs particularly as they relate to Christian evangelism. *Servant Leadership* will be addressed as well in that Christian apologists must model humility. The core value for the 2018-2019 academic year is Doctrinal Integrity.

Competencies Addressed

The competencies of Christian Theological Heritage, Disciple Making, and Spiritual and Character Formation will be addressed.

Course Description

This course examines barriers to Christian faith as well as efforts to provide convincing presentations of Christian faith. Attention is given to biblical foundations, historical development, apologetic method, and contemporary issues related to apologetics.

Student Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should:

1. Be able to apply their knowledge and comprehension of how to defend and support Christian belief to academic and ministerial issues.
2. Value the following:
 - Intellectual accountability in relation to issues of ultimate concern to Christian faith.
 - Convincing presentations of Christian faith.
3. Be able to present the Christian faith in a reasonable and attractive form to skeptics and other non-Christians.

Required Textbooks

Douglas Groothuis, *Christian Apologetics: A Comprehensive Case for Biblical Faith*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.

Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*. New York: Dutton, 2008.

Course Requirements

1. Lecture Attendance. Students are required to attend all sessions of the *Defend 2019* Christian Apologetics Conference. Students must listen to at least 12 breakout sessions of the *Defend 2019* Christian Apologetics Conference which they did not attend. Students must affirm that they have completed this. Students will confirm on Blackboard which breakout sessions they attended and listened to.

2. Book Reviews. Each student is required to review **3** of the following books:

1. Robert M. Bowman, Jr., Ed Komoszewski, and Darrell L. Bock, *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Jesus Christ*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007.
2. Francis S. Collins, *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*. New York: Free Press, 2007.
3. Paul Copan, *True for You But Not for Me: Deflating the Slogans That Leave Christians Speechless*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.
4. Paul Copan, *When God Goes to Starbucks: A Guide to Everyday Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.
5. William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics*. Third Edition. Wheaton: Crossway, 2008.
6. Craig A. Evans, *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006.
7. Nancy Pearcey, *Saving Leonardo: A Call to Resist the Secular Assault on Mind, Morals, and Meaning*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010.
8. C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001.
9. C. S. Lewis, *Miracles*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001.
10. Alister E. McGrath, *Why God Won't Go Away: Is the New Atheism Running on Empty?* Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2011.
11. Alister E. McGrath. *Mere Apologetics: How to Help Seekers and Skeptics Find Faith*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012.
12. Robert J. Spitzer, *New Proofs for the Existence of God: Contributions of Contemporary Physics and Philosophy*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.
13. Robert B. Stewart, *The Future of Atheism: Alister McGrath and Daniel Dennett in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008.
14. Robert B. Stewart, *The Resurrection of Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and N. T. Wright in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006.

15. Robert B. Stewart, *The Reliability of the New Testament: Bart Ehrman and Daniel B. Wallace in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011.
16. Robert B. Stewart, *Can Only One Religion Be True?: Paul Knitter and Harold Netland in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013.
17. Robert B. Stewart, *The Message of Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and Ben Witherington III in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013.
18. J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity: A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels*. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2013.

Reviews should include: (1) some professional biographical data concerning the author; (2) an identification of the major elements of content; (3) an assessment of the author's aim or purpose and of the degree of its fulfillment; and (4) a critical evaluation of the book. All grammar and citations in the reviews should follow Turabian form. Reviews should be 4-6 double-spaced pages. **Book Reviews are due 6 weeks after the final day of the Defend 2019 Apologetics Conference (February 22, 2019).**

3. Session Summaries. Students will write one-page, single-spaced summaries of 12 different breakout sessions from the *Defend 2019* Christian Apologetics Conference. Students taking more than one *Defend 2019* course for NOBTS credit may use 4 session summaries that they summarize for another course so long as they are shaped for the concerns of each course. Summaries should be submitted via Blackboard. **Summaries are due 8 weeks after the conclusion of the Defend 2019 Apologetics Conference (March 8, 2019).**

4. Apologetics Research Paper. Each student is required to submit a research paper on a topic related to Christian Apologetics, e.g., science and faith, a non-Christian religion, atheism, argument(s) for the existence of God, the problem of evil, the reliability of Scripture, and/or miracles, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, etc. The paper should be not less than 5,000 words nor more than 7,000 words in length (double spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font). Papers must adhere to the Turabian style guide. **Research papers are due 10 weeks after the final day of the Defend 2019 Apologetics Conference (March 22, 2019).**

Grades will be assigned on the basis of the NOBTS grading scale: 93-100, A; 85-92, B; 77-84, C; 70-76, D; 0-69, F.

The final grade will be determined accordingly:

Book Reviews	30%
Research Paper	40%
<u>Session Summaries</u>	30%
Final Grade	100%

Extra Credit may be earned for additional book reviews (students taking more than one course will not receive extra credit for book reviews from another class), additional session summaries, or attendance at approved apologetics events.

The required texts will be available for purchase through the LifeWay Seminary bookstore. All texts are presently available online as well.

Suggested Bibliography

- Adams, Marilyn, and Adams, Robert, eds. *The Problem of Evil*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Bowman, Robert M. Jr., Ed Komoszewski, and Darrell L. Bock, *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Jesus Christ*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007.
- Brown, Colin. *Christianity and Western Thought*. Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 1990.
- . *Miracles and the Critical Mind*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984.
- . *Philosophy and the Christian Faith*. Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 1968.
- Bush, L. Russ. *Classical Readings in Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Academie, 1983.
- Clark, Kelly James. *Return to Reason*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.
- Collins, Francis S. *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*. New York: Free Press, 2007.
- Copan, Paul. *True for You But Not for Me: Deflating the Slogans That Leave Christians Speechless*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.
- Copan, Paul. *When God Goes to Starbucks: A Guide to Everyday Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.
- Craig, William Lane. *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics*. Third Edition. Wheaton: Crossway, 2008.
- Davis, Stephen T., ed. *Encountering Evil: Live Options in Theodicy*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1973.
- Dyrness, William. *Christian Apologetics in a World Community*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1983.
- Evans, Craig A. *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006.
- Geisler, Norman. *Philosophy of Religion*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974.
- . *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.
- Groothuis, Douglas. *Christian Apologetics: A Comprehensive Case for Biblical Faith*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.
- Keller, Timothy. *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*. New York: Dutton, 2008.
- Kreeft, Peter. *Making Sense out of Suffering*. Ann Arbor: Servant, 1986.
- Lewis, C. S. *Mere Christianity*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001.
- Lewis, C. S. *Miracles*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001.
- McGrath, Alister E. *Why God Won't Go Away: Is the New Atheism Running on Empty*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2011.
- McGrath, Alister E. *Mere Apologetics: How to Help Seekers and Skeptics Find Faith*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012.
- Mitchell, Basil. *The Justification of Religious Belief*. New York: Seabury Press, 1974.

- Moreland, J. P. *Christianity and the Nature of Science*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989.
- . *Scaling the Secular City: A Defense of Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987.
- Nash, Ronald. *Faith and Reason*. Grand Rapids: Academie, 1988.
- Pearcey, Nancy. *Finding Truth: 5 Principles for Unmasking Atheism, Secularism, and Other God Substitutes*. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2015.
- . *Saving Leonardo: A Call to Resist the Secular Assault on Mind, Morals, and Meaning*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010.
- . *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2004.
- Ramm, Bernard. *Varieties of Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1961.
- Spitzer, Robert J. *New Proofs for the Existence of God: Contributions of Contemporary Physics and Philosophy*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.
- Sproul, R.C., Gerstner, John, and Lindsley, Arthur. *Classical Apologetics: A Rational Defense of the Christian Faith and a Critique of Presuppositional Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984.
- Stewart, Robert B. *Can Only One Religion Be True?: Paul Knitter and Harold Netland in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013.
- . *The Future of Atheism: Alister McGrath and Daniel Dennett in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2008.
- . *The Resurrection of Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and N. T. Wright in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006.
- . *The Reliability of the New Testament: Bart Ehrman and Daniel B. Wallace in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011.
- . *The Message of Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and Ben Witherington III in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013.
- Strobel, Lee. *The Case for Faith: A Journalist Investigates the Toughest Objections to Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2000.
- Swinburne, Richard. *The Concept of Miracle*. London: Macmillan, 1970.
- Wallace, J. Warner. *Cold-Case Christianity: A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels*. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2013.