

Christianity and the Sciences THEO6309/PHIL6311
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Defend the Faith Christian Apologetics Conference
January 4-8, 2016
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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.

Course Description

This course is a study of the relationship between Christianity and the natural, social, and mathematical sciences. It will survey the history of the relationship between Christianity and the sciences, with a critique of the “warfare metaphor.” Special attention will be given to the creation/evolution debate and the age of the earth debate. The question of the possibility of a natural theology will be addressed, with an assessment of the various approaches.

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.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will read broadly on the relationship between Christianity and the Sciences as understood and studied in contemporary theology and philosophy of religion.
2. Students will become familiar with issues related to the relationship between Christianity and the Sciences.
3. Students will demonstrate basic understanding of an issue related to the relationship between Christianity and the Sciences.
4. Students will research, summarize, and critique a contemporary philosopher or theologian related to his or her views concerning the relationship between Christianity and the Sciences.

Methodology

Required Texts

Students are required to read the following books:

Richard F. Carlson, *Science and Christianity: Four Views*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000.

Philip Clayton, *Religion and Science: The Basics*. New York: Routledge, 2011.

Ronald L. Numbers, *Galileo Goes to Jail and Other Myths about Science and Religion*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2010.

Course Requirements

All assignments should be submitted via Blackboard.

1. Lecture Attendance. Students are required to attend all plenary sessions as well as one breakout presentation for each breakout session, and listen to audio recordings of all breakout sessions they cannot physically attend. Students must affirm that they have completed this. Students will confirm on Blackboard how much they attended/listened to. Failure to attend/listen to all of the conference will result in a 5 point deduction from a student's final average.

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

Stephen M. Barr, *Modern Physics and Ancient Faith*. Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 2003.

Michael J. Behe, *The Edge of Evolution: The Search for the Limits of Darwinism*. New York: Free Press, 2007.

Philip Clayton, *The Oxford Handbook of Religion and Science*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Francis S. Collins, *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*. New York: Free Press, 2006.

Paul Copan and William Lane Craig, *Creation Out of Nothing: A Biblical, Philosophical, and Scientific Exploration*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004.

William A. Dembski, *The Design Revolution: Answering the Toughest Questions about Intelligent Design*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2004.

- Daniel C. Dennett and Alvin Plantinga, *Science and Religion: Are They Compatible?* New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- Peter Enns, *The Evolution of Adam: What the Bible Does and Doesn't Say about Human Origins*. Grand Rapids: Brazos, 2012.
- Darrel R. Falk, *Coming to Peace with Science: Bridging the Worlds Between Faith and Biology*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004.
- Gary B. Ferngren, *Science and Religion: A Historical Introduction*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002.
- Karl W. Gibberson and Francis S. Collins, *The Language of Science and Faith: Straight Answers to Genuine Questions*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2011.
- Deborah B. Haarsma and Loren D. Haarsma, *Origins: Christian Perspectives on Creation, Evolution, and Intelligent Design*. Grand Rapids: Faith Alive Christian Resources, 2001.
- John C. Lennox, *God's Undertaker: Has Science Buried God?* Oxford: Lion, 2009.
- John C. Lennox, *Seven Days That Divide the World: The Beginning According to Genesis and Science*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.
- John C. Lennox, *God and Stephen Hawking: Whose Design Is It Anyway?*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011. Oxford: Lion, 2011.
- Henry M. Morris, *Scientific Creationism*. Green Forest, AR: Master, 1974.
- Henry M. Morris, *The Genesis Flood: The Genesis Flood and Its Scientific Implications*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2011.
- Ronald Numbers, *The Creationists: From Scientific Creationism to Intelligent Design, Expanded Edition*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2006.
- Alvin Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really Lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.
- Jay Wesley Richards, *God and Evolution*. Seattle: Discovery Institute, 2010.
- Hugh Ross, *The Creator and the Cosmos: How the Greatest Scientific Discoveries of the Century Reveal God*. Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1993.
- Hugh Ross, *Creation and Time: A Biblical and Scientific Perspective on the Creation-Date Controversy*. Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1994.

Hugh Ross, *Beyond The Cosmos: What Recent Discoveries in Astrophysics Reveal about the Glory and Love of God*. Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1996.

Hugh Ross, *A Matter of Days: Resolving a Creation Controversy*. Colorado Springs: Navpress, 2004.

Robert J. Spitzer, *New Proofs for the Existence of God: Contributions of Contemporary Physics and Philosophy*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.

Robert B. Stewart, ed., *Intelligent Design: William A. Dembski and Michael Ruse in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007.

Charles M. Wynn, *The Five Biggest Ideas in Science*. Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 1994.

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. The reviews should follow Turabian form. **Book Reviews should be 5-7 double-spaced pages in length. Book Reviews are due 6 weeks after the final day of the Defend the Faith Apologetics Conference (February 19, 2016).**

3. Session Summaries. Students will write one-page, single-spaced summaries of 12 different sessions from the Defend the Faith Christian Apologetics Conference. Summaries may be submitted via Blackboard. Students taking more than one Defend the Faith course for NOBTS credit may use up to 6 session summaries that they summarize for another course so long as they are shaped for the concerns of each course. **Summaries are due 8 weeks after the conclusion of the Defend the Faith Apologetics Conference (March 4, 2016).**

4. Apologetics Research Paper. Each student is required to submit a research paper on a topic related to Christian and the Sciences. A list of possible topics is included in this syllabus. Topics on the list do not need to be approved by the professor. Topics not on the list do need to be approved by the professor. 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 the Faith Apologetics Conference (March 25, 2016).**

5. Greer-Heard Report. Students must attend the 2016 Greer-Heard Point-Counterpoint Forum in Faith and Culture, February 12-13, 2016 *How Did Jesus Become God?*, featuring Bart Ehrman and Michael Bird, and write a summary and critique of the event, including all Saturday papers. The summaries should include some professional biographical data on each presenter, as well as their major points of content. Students should respond to their points critically. Students unable to attend the Greer-Heard activities may purchase the audio CDs (or MP3 files) from the conference to prepare the report, or a research paper may be substituted for this assignment. Reports should be 12-

15 double-spaced pages in length, not counting bibliography and must adhere to Turabian standards, with 1 inch margins and 12 Times New Roman font. **Greer-Heard Reports are due April 15, 2016.**

Grading

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	35%
Session Summaries	20%
<u>Greer-Heard Report</u>	<u>15%</u>
Final Grade	100%

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

Possible Christianity and the Sciences Paper Topics

Individuals

Charles Darwin	J. P. Moreland
Albert Einstein	Thomas Kuhn
Daniel Dennett	Karl Popper
Richard Dawkins	Nancey Murphy
Alvin Plantinga	Ken Ham
Stephen Hawking	Owen Gingerich
Ian Barbour	Alfred North Whitehead
Robert John Russell	John Polkinghorne
Ted Peters	Barbara Forrest
William Dembski	Hugh Ross
Michael Behe	Augustine of Hippo
Francis Collins	John Lennox
Henry Morris	Frank Tipler
Isaac Newton	John Leslie
Nicholas Copernicus	Robin Collins
Galileo Galilei	Francis Beckwith
Alister McGrath	Keith Ward
Michael Ruse	Paul Davies
E. O. Wilson	William Lane Craig
Stephen Jay Gould	Duane Gish

John Haught
Stanley Jaki
Robert Jastrow
Philip Johnson
Paul Kurtz
Del Ratzsch

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin
Howard Van Til
Kurt Wise
J. Wentzel van Huyssteen
B. B. Warfield
Karol Józef Wojtyła (Pope John Paul II)

Topics

The Age of the Earth
Theistic Evolution
Progressive Creationism
Animal Death and an Old Earth
The Historical Adam
Monogenesis: Its Difficulties and Theological Significance
Intelligent Design
Anthropic Cosmological Fine Tuning
The Fossil Record: Evidence For or Against Evolution?
The Multiverse: Explanation or Desperation?
The Genesis Flood: Local or Universal?
Genesis and Genealogies
The Relationship of Genesis 1 to Genesis 2
The Days of Genesis 1
Was There a Historical Adam?
Who Was Adam?
Stem Cell Research
Christianity and Genetics

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Orthodox Christians accept certain rules of behavior as normative and binding not because they consider them as universally applicable to human beings regardless of their beliefs and conditions, but because they believe them to be commanded by the living God who acts in their lives and to whom they are indebted and responsible. They find themselves by faith in a New Covenant with God the Father through Christ and the Holy Spirit. Why then do our seminaries have courses in Christian Ethics and Moral Theology? And why should we spend time on Orthodox Education Day discussing ethical issues in various areas of human life and work? SVS "oral tradition" does not give us Fr Florovsky's answer to these questions. But for us the answer is clear.