



LEAVELL COLLEGE

AT NEW ORLEANS BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Defend Explorations in Apologetics: LCTH3343

Defend the Faith, January 2–5, 2024

Spring 2024

Dr. Thomas Doughty

Assistant Professor of Theology & Christian Worldview

504.816.8040

Office hours: Mon, Fri 1-5pm Central (Phone or Bluejeans by Appointment)

LSC – Leavell College

Tdoughty@nobts.edu

DoughtyGrader@gmail.com

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

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to introduce students to various topics in contemporary apologetics through scholar- and peer- interaction. In conjunction with the annual NOBTS Defend the Faith conference, students will explore ways to communicate the Christian worldview in a pluralistic world.

COURSE STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the conclusion of the semester, the student will:

1. Understand major issues and arguments in contemporary apologetics.
2. Value a coherent application of the Christian worldview in contemporary culture, including non-Christian contexts.
3. Communicate sound biblical and theological arguments to Christians and skeptics with understanding and compassion.

COURSE TEXTS

The following textbook is required:

Gould, Paul M. *Cultural Apologetics: Renewing the Christian Voice, Conscience, and Imagination in a Disenchanted World*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2019.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Defend the Faith Attendance (20% of total grade): Students will attend the Defend the Faith conference at NOBTS January 2-5, 2024. At the conference, students will attend one class meeting with Dr. Doughty (time and location will be communicated via email) and a talk during each scheduled timeslot (breakouts and plenary sessions). After the conference, students will report the breakouts they attended on Canvas.

Due Saturday, January 20 by 11:59pm

2. Session Summaries (20% of total grade): Students will write 15 session summaries based on attendance or recordings from Defend the Faith. Students must report on 5 plenary sessions and then may choose any other breakouts or plenary sessions. Summaries should be 2 paragraphs each with one paragraph summarizing the session and one paragraph explaining how the session's content changed the student's understanding of apologetics or can be applied in the student's ministry context. All summaries should be submitted in one document (12 pt. Times New Roman, double-spaced, in .docx format).

Due Saturday, February 10 by 11:59pm

3. Book Review (20% of total grade): Students will read the required textbook *Cultural Apologetics* and write a 4-page book review (12 pt. Times New Roman, double-spaced, in .docx format). The review should use parenthetical citations for page references and include:

- a bibliography entry
- a brief biography about the author (e.g., career position, degrees, research interests, and other works) (1 paragraph)
- a concise summary of the book's contents (no more than 2 pages)
- connections to topics discussed at the Defend the Faith conference (1 page)
- a critique of the author's arguments, including insights which changed the student's understanding of apologetics (1 page)

Due Saturday, March 2 by 11:59pm

4. Book Summary (20% of total grade): Students will read and summarize one work from the list below and write a 3-page book summary (12 pt. Times New Roman, double-spaced, in .docx format). This paper should only *summarize* the book's arguments. Do not merely reproduce the table of contents, but outline the author's arguments in the order they are presented throughout the book.

Due Saturday, March 23 by 11:59pm

Students must identify their selection from this list by Saturday, January 20 by 11:59pm. Students are not allowed to select a book they are using for an assignment in another class:

Anderson, Tawa J. *Why Believe: Christian Apologetics for a Skeptical Age*. Nashville, TN: B&H Academic, 2021.

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

Geisler, Norman L. and Frank Turek. *I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2004.

Habermas, Gary R. *Risen Indeed: A Historical Investigation into the Resurrection of Jesus*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Academic, 2021.

Kelly, Stewart E. and James K. Dew Jr. *Understanding Postmodernism: A Christian Perspective*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Academic, 2017.

5. Personal Reflection (20% of total grade): Students will research and respond to each of the following reflection prompts. Students will write one page per prompt but all should be turned in as one document (12 pt. Times New Roman, double-spaced, in .docx format). Reflections should evidence background research on the topic, sound biblical reasoning, and pertinent theological application. First- or second-person language is allowed when the student is sharing personal experiences. Reflections will be graded for grammar, clarity and coherence, and substantial application of apologetics in ministry.

Due Saturday, April 13 by 11:59pm

Reflection prompts:

- Recount one event/conversation in your life or ministry which you would have approached differently on the basis of your studies through Defend the Faith. Explain any new attitudes, arguments, or examples which could have benefited this past event.
- Explain the apologetics topic which interested you the most in your studies through Defend the Faith. Create a study plan which you can use to go further in your studies, including books, mentors, conversations, or ministries you could pursue to benefit your experience on that topic.
- Seek out one apologetic conversation this semester and report your activities. This could include sharing the gospel with someone in another religion, addressing objections from a skeptic, or answering Bible problems or doubt with a believer.

GRADING

Defend Attendance: 20%
Session Summaries: 20%
Book Review: 20%
Book Summary: 20%
Personal Reflection: 20%

GRADING SCALE

A: 93 – 100
B: 85 – 92
C: 77 – 84
D: 70 – 76
F: below 70

COURSE OUTLINE

***All assignments must be completed to pass the course. If any assignment is not submitted within two weeks of the listed deadline, the student will not pass the course.**

| Assignment | Assignment Due by 11:59pm Central |
|--|-----------------------------------|
| Defend Attendance & Book Response Choice | January 20 |
| Session Summaries | February 10 |
| Book Review | March 2 |
| Book Response | March 23 |
| Personal Reflection | April 13 |

ADDITIONAL COURSE INFORMATION

1. Attendance Policy: Leavell College follows the attendance policy as stated in the Leavell College catalog. **Students must attend the complete Defend the Faith conference and be present in every session time slot.**
2. Assistance from Instructor and Teaching Assistant: The intensive format of this course places responsibility for completing assignments on the student with less direction than a traditional class. However, Dr. Doughty and the teaching assistant are readily available throughout the term via email. Please ask for help on content or assignments as needed.
3. Policy for Late Submissions:
 - a. All assignments must be submitted in the course Canvas shell. Emailed submissions will not be accepted unless by explicit request of the instructor.
 - b. Written Assignments: Written assignments must be submitted by the assigned deadline. A late written assignment will be assessed a 10 percent penalty if it is submitted after the deadline and a 20 percent penalty after seven calendar days. **No written assignment will be accepted after two weeks.**
3. Plagiarism Policy: A high standard of personal integrity is expected of all Leavell College students. Copying another person's work, submitting downloaded material without proper references, submitting material without properly citing the source, submitting the same material for credit in more than one course, and committing other such forms of dishonesty are strictly forbidden. *Although anything cited in three sources is considered public domain, we require that all sources be cited.* Any infraction may result in failing the assignment and the course. Any infraction will be reported to the Dean of Leavell College for further action.
4. Classroom and Online Decorum: Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of the others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity is expected at all times. Electronic devices should be used only for classroom purposes as indicated by the professor.
5. Special Needs: If you need accommodations for a disability, please set up a meeting with the professor for consideration of any modifications you may need.
6. Emergency Plan: In the event the NOBTS schedule is impacted due to a natural event,

go

to the seminary's website for pertinent information. Class will continue as scheduled through the Canvas site. Please note announcements and assignments on the course's Canvas site.

7. Technical Assistance: For general NOBTS technical help, go to www.NOBTS.edu/itc/

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Anderson, Tawa J., W. Michael Clark, and David K. Naugle. *An Introduction to Christian Worldview: Pursuing God's Perspective in a Pluralistic World*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2017.

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

Cowan, Steven B., ed. *Five Views on Apologetics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000.

Geisler, Norman. *Encyclopedia of Christian Apologetics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1999.

Groothuis, Douglas. *Christian Apologetics: A Comprehensive Case for Biblical Faith*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2011.

Holden, Joseph M., ed. *The Comprehensive Guide to Apologetics*. Eugene, OR: Harvest House, 2018.

Kreeft, Peter and Ronald K. Tacelli. *Handbook of Christian Apologetics*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 1994.

McGrath, Alister E. *Narrative Apologetics: Sharing the Relevance, Joy, and Wonder of the Christian Faith*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2019.

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

Strobel, Lee. *The Case for Faith: A Journalist Investigates the Toughest Objections to Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000.