



## **The Doctrine of Revelation THEO6301**

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary  
Theological and Historical Studies Division  
Hybrid • Spring 2022 • Hybrid Weekend 3/11–3/12

### **Dr. Rhyme Putman**

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### **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**

This course provides a biblical, historical, and theological examination of the doctrines of revelation and the Bible. This study assists students to begin formation of a systematic, Christian perspective upon these issues. An understanding of the doctrine of revelation and the Bible is basic to all other doctrines because the Christian faith and theology are based upon God's self-revelation. Students will investigate the theoretical issues involved in these doctrines as well as develop the implications of their findings for Christian living and ministry.

### **Student Learning Outcomes**

The student, by the end of the course, should:

1. **Be able to understand** issues related to the doctrine of revelation: the nature of revelation, the nature and value of general revelation, and the nature of Scripture.
2. **Be able to apply** the doctrine of revelation by reading Scripture as the word of God (i.e., theological interpretation).
3. **Be able to communicate** key issues related to the doctrine of revelation in the academy and the life of the local church.

### **Statement on Biblical Authority**

In order to develop competent theological researchers for the twenty-first century church and academy, students in this course will be exposed to seminal works in Christian theology from a wide array of theological perspectives, including the influential works of many prominent non-evangelical and liberal theologians. Students are expected to become familiar with and demonstrate advanced, biblically guided critical engagement with the works of these thinkers.

The instructor of this course operates under the assumption that the Bible is the inspired, totally true and trustworthy Word of God which is "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness" (2 Tim. 3:16). The Baptist Faith and Message (2000) provides the confessional framework from which the instructor leads the course.

### Required Textbooks

Brunner, Emil and Karl Barth. *Natural Theology: Comprising "Nature and Grace" by Professor Dr. Emil Brunner and the reply "No!" by Dr. Karl Barth*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2002.

Feinberg, John S. *Light in a Dark Place: The Doctrine of Scripture*. Foundations of Evangelical Theology. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2018.

### Recommended Texts

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, Joseph Bizup, and William T. Fitzgerald. *The Craft of Research*. 4th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2016.

Putman, Rhyne. *The Method of Christian Theology*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2021.

Turabian, Kate L., Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Ninth Edition: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018.

### Book Review Texts (Students Must Sign Up for Their Text of Choice)

Students must **select one** of the following texts for their book review/presentation. **Students must sign up for the text and no two students will be allowed to review the same text.** Students are advised to pick a book related to the general topic they want to write their research paper about, so they have an established background on the topic.

Barrett, Matthew. *God's Word Alone*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2016. **(INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE/AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE/SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE)**

Billings, Todd. *The Word of God for the People of God: An Entryway to the Theological Interpretation of Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010. **(THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE)**

Dulles, Avery. *Models of Revelation*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1983. **(NATURE OF REVELATION)**

Jensen, Peter. *The Revelation of God*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2002. **(NATURE OF REVELATION)**

Johnston, Robert K. *God's Wider Presence: Reconsidering General Revelation*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2014. **(GENERAL REVELATION)**

Kruger, Michael J. *Canon Revisited: Establishing the Origins and Authority of New Testament Books*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2012. **(CANON OF SCRIPTURE)**

Mathison, Keith A. *The Shape of Sola Scriptura*. Canon, 2001. **(SUFFICIENCY OF SCRIPTURE)**

Merrick, J. and Stephen M. Garrett, eds. *Five Views on Biblical Inerrancy*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013. **(INERRANCY OF SCRIPTURE)**

Miller, Ike. *Seeing By the Light: Illumination in Augustine and Barth's Readings of John*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2020. **(ILLUMINATION OF SCRIPTURE)**

Putman, Rhyne. *When Doctrine Divides the People of God*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2020. **(CLARITY OF SCRIPTURE/AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE)**

Swain, Scott R. *The Trinity and the Bible: On Theological Interpretation*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2021. **(THEOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE)**

Thompson, Mark D. *A Clear and Present Word: The Clarity of Scripture*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2006. **(CLARITY OF SCRIPTURE)**

Ward, Timothy. *Words of Life*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2009. **(INSPIRATION OF SCRIPTURE)**

Webster, John. *Holy Scripture*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003. **(SPECIAL REVELATION)**

Wright, N. T. *Scripture and the Authority of God*. New York: HarperOne, 2013. **(AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE)**

### **Course Teaching Methodology**

The course will involve the following methodologies: readings, lectures, and seminar-style engagement with one another's work.

### **Course Requirements**

#### **1. Attendance and Reading Report (10%)**

Students are expected to view all lectures online and read all required materials for the course. Blackboard keeps a record of how much of each video is viewed by each student. Students will **submit weekly reading reports on Blackboard.**

#### **2. Book Review / Presentation (20%)—Due Unit 8**

Each student is required to select a text from the list of review texts above. **Students will sign up for a text in Blackboard.** No two students will be allowed review the same text.

Every student will write a review of a book written on one of the themes of this course. These book reviews should be 4-6 single-spaced pages in length. Each review should include a bibliographic entry, brief biographical data about the author (including dates, degrees, theological tradition, academic positions held, research interests, and significant works), a brief summary of the book's argument and contents, and critical analysis.

A few questions to consider while reading these monographs: What is the main purpose or thesis of this book? To whom is this book written? Did the author(s) fulfill his or her purpose? What are some of the author's working assumptions (e.g., his or her denominational background, field of research, or view of Scripture)? Does the author provide strong biblical,

philosophical, and historical support for his or her positions? Are there any points of contact between this book/writer and other texts read during the course of the semester? How might the content of this book affect ministry in the local church or ministry within your particular calling? Are there any ideas that changed your particular way of thinking on the subject matter at hand? Would you recommend this book to someone else?

- “A” papers (93-100) clearly state the book’s thesis, successfully and succinctly outline its argument in its own terms, demonstrate advanced critical engagement with the argument and content of the book, make clear and well-structured arguments, and exhibit a proficient grasp of grammar, spelling, and style.
- “B” papers (85-92) clearly state the book’s thesis, show an attempt to understand the book on its own terms and critically reflect on the issues at hand, make arguments, and show sufficiency in grammar, spelling, and style.
- “C” papers (77-84) state the book’s thesis, present the content of the book, raise preliminary critical questions for further evaluation, limit evaluation to approval or disapproval of the author’s arguments, and make repeated mistakes in grammar, spelling, and style.
- “D” (70-76) and “F” (0-69) papers lack evidence of grasping the book’s thesis and content, limit evaluation to preformed judgments without serious consideration of the book’s ideas, contain major grammatical, spelling, and stylistic errors, and demonstrate little or no attempt to proofread.

Students in hybrid classes will be required to present their reviews in person to classmates. *Students in purely online classes will be required to create a video presentation of their reviews and upload them in Blackboard, then watch and respond to each other’s videos.*

### **3. Discussion Board Questions (15%)**

Throughout the course of the semester, students will answer **six discussion board questions** related to the reading material provided. Students are expected demonstrate (1) knowledge of the reading assignment’s contents, (2) critical analytical skill, and (3) engagement with other students.

### **4. General Paper Topics (5%)—Due Unit 6**

Students are required to pick a general topic and ask a specific question related to it for your research paper.

### **5. Thesis Statement (5%)—Due Unit 8**

Students are required to provide a deductive thesis statement (a claim they set out to prove in their paper) OR an inductive thesis statement (a statement of purpose or question they plan to explore in their paper). The professor and students will workshop these statements together.

**6. Paper Sources (5%)—Due Unit 9**

Students are required to provide a list of TEN QUALITY resources (primary sources, secondary sources, monographs, journal articles, etc.) that directly or indirectly address their thesis or research question.

**7. Paper Outline (5%)—Due Unit 11**

Students should provide an outline of their summative writing paper structure, including chapter, section headings, and specific arguments/guiding research questions. This outline will be reviewed by the professor before the summative writing project can commence. Dr. Putman's chapter on research paper writing should serve as a guide.

**8. First Draft Paper (10%)—Due Unit 14**

Students are required to submit a first draft of their paper in unit 14. The papers should be essentially done save for minor edits.

**9. Student Paper Responses (5%)**

Students will read and respond to one classmate's paper and provide critical feedback, including a list of strengths and weaknesses, as well as editorial suggestions (e.g., grammar, style, etc.).

**10. Final Draft Paper (20%)**

In the final unit, students will submit their final drafts, complete with corrections and edits.

**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) 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](http://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.

**Writing Style Guide**

A copy of the approved NOBTS Style Guide can be found in the course Blackboard shell, or can be located online at the Writing Center's page on the seminary website at:

<https://www.nobts.edu/resources/pdf/writing/StyleGuide.pdf>

**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.

## Course Schedule

Students who are enrolled in semester-length Internet sections will cover one unit a week. Students enrolled in eight-week summer courses will cover two units a week. Each exam will cover four units. **ALL ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE UNIT/WEEK ARE DUE SATURDAY AT MIDNIGHT.**

Unit	Topic	Assignments
<b>1</b> 1/18-1/21	Introduction to the Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read the syllabus</li> <li>• Watch “Introduction to the Course” video</li> </ul>
<b>2</b> 1/24-1/28	The Nature of Revelation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch “The Nature of Revelation” video</li> <li>• Read Feinberg, chs. 1–2</li> </ul>
<b>3</b> 1/31-2/4	General Revelation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read “Nature and Grace” by Emil Brunner</li> <li>• Watch “General Revelation” video</li> </ul>
<b>4</b> 2/7-2/11	Natural Theology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read “Nein!” by Karl Barth</li> <li>• Watch Karl Barth Interview</li> <li>• Discussion Board Question</li> </ul>
<b>5</b> 2/14-2/18	Special Revelation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Feinberg, ch. 3</li> <li>• Read Putman, “How to Write a Theological Research Paper”</li> </ul>
<b>6</b> 2/21-2/25	The Inspiration of Scripture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Feinberg, chs. 4–6</li> <li>• Watch “Inspiration of Scripture” Lecture</li> <li>• Submit general paper topic/research question</li> </ul>
<b>7</b> 2/28-3/4	The Infallibility and Inerrancy of Scripture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Feinberg, ch. 7</li> <li>• Read <i>The Chicago Statement on Biblical Inerrancy</i></li> <li>• Discussion Board Question</li> </ul>
<b>8</b> 3/7-3/11	Answering Objections to Inerrancy  <b>HYBRID WEEKEND MEETING</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Feinberg, chs. 8–9</li> <li>• Book Reviews due (you will present and discuss them during our hybrid weekend meeting)</li> </ul>
<b>Spring Break</b> <b>“...give him rest from days of trouble...” (Psalm 94:13)</b>		
<b>9</b>	The Authority of Scripture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Feinberg, ch. 10</li> <li>• Paper Sources (preliminary list due)</li> </ul>

Unit	Topic	Assignments
3/21-3/26		
<b>10</b> 3/28-4/2	The Canon of Scripture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Feinberg, chs. 11–14</li> <li>• Watch videos from Licona, Carson, and Kruger</li> <li>• Discussion Board Question</li> </ul>
<b>11</b> 4/4-4/9	Theological Interpretation of Scripture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Vanhoozer, “What is TIS?”</li> <li>• Read Carson, “Yes, But...”</li> <li>• Submit Paper Outlines</li> </ul>
<b>12</b> 4/11-4/16	The Clarity of Scripture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Feinberg, ch. 16</li> <li>• Watch Lecture</li> <li>• Discussion Board Question</li> </ul>
<b>13</b> 4/18-4/23	The Illumination of Scripture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Feinberg, chs. 15, 17</li> </ul>
<b>14</b> 4/25-4/30	The Sufficiency of Scripture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Feinberg, ch. 18; Whitfield and Putman, “The Bible and the University”</li> <li>• First Draft of Paper Due</li> </ul>
<b>15</b> 5/2-5/7	Religious Experience & Prophecy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion Board Question</li> </ul>
<b>16</b> 5/11	<b>Final Assignment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Final Draft of Paper Due</li> </ul>