



THEO5300 -- Systematic Theology I

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Division of Theological & Historical Studies
Internet Summer 2023

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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 first course in Systematic Theology introduces the student to the methodology of theology (prolegomena) and the doctrines of revelation, God, humanity, and the person of Christ. The biblical foundations and the relevant historical developments are considered in construction of a Christian understanding of each doctrine.

Student Learning Outcomes

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

1. be able to understand theological method and the doctrines of revelation, God, humanity, and the person of Christ biblically, historically, and systematically.
2. be able to apply theology by integrating these doctrines into a coherent, comprehensive, and consistent Christian worldview.
3. be able to communicate these doctrines in the particular ministry calling and context of the learner.

Required Textbooks

Harwood, Adam. *Christian Theology: Biblical, Historical, and Systematic*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Academic, 2022.

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

Course Teaching Methodology

The course will involve the following methodologies: video lectures from Dr. Putman, video discussions with Dr. Lemke, reading, online testing, and writing a doctrinal sermon. These methods are consistent with the belief that some learning will occur outside of as well as in the classroom. The goal is not that students will be indoctrinated to affirm any particular professor's views; rather, it is that students think critically about their own views, gain a better understanding of other views, and be able to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the supporting claims.

Summer Course Schedule

Students should be aware that this internet course has the same content as a semester-length course, but it is packed in 10 weeks rather than 15 weeks. Therefore, the pace of the course is much quicker & the assignments much heavier each week. Students should plan to spend more time than usual each week to complete the assignments for that week in a timely manner. If students get behind schedule, it is very difficult to catch up because of the pace of the course.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to engage regularly with course content through the learning management system and other course delivery methods. Students who fail to participate consistently in course activities may receive a grade of "F" for the course.

Course Requirements

1. Attendance and Reading Report (10%, 100 points)

Students are expected to view all lectures online and read all required materials for the course. Canvas keeps a record of how much of each video is viewed by each student. Students will **submit a reading report at the end of the semester.**

2. Exams (80%, 800 points)—Four Tests (20% each, 200 points)

Students will take four open-book, open-note exams in this course, each of which count for 20% of the student's total grade. These examinations are timed and feature a random pool of questions. No collaboration or group work in these exams is allowed. ANYTHING from the reading, notes, or lectures is fair game for these exams, so students **must do reading and viewing of lectures in advance to finish the exams in a timely manner.**

In each of these exams, students will demonstrate

(a) their **UNDERSTANDING** of theological content (student learning outcome #1) by a number of multiple choice, true-false, and fill-in-the-blank questions.

(b) Students will also demonstrate their ability to **APPLY** the content of the course in **essay answers that will be written prior to beginning the objective portion of the exam** (student learning outcome #2).

(c) These answers will also demonstrate their ability to **COMMUNICATE** in a way that is appropriate to their ministry context (student learning outcome #3). For the best possible answers to these essay questions, students are strongly recommended to look at the recommended texts listed below in the bibliography.

Embedded Assignment (in Exam One)

All sections of Systematic Theology 1 have an embedded assignment. This assignment may be read by other professors, so you would want to do your best work for this assignment. This essay is included in Exam 1. This essay should be 800-1,200 words in length. Here are the questions your essay should address specifically:

1. Using the materials from your assigned systematic theology textbook and other theological resources (like commentaries, other theological textbooks or monographs), briefly explain your understanding of the doctrine of general revelation, highlighting the differences between general and special revelation.
2. What impact does the doctrine of general revelation have in application to missions and evangelism?
3. Describe how the doctrine of general revelation can affect your communication of the Gospel.

The rubric below shows how the question will be evaluated in terms of addressing Student Learning Outcomes. Students may use this rubric as a guide for how they answer questions in other essays.

Rubric for Embedded Assignment and Other Essays

DOMAIN	LEVEL	INADEQUATE	BASIC	COMPETENT	GOOD	EXCELLENT
UNDERSTANDING	Able to understand the doctrinal topic.					
APPLICATION	Able to apply knowledge by relating it to the broader Christian worldview.					
COMMUNICATION	Able to communicate the doctrine to a ministry audience.					

3. Doctrinal Message (10%, 100 points)

Every student will write a 6–8-page double-spaced sermon manuscript for a doctrinal sermon or discipleship teaching session. Students can write on any doctrine addressed in this section of Systematic Theology I (the doctrines of revelation, God, creation, providence, humanity, sin, and Christ). This assignment is submitted in Unit 15.

Each sermon should contain an introduction, a main idea, explanations of the biblical text, illustrations, applications, and a conclusion/invitation.

Students who preach or teach their lesson in a church context by the end of the semester and who provide a one-page summary of their feedback can get 10 extra-credit points on the grade of this assignment.

The sermon may be a straightforward exposition of a doctrine in a particular text (e.g., the providence of God in Rom. 9) or a topical, yet text-driven sermon that traces a doctrine through a book or multiple books of the Bible.

*Instructions on how to write a doctrinal sermon can be found in chapter 14 of Putman, *The Method of Christian Theology*.*

The sermon will be graded this way:

Rubric for Evaluating Doctrinal Messages

DOMAIN	LEVEL	INADEQUATE	BASIC	COMPETENT	GOOD	EXCELLENT
UNDERSTANDING	The student shows an ability to understand the content of the doctrine taught.	The student fails in his or her basic understanding of the biblical doctrine.	The student has an overly simplistic understanding of the doctrine that fails to account for the major biblical data and historical resources.	The student has an adequate understanding of the theological content but does not demonstrate much critical thought in this area.	The student has a solid understanding of the issues involved in the content and shows good interaction with the resources.	The student has a superior understanding of the content and shows excellent interaction with the resources.
APPLICATION	The student demonstrates an awareness of the practical implications of the doctrine.	The student has given no serious thought to the application of the doctrine.	The student has given little attention to the application of the doctrine.	The student shows some effort at applying the doctrine but does miss key applications.	The student does well in applying the content of the doctrine to the Christian life.	The student has great insight as to how the doctrine applies to the Christian life.
COMMUNICATION	The student is able to communicate the doctrine to a ministry audience.	The student fails in basic grammar and communication. This sermon has no organization or structure.	The student makes numerous grammatical mistakes and lacks good organization.	The student has some grammatical errors and shows an effort to organize the content in a way that reaches his or her audience.	The student has a good presentation of content with little mistakes that will communicate well with his audience.	The student has an excellent presentation of content that communicate extremely well with his audience.

Evaluation of Course Grades

The student's grade will be computed as follows:

1. Attendance and Reading Report	10%
2. Exams (20% each exam)	80%
3. Doctrinal Sermon	10%
Total	100%

All assignments must be submitted to pass the course. Students who fail to complete an assignment will not receive a passing grade.

The grading scale for the class is the NOBTS standard grading policy--

A = 93-100%

B = 85-92%

C = 77-84%

D = 70-76%

F = below 70%

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 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.
3. ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
4. 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.

Course Schedule

Units Dates	Topic	Assignments
#1 5/29- 6/4	Introduction to the Course Prolegomena and Theological Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read syllabus • Watch video lectures (“What is Systematic Theology?”) • Read Putman, <i>Method</i>, chapters 1—4 <p>Meet the Professor / Syllabus Q&A on Blue Jeans (optional but strongly encouraged)</p>
#2 5/29- 6/4	Prolegomena and Theological Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video lecture (“The Procedure of Christian Theology”) • Read Putman, <i>Method</i>, chapters 5—6, 11—12 • Read Harwood, Preface & Chapter 1
#3 6/5- 6/11	The Doctrine of Revelation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video lectures (“The Nature of Revelation,” “General Revelation”) • Read Putman, <i>Method</i>, pp. 101–163 • Read Harwood, chapter 2
#4 6/5- 6/11	The Doctrine of Scripture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video lecture (“The Doctrine of Scripture”) • Read Putman, <i>Method</i>, pp. 163–220 • Read Harwood, chapter 3 • Exam One—Method and Revelation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Essay Question #1: Using the materials from your assigned systematic theology textbook and other theological resources (like commentaries, other theological textbooks or monographs), briefly explain your understanding of the doctrine of general revelation, highlighting the differences

Units Dates	Topic	Assignments
		<p>between general and special revelation. What impact does the doctrine of general revelation have on your understanding of missions and evangelism? Describe how the doctrine of general revelation can affect your communication of the Gospel. (This assignment should be 2–3 double-spaced pages in length. See the section entitled “embedded assignment” above.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Essay Question #2a (choose 2a or 2b)-- Explain and defend the doctrine of biblical inerrancy. What practical implications does a doctrine of biblical inerrancy have for the way we address contemporary theological issues? (2-page double-spaced answer) ○ Essay question #2b (choose 2a or 2b): Explain what a worldview is and its constituent elements as described in your textbook (Putman). Why is a worldview important for Christian disciple-making?
<p>#5 6/12- 6/18</p>	<p>Theology Proper – The Trinity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video lectures (“The Trinity, Pt. 1”; “The Trinity, Pt. 2”; “The Trinity, Pt. 3”) • Read Harwood, Part 2 introduction & chapter 4
<p>#6 6/12- 6/18</p>	<p>Theology Proper – Existence and Attributes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video lectures (“The Incommunicable Attributes of God,” “The Communicable Attributes of God”) • Read Harwood, chapters 5-6
<p>#7 6/19- 6/25</p>	<p>Theology Proper -- Creation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video lecture (“Creation”) • Read Harwood, chapter 7
<p>#8 6/19- 6/25</p>	<p>Theology Proper – Providence and Evil</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video lectures (“Providence,” “The Problem of Evil”) • Read Harwood, chapters 8-9 • Exam Two—God, Creation, and Providence <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exam Question #1: Explain the doctrine of the Trinity as you would to a student in a youth group. Be careful to avoid bad analogies that implicitly reflect trinitarian heresies (2-page double-spaced answer). ○ Exam Question #2: How do you make sense of the “days of creation” in Genesis 1. Defend your position using biblical, historical, and theological data. (2-page double-spaced answer)

#9 6/26- 7/2	Introduction to Theological Anthropology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video lectures (“The Image of God”) • Read Putman, <i>Method</i>, pp. 223–284 • Read Harwood, Part 3 introduction, chapter 10
#10 6/26- 7/2	Theological Anthropology – The Human Constitution and Human Sexuality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video lecture (“The Human Constitution,” “Biblical Sexuality”) • Read Harwood, chapter 11
#11 7/3- 7/9	Hamartiology – The Doctrine of Sin, pt. 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video lecture (“The Doctrine of Sin”) • Read Harwood, chapter 12
#12 7/3- 7/9	Hamartiology – The Doctrine of Sin, pt. 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video lecture (“Does the Bible Teach an ‘Age of Accountability’ Doctrine? Competing Views”) • Read Harwood, chapter 13 • Exam Three—Theological Anthropology and Hamartiology <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exam Question #1: A friend who claims to be Christian is living with a particular sexual sin (you can identify which). Write a two-page letter to him which underscores a biblical sexual ethic. ○ Exam Question #2: Do you affirm an “age of accountability” doctrine? Defend your answer (2-page double-spaced answer).
#13 7/10- 7/16	Christology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video lecture (“Jesus Christ in the Biblical Story”) • Read Harwood, Part 4 introduction & chapter 14
#14 7/10- 7/16	Christology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video lecture (“Jesus Christ in Christian Truth”) • Doctrinal Sermon Due
#15 7/17- 7/23	Christology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video lectures (“Impeccability,” “The Virgin Birth”) • Read Harwood, chapter 15
#16 7/17- 7/23	Christology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch video lecture (“The Sinlessness of Christ,” “The Virgin Birth of Christ”)
7/24- 7/28	Final Exam	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exam Four—Christology • Exam Question: The Scriptures repeatedly affirm the sinlessness of Jesus, but the question of whether Jesus could have sinned has significant implications for understanding the relationship between his human nature and his divine nature. Could Jesus have sinned? Is he impeccable? Why or why not?

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Bird, Michael F. *Evangelical Theology: A Biblical and Systematic Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2013. Bird is an Anglican and Reformed NT scholar from Australia who has written a systematic theology that integrates the insights of contemporary biblical theology into a systematic textbook.
- Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013. Erickson represents a moderate Calvinistic framework. Erickson is philosophically and apologetically robust as a theologian and provides great historical content along the way. His text is the basis of many of the lectures in this course.
- Frame, John. *Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Christian Belief*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2013. Frame is a Presbyterian and Reformed theologian in the Westminster Tradition.
- Garrett, James L. *Systematic Theology: Biblical, Historical, and Evangelical*, vol. 1, 4th ed. North Richland Hills, TX: BIBAL Press, 2011. Dr. Garrett is a SBC theologian who offers an excellent historical examination of each of the doctrines discussed. Dr. Garrett is the go-to expert on Baptist doctrine.
- Grider, J. Kenneth. *A Wesleyan-Holiness Theology*. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill, 1994. J. Kenneth Grider was a Nazarene systematic theologian in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition.
- Grudem, Wayne. *Systematic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994. Grudem, a Calvinistic Baptist with charismatic undertones, has written one of the most popular and accessible theology texts available today.
- Horton, Michael F. *The Christian Faith: A Systematic Theology for Pilgrims on the Way*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011. Horton is a well-known Reformed theologian and apologist who engages many contemporary issues and important philosophical trends in his work.
- Lewis, Gordon and Bruce Demarest. *Integrative Theology*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010. This evangelical theology—available in one-volume and three-volume editions—integrates biblical exegesis, historical research, apologetics, and pastoral application in its discussion of every doctrine.
- Oden, Thomas C. *Classic Christianity: A Systematic Theology*. New York: HarperOne, 2011. Oden is a Methodist/Wesleyan evangelical theologian who utilizes the resources of patristic Christianity to make a case for Christian doctrines. This book is a valuable resource for anyone interested in the thought of early church fathers.
- Putman, Rhyne. *The Method of Christian Theology: A Basic Introduction*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2021. In this book, Dr. Putman explores the basics of Christian theology and includes sections on how to write a theological paper and preach a doctrinal sermon.

Ryrie, Charles C. *Basic Theology: A Popular Systematic Guide to Understanding Biblical Truth*. 2d ed. Chicago: Moody, 1999. This volume is a systematic theology written with lay persons in mind. Ryrie writes from a classic Dispensationalist perspective.

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