



Christianity and the Sciences
THEO6309/PHIL6311
 New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
 Theological & Historical Studies Division
 Defend Conference, January 3-7, 2022

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Mission Statement

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

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.

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 research, summarize, and critique a contemporary philosopher or theologian related to his or her views concerning the relationship between Christianity and the Sciences.

Textbooks

Students are required to read the required texts:

- Richard F. Carlson, *Science and Christianity: Four Views*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2000.
- Ken Keathley, J. B. Stump, and Joe Aguirre, with *Old Earth or Evolutionary Creation? Discussing Origins with Reasons to Believe and BioLogos*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2017.
- Nancy R. Pearcey and Charles B. Thaxton. *The Soul of Science: Christian Faith and Natural Philosophy*. Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1994.
- Dr. Lemke’s book *A Christian Philosophy of Science* is available free in the Blackboard shell. It may be helpful for reference. PowerPoint presentations from Dr. Lemke’s lectures are also available in the Blackboard shell.
- Students will also read one book in a focused area of Christianity and the sciences they choose from a list in the assignments below.

Course Teaching Methodology

As a part of the Defend conference, the course draws upon presentations made by speakers in that conference. Since class time is extremely limited, the bulk of the study will be done by the student independently in completing assignments outside of class time.

Course Requirements

- **All assignments may be submitted via by email.** However, a Blackboard course shell is going to be utilized for class communications, so please sign up for it.
- **Lecture Attendance, 50 points.** Students are encouraged to attend all plenary sessions of the Defend Christian Apologetics conference, as well as the breakout sessions. Students should attend the lectures by Dr. Lemke, since he is addressing topics about science. Students should listen to audio recordings of all breakout sessions they cannot physically attend. Students will report (one page, single-spaced summaries, noting new insights) of seven sessions, (plenary or breakout sessions). The seven sessions should prioritize those dealing with Christianity and Science. Summaries may be submitted via email. ***Summaries are due 2 weeks after the conclusion of the Defend Conference (Friday, January 28th, 2022).***
- **Assessment of the Texts, 150 points (50 points each).** If possible, it would be helpful if the students could read at least some of the texts before the Defend Conference, but if not they all should be completed within the first month after the Defend Conference. Students should submit a ***4 page, double-spaced*** review of each book, assessing its strengths and weaknesses. ***The assessments are due 4 weeks after the conclusion of the Defend Conference (Friday, February 4th, 2022).***
- **Focused Topic Book Review, 50 points.** Each student is required to review **one** of the following focused topic books regarding a Christian response to the sciences. *Reviews should include:*
 - (1) some brief biographical data concerning the author;
 - (2) an identification of the major elements of the book's 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 NOBTS Style Guide form. ***Book Reviews should be 5-7 double-spaced pages in length. The book review is due 7 weeks after the Defend Conference (Friday, February 25th, 2022). Students may choose any of the following books that they have not previously read:***

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

Michael J. Behe, *Darwin's Black Box: The Biochemical Challenge to Evolution*. New York: The Free Press, 1996.

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

Colin Brown, *Miracles and the Critical Mind*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1984.

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.
- Ken Ham, Hugh Ross, Deborah B. Haarsma, and Stephen C. Meyer. *Four Views of Creation, Evolution, and Intelligent Design*. Counterpoints: The Bible and Theology series, ed. Stanley N. Gundry and J. B. Stump. Zondervan: Grand Rapids, 2017.
- Ken Keathley, and Mark Rooker, *40 Questions about Creation and Evolution*. Nashville: Kregel, 2014.
- John C. Lennox, *God and Stephen Hawking: Whose Design Is It Anyway?*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011. Oxford: Lion, 2011.
- _____, *Seven Days That Divide the World: The Beginning According to Genesis and Science*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2011.
- Henry M. Morris, *Scientific Creationism*. Green Forest, AR: Master, 1974.
- _____, *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.
- _____, *Creation and Time: A Biblical and Scientific Perspective on the Creation-Date Controversy*. Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1994.
- _____, *Beyond The Cosmos: What Recent Discoveries in Astrophysics Reveal about the Glory and Love of God*. Colorado Springs: Navpress, 1996.
- _____, *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.

- **Apologetics Research Paper, 100 points.** 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 below. 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). The paper should consist of about two-thirds descriptive of the person or topic, and one-third an evaluation or critique that voices the student's own perspective about the topic. Papers must adhere to the NOBTS style guide. ***Research papers are due 10 weeks after the final day of the Defend Conference (Friday, March 18, 2022).***

Suggested Christianity and the Sciences Paper Topics

Individuals

Charles Darwin	Alister McGrath	John Leslie
Albert Einstein	Michael Ruse	Robin Collins
Daniel Dennett	E. O. Wilson	Keith Ward
Richard Dawkins	Stephen Jay Gould	Paul Davies
Alvin Plantinga	J. P. Moreland	William Lane Craig
Stephen Hawking	Thomas Kuhn	Duane Gish
Ian Barbour	Karl Popper	Stanley Jaki
Robert John Russell	Nancey Murphy	Robert Jastrow
Ted Peters	Ken Ham	Philip Johnson
William Dembski	Owen Gingerich	Paul Kurtz
Michael Behe	Alfred North Whitehead	Del Ratzsch
Francis Collins	John Polkinghorne	Teilhard de Chardin
Henry Morris	Barbara Forrest	Kurt Wise
Isaac Newton	Hugh Ross	J. Wentzel van Huyssteen
Nicholas Copernicus	John Lennox	
Galileo Galilei	Frank Tipler	

Topics

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

Evaluation of Grades

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

- Notes on Seven Presentations (50 points) – 14.2%
- Review of Three Texts (50 points each – 150 points) – 42.8%
- Focused Topic Book Review (50 points) – 14.2%
- Research Paper (100 points) – 28.5%

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. BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System NOBTS.Blackboard.com.
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.

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

When	What
January 2-9, 2022	Attend the Defend Conference (attend or listen to the recordings of Dr. Lemke's sessions)
January 28, 2022	Email your notes for seven Defend sessions
February 4, 2022	Email your reviews & assessments of the three required texts
February 25, 2022	Email your focused topic book review
March 18, 2022	Email your Apologetics research paper

Selected Bibliography

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- . *Religion and Science: Historical and Contemporary Issues*. New York: Harper Collins, 1997.
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