



Christian Apologetics PHIL5301
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Division of Theological and Historical Studies
Defend the Faith Conference 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

Students will study the major issues one encounters when presenting and defending the Christian faith in our contemporary culture, with particular attention given to biblical reliability, the relationship of science and Christianity, the existence of God, problems of evil, and the uniqueness of Christ. They will also learn to develop and present persuasive responses to those challenges.

Student Learning Outcomes

In order to obey the biblical mandate found in **1 Peter 3:15**, the student, by the end of course, should:

1. Understand the basics of historic Christian theology and be able to recognize concepts that challenge Christian belief.
2. Value the following concepts:
 - ◆ Intellectual accountability in relation to the issues of ultimate concern to Christian faith.
 - ◆ Convincing presentations of Christian faith.
 - ◆ Insightful and effective defenses of the Christian faith.
 - ◆ Clear ways of stating the Christian hope to those who either reject or question the truth claims of Christian theology.
3. Be able to present and defend the Christian faith clearly and rationally.

Required Textbooks

Douglas Groothuis, *Christian Apologetics: A Comprehensive Case for Biblical Faith*, 2nd ed.
Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2022.

Why Believe: Christian Apologetics for a Skeptical Age. Hobbs College Library. Nashville: B & H Academic, 2021.

Course Requirements

1. Lecture Attendance. Students are required to attend all sessions of the *Defend 2023* Christian Apologetics Conference.

2. Required Reading. Students are required to read all of the two required textbooks. Students are not required to review these two books, nor may they review either of the required books in lieu of one of the books listed for book reviews.

3. Book Reviews. Each student is required to review **2** of the following books. **Students may not duplicate book reviews from any other course for this course.** If a student wishes to substitute another book in place of one of the books on the list below, he or she must get the professor's permission in an email to do so.

Robert M. Bowman, Jr., Ed Komoszewski, and Darrell L. Bock, *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Jesus Christ*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007.

Francis S. Collins, *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief*. New York: Free Press, 2007.

Paul Copan, *True for You But Not for Me: Deflating the Slogans That Leave Christians Speechless*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.

Paul Copan, *When God Goes to Starbucks: A Guide to Everyday Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2008.

William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics*. Third Edition. Wheaton: Crossway, 2008.

Craig A. Evans, *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006.

Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism*. New York: Dutton, 2008.

C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001.

C. S. Lewis, *Miracles*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2001.

Alister E. McGrath, *Mere Apologetics: How to Help Seekers and Skeptics Find Faith*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012.

Alister E. McGrath, *Why God Won't Go Away: Is the New Atheism Running on Empty?* Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2011.

Nancy Pearcey, *Finding Truth: 5 Principles for Unmasking Atheism, Secularism, and Other God Substitutes*. Colorado Spring, CO: David C. Cook, 2015.

Nancy Pearcey, *Love Thy Body: Answering Hard Questions About Life and Sexuality*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2018.

Nancy Pearcey, *Saving Leonardo: A Call to Resist the Secular Assault on Mind, Morals, and Meaning*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010.

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

Bob Stewart, *Honest Answers to Hard Questions*. Amazon Kindle Platform, 2022.

Robert B. Stewart, *The Resurrection of Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and N. T. Wright in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006.

Robert B. Stewart, *The Reliability of the New Testament: Bart Ehrman and Daniel B. Wallace in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011.

Robert B. Stewart, *Can Only One Religion Be True?: Paul Knitter and Harold Netland in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013.

Robert B. Stewart, *The Message of Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and Ben Witherington III in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013.

J. Warner Wallace, *Cold-Case Christianity: A Homicide Detective Investigates the Claims of the Gospels*. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2013.

Reviews should include: (1) some professional biographical data concerning the author; (2) a summary of the book; (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. All grammar and citations in the reviews should follow Turabian form. Reviews should be 4-6 double-spaced pages (which won't be difficult if students include all of the above criteria). **Book Reviews are due 7 weeks after the final day of the *Defend 2023 Apologetics Conference* (February 24, 2023).**

4. Session Summaries.

Write one-page, single-spaced summaries of **10 different breakout sessions** from the *Defend 2020* Christian Apologetics Conference. Students taking more than one *Defend 2020* course for NOBTS credit may not use any session summaries that they use for another course. Summaries should be submitted via Canvas. **Summaries are due 15 weeks after the conclusion of the *Defend 2023 Apologetics Conference* (April 21, 2023).**

5. Apologetics Research Paper. Each student is required to submit a research paper on a topic related to Christian Apologetics, e.g., science and faith, a non-Christian religion, atheism, argument(s) for the existence of God, the problem of evil, the reliability of Scripture, and/or miracles, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, etc. The paper should be not less than 2,500 words nor more than 4,000 words in length (double spaced, Times New Roman 12 point font). Papers must adhere to the Turabian style guide. Students may NOT submit the same paper for this course and another NOBTS course. **Research papers are due 13 weeks after the final day of the *Defend 2023 Apologetics Conference* (April 7, 2023).**

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:

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| Conference Attendance | 10% |
| Required Reading | 10% |
| Book Reviews | 20% |
| Research Paper | 30% |

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| <u>Session Summaries</u> | <u>30%</u> |
| Final Grade | 100% |

Extra Credit may be earned for: (1) additional book reviews (students taking more than one course will not receive extra credit for book reviews from another class), additional session summaries, or attendance at approved apologetics events; or (2) attendance at *ad hoc* apologetics events in the spring semester for which the student has previously received the approval of the professor of record.

Technical Assistance

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/- Email for general technical questions/support requests.
2. Selfserve@nobts.edu- Email technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu or My.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, Faculty portal, etc.)
3. Canvas@nobts.edu Click on the “Help” button for technical questions/support requests regarding the NOBTS Canvas System. You can also email questions to Canvas.nobts.edu / nobts.instructure.com.
4. Bluejeanshelpdesk@nobts.edu - Email technical questions/support requests with Bluejeans and NOBTS Bluejeans classrooms (On and Off-Campus).
5. TelephoneHelpDesk@nobts.edu- Email technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Nextiva Phone system.

[504.816.8180](tel:504.816.8180) - Call for any technical questions/support requests. (Currently available Mon-Thurs 7:00am-9:00pm & Fri 7:00-7:00pm Central Time)

Suggested Bibliography

Adams, Marilyn, and Adams, Robert, eds. *The Problem of Evil*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Bowman, Robert M. Jr., Ed Komoszewski, and Darrell L. Bock, *Putting Jesus in His Place: The Case for the Deity of Jesus Christ*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007.

Brown, Colin. *Christianity and Western Thought*. Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 1990.

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

———. *Philosophy and the Christian Faith*. Downer's Grove: InterVarsity, 1968.

Bush, L. Russ. *Classical Readings in Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Academie, 1983.

Clark, Kelly James. *Return to Reason*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

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- Copan, Paul. *True for You But Not for Me: Deflating the Slogans That Leave Christians Speechless*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.
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- Davis, Stephen T., ed. *Encountering Evil: Live Options in Theodicy*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1973.
- Dyrness, William. *Christian Apologetics in a World Community*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1983.
- Evans, Craig A. *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2006.
- Geisler, Norman. *Philosophy of Religion*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974.
- . *Baker Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999.
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- Kreeft, Peter. *Making Sense out of Suffering*. Ann Arbor: Servant, 1986.
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- McGrath, Alister E. *Mere Apologetics: How to Help Seekers and Skeptics Find Faith*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2012.
- Mitchell, Basil. *The Justification of Religious Belief*. New York: Seabury Press, 1974.
- Moreland, J. P. *Christianity and the Nature of Science*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1989.
- . *Scaling the Secular City: A Defense of Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987.
- Nash, Ronald. *Faith and Reason*. Grand Rapids: Academie, 1988.
- Pearcey, Nancy. *Finding Truth: 5 Principles for Unmasking Atheism, Secularism, and Other God Substitutes*. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2015.
- . *Saving Leonardo: A Call to Resist the Secular Assault on Mind, Morals, and Meaning*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2010.
- . *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2004.
- Ramm, Bernard. *Varieties of Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1961.
- Spitzer, Robert J. *New Proofs for the Existence of God: Contributions of Contemporary Physics and Philosophy*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.
- Sproul, R.C., Gerstner, John, and Lindsley, Arthur. *Classical Apologetics: A Rational Defense of the Christian Faith and a Critique of Presuppositional Apologetics*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984.

- Stewart, Robert B. *Can Only One Religion Be True?: Paul Knitter and Harold Netland in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013.
- . *The Resurrection of Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and N. T. Wright in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2006.
- . *The Reliability of the New Testament: Bart Ehrman and Daniel B. Wallace in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2011.
- . *The Message of Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and Ben Witherington III in Dialogue*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2013.
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- Swinburne, Richard. *The Concept of Miracle*. London: Macmillan, 1970.
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