

# SOUTHWESTERN

BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

*What you believe to be true will control you whether it's true or not.*  
—Jeremy LaBorde

**Course Title:** PHILO 4373 A; Christian Apologetics  
**Class Dates, Time, and Term:** WF, 9:25 AM – 10:40 AM, Spring 2009  
**Room:** F-21  
**Professor:** William A. Dembski, F-215D

**COURSE DESCRIPTION** An introductory study of selected issues in apologetics. Common objections to Christian truth claims will be critically appraised and answered. Three hours.

**COURSE GOALS** This course will help students reflect with theological accuracy, philosophical precision, and cultural sensitivity on the Christian apologetic enterprise.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES** In this course the student will:

- Gain facility with the main apologetic strategies and arguments for defending the Christian faith.
- Understand the philosophical and cultural backdrop of contemporary apologetics.
- Learn how to write a critical review, a vital genre for engaging apologetic arguments.

## COURSE TEXTS

### Required

- [D&R] William A. Dembski & Jay Wesley Richards, eds., *Unapologetic Apologetics: Meeting the Challenges of Theological Studies* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2001).
- [CSL] C. S. Lewis, *Miracles* (1947; revised and reprinted San Francisco: Harper, 2001).
- [NP] Nancy Pearcey, *Total Truth: Liberating Christianity from Its Cultural Captivity* (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway, 2004).
- [MG] Martin Gardner, *The Flight of Peter Fromm* (1973; reprinted Amherst, N.Y.: Prometheus, 1994).
- [BCM] Francis J. Beckwith, William Lane Craig, and J. P. Moreland, eds., *To Everyone an Answer: A Case for the Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2004).

### Recommended

- Kenneth D. Boa and Robert M. Bowman Jr., *Faith Has Its Reasons: An Integrative Approach to Defending Christianity*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Waynesboro, Georgia: Paternoster, 2006).
- C. Campbell-Jack and G. J. McGrath, *New Dictionary of Christian Apologetics* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2006).
- Doug Powell, *Holman QuickSource Guide to Christian Apologetics* (Nashville: Broadman and Holman, 2006).

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

- (1) (Almost) daily quizzes — 20 percent positive.
- (2) In-class midterm exam — 20 percent positive.
- (3) In-class final exam — 30 percent positive.
- (4) 2,000- to 2,500-word critical review of MG — 30 percent positive. Due last class meeting.
- (5) Active class participation — up to 10 percent negative.
- (6) Single-page course-specific executive summary of YOU (with clearly recognizable picture of yourself) — up to 5 percent negative if not handed in or carelessly done. Due third class meeting.

## **GRADES**

Grades will be determined by the following scale: 100-98 (A+); 97-93 = A; 92-90 (A-); 89-88 (B+); 87-83 (B); 82-80 (B-); 79-78 (C+); 77-73 (C); 72-70 (C-); 69-68 (D+); 67-63 (D); 62-60 (D-); Below 60 = F.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Plagiarism is the misrepresentation of another's work as one's own. When the professor concludes that a student has plagiarized an assignment, the student will receive the grade of zero for the assignment, and the office of the Vice President for Student Affairs will be notified about the incident. The same actions apply to other acts of academic dishonesty such as cheating on examinations (see Ethical Conduct section in SWBTS catalog).

## **SPECIAL NEEDS**

Individuals with documented impairments who may need special circumstances for exams, classroom participation, or assignments should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester in order for special arrangements to be considered.

## **CLASS SCHEDULE**

- (1) D&R, foreword, preface, chs. 1 || 4, 5
- (2) D&R, chs. 7-10 || 11-13
- (3) CSL, chs. 1-5 || 6-10
- (4) CSL, chs. 11-14 || 15-17 plus appendices
- (5) NP, foreword, chs 1 || 2-3
- (6) NP, chs. 4-5 || 6-7
- (7) NP, chs. 8-9 || 10-11
- (8) NP, chs. 12-13 || appendices
- (9) MG, afterword, foreword, chs. 1-14
- (10) MG, chs. 15-30
- (11) BCM, foreword, intro., chs. 1-3 || 4-5
- (12) BCM, chs. 6-8 || 9-11
- (13) BCM, chs. 12-14 || 15-16
- (14) BCM, chs. 17-18 || 19-20, conclusion

## **COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- Steven B. Cowan, ed., *Five Views on Apologetics* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan, 2000).
- Robert Greene, *The 33 Strategies of War* (New York: Viking, 2006).
- Robert Greene and Joost Elffers, *The 48 Laws of Power* (New York: Penguin Putnam, 2000).
- Phillip E. Johnson, *Reason in the Balance: The Case Against Naturalism in Science, Law, and Education* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 1995).
- Josh McDowell, *The New Evidence That Demands a Verdict* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1999).
- J. P. Moreland and William Lane Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2003).
- Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1989).
- William Strunk Jr. and E. B. White, *The Elements of Style*, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1979 or later).