



**PHIL6308 Metaphysics**  
**New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary**  
**Theology and History Division**  
**June 14-25, 2021 Intensive (NOLA2U Live)**

**RAYMOND B. STEWART**  
Adjunct Professor in Philosophy  
Phone: 504-256-0800  
Email: [ray.stewart13@gmail.com](mailto:ray.stewart13@gmail.com)

**Mission Statement**

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

**Course Description**

We will investigate 8 topics of perennial importance in metaphysics. These are truth-makers, composition, the mind-body problem, the nature of time, tense and persistence through time, freewill and the cosmological argument for Theism. We will also investigate how each of these topics are Christian theism.

**Student Learning Outcomes**

1. Students will be introduced to some basic issues related to metaphysics by attending class lectures.
2. Students will be introduced to some basic issues related to metaphysics by reading the primary texts and assigned readings.
3. Students will be introduced to the basic issues related to metaphysics through completing the assignments.

**Required Textbooks**

There are no textbooks. All readings will be posted online at Blackboard.

**Optional Readings**

Because metaphysics is an expansive subject and time is limited, there are many important areas that we will not touch on. These include, but are not limited to, grounding, universals, causation, truth, modal ontology and semantics and many other arguments for God's existence. Students wishing to write on any of these topics should meet with me and I will suggest readings for them.

**Course Teaching Methodology**

The course will involve the following methodologies:

Students will meet for class at the NOBTS main campus from June 14-25. Assignments will be turned in at a later date and evaluated via Blackboard.

**Course Requirements**

1. Students are expected to attend class, read the assigned materials and participate in class discussion.
2. Students are expected to complete the required assignments.

### Assignments:

- **Daily Questions:** Students will submit one question, comment on, or criticism of the day's reading *at the beginning of class*. 10%
- **Attendance/Participation:** Students shall be graded on both their attendance and on their actively engaging the material in class. 10%

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

1. The course on the New Orleans campus will be connected synchronously via Web conferencing with Internet students. These courses will require weekly attendance at the stated class meeting times.
2. Students are only allowed to miss the amount of class time specified in the NOBTS attendance policy as stated in the graduate catalog. (See "Absences" category in the website catalog at: <https://catalog.nobts.edu/generalinfo/academicpolicies>.)
3. Technical issues will not be considered a valid reason for missing a class session.

### Cautions:

"NOLA2U" students are expected to use hard-wired internet connections and headphones. Mics are to be muted during the live session. The mic is to be active only when a question or comment is desired.

### And Either

- **Write a term paper and complete related preparatory assignments:**
  - **Pre-Draft Materials:** In preparation for the first draft final paper, students shall come up with a question to investigate, a reading list, and eventually an abstract. 20%
  - **Rough Draft of the Term Paper:** There's a draft. 25%
  - **Final Draft:** A revised version of the draft. 35%

### Or Else:

- **Complete two take-home exams:**
  - **Exam 1 will cover Truth-Making, Composition and Time. 40%**
  - **Exam 2 will cover Free-Will and The Cosmological Argument. 40%**

### Due Dates for Assignments

Exam 1/Rough Draft of the Term Paper is due by 11:59PM Friday, July 9, 2021

Exam 2/Final Draft is due by 11:59PM Friday, July 23, 2021

### 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](https://Selfserve.nobts.edu) site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. [BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu](mailto:BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu) - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System [NOBTS.Blackboard.com](https://NOBTS.Blackboard.com).
3. [ITCSupport@nobts.edu](mailto:ITCSupport@nobts.edu) - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
4. [www.NOBTS.edu/itc/](http://www.NOBTS.edu/itc/) - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

## **Help for Writing Papers at “The Write Stuff”**

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer.

## **Plagiarism on Written Assignments**

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

## **Tentative Course Schedule**

### **Week 1:**

#### **Part 1: Introduction**

1. *Introduction: Truthmakers and Composition*
  - a. Koons and Pickavance, “Truthmakers” in *Metaphysics: The Fundamentals*, Robert Koons and Timothy Pickavance, Oxford, Wiley Blackwell, 2015.
  - b. Ney, “Material Objects” in *Metaphysics: An Introduction*, Alyssa Ney, New York, Routledge, 2014.

#### **Part 2: Time**

2. Time Part 1: Eternalism and Presentism
  - a. *Introductory Materials: Time*
  - b. Ney, “Time” in *Metaphysics: An Introduction*
3. Time Part 2: God and Time
  - a. God and Time at <https://www.iep.utm.edu/god-time/>
  - b. TBA
4. Time Part 3: Persistence
  - a. Ney, “Persistence”
  - b. Sider, “Temporal Parts” in CDM, p. 241-262.

#### **Part 3: Mind and Body**

5. The Mind-Body Problem 1:
  - a. *Introductory Materials*
  - b. *IEP: Consciousness*
  - c. John Spackman, “Consciousness and the Prospects for Substance Dualism,” *Philosophy Compass* 8 (2013), p. 1054-1065
6. The Mind Body Problem 2:
  - a. Dean Zimmerman, “Materialism and Survival”
  - b. Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: Immortality §5-7. (<http://www.iep.utm.edu/immortal/>)
  - c. Richard Swinburne, “The Future of the Soul” in *The Evolution of the Soul*, Richard Swinburne, Oxford: Clarendon Press; revised edition, 1997.

## **Week 2:**

### **Part 4: Freewill:**

7. Freewill Part 1: Compatibilism and Incompatibilism
  - a. Harry Frankfurt, "Alternate Possibilities and Moral Responsibility"
  - b. Carroll and Markosian, "Freedom and Determinism" in *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, John Carroll and Ned Markosian, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2010. Chap 3, p. 45-78.
8. Freewill Part 2: Freewill and Theism
  - c. Derk Pereboom, "Libertarianism and Theological Determinism"
  - d. Neal Judisch, "Theological Determinism and the Problem of Evil."

### **Part 5: The Cosmological Argument**

9. Cosmological Arguments Part 1
  - e. Alex Pruss, "Leibnizian Cosmological Arguments"
10. Cosmological Arguments Part 2:
  - a. Graham Oppy, "Cosmological Arguments"
  - b. Raymond Stewart, "The Diet Cosmological Argument"

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