

GOLDEN GATE BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

MILL VALLEY CAMPUS
L3315, Christian Apologetics

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

Christian apologetics has taken center stage in the very definition of evangelism in our post-modern world. As believers seek to proclaim Christ's Lordship in an increasingly diverse world marked by high-speed communication and technology, challenges to Christian truth claims are becoming an every-day challenge. How do we respond in a biblical, God-honoring, clear, compelling fashion? Though particular apologetic challenges presented by specific groups will be examined, the underlying material will allow the student to respond to a much wider range of apologetic challenges to the Christian faith.

EPORTFOLIO REFLECTIONS

All degree-seeking students must reflect on the work completed as part of this course and the manner in which the course contributed to his/her growth in relation to five Essential Leadership Characteristics selected by the student and referenced in the *syllabus under* Course Learning Outcomes. These reflections must be recorded in the student's ePortfolio and a copy emailed to the professor *no later than the last class period*.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

A functional familiarity with the worldview and argumentation of the modern atheists will give the student an understanding of the basic foundational truths of the Faith that he or she must master so as to be able to give "a reason for the hope within" (1 Peter 3:15). An adequate and balanced knowledge of Islamic belief, and an understanding of Islamic practice, will give to the student a deeper appreciation of the centrality of Jesus Christ, the cost of discipleship, and a call to evangelization of the Muslim people. J1, J2, F11, F14, M15, M17, R19.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course will seek to allow the student to advance in understanding with reference to key apologetics issues raised in the following areas:

- 1) How do we defend the concept of God's existence in light of modern attacks upon theism in general?
- 2) How do we know that God has spoken, and that we still have a reliable record of His dealings

with mankind?

- 3) What of the New Atheists, and the attacks upon the reliability and uniqueness of the New Testament?
- 4) What of Islam? The Qur'ân? The Hadith? Jihad? These issues are now relevant to all believers across the world.

COURSE LEARNING EXERCISES/ASSIGNMENTS

Class will meet from 9am till noon, and 2pm till 5pm, Wednesday, January 13th through Friday, January 15th, 2010, at the Mill Valley Campus.

Reading Assignments: Students will turn in a signed confirmation of the reading of each of the four assigned texts *by the end of the final class session on January 15th*. This means students should have the vast majority of their reading finished prior to the beginning of class in January.

Review of the Ehrman/White Debate and the Barker/White debate (URL will be provided). These debates will be provided in .mp4 format, and it is the student's responsibility to be able to view the debates. These reviews should not only outline the actual debate, but provide main points made in each section, review of how well each debater did in answering the questions asked by their opponent in cross-examination, and the students over all thoughts and conclusions regarding the debate thesis.

Final project: students will write an apologetically oriented letter to an unbeliever of their choice (atheist, Muslim, Mormon, whatever would be most helpful in the student's sphere of ministry) that demonstrates and applies the learning gained from the books, class instruction, and debates. As this project will weigh heavily in the grading, attention should be paid to form and presentation, but most importantly in presenting as clear and biblical an apologetic as possible.

Debate reviews and final project are all due by 12:00 Noon Friday, January 22nd, 2010! Papers should be submitted electronically to the e-mail address included above. Please submit these in Word, .pdf, or .rtf format.

Required Texts: Most of the texts for this class are designed to function as resources for future study.

Bahnsen, Greg L. *Always Ready: Directions for Defending the Faith*. Texarkana, AR: Covenant Media Foundation, 1998.

Wallace, Daniel, Komoszewski, J. Ed., Sawyer, M. James. *Reinventing Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2006.

White, James. *The Forgotten Trinity*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 1998.

_____, *Scriptura Alone*. Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House Publishers, 2004.