

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

PCP 541 Psychology and the Christian Faith Tuesdays 1:30 – 4:15

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COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines theology and the behavioral sciences in an attempt to integrate spirituality, theology, and pastoral psychology. Psychological investigations of theological themes and phenomena engaged in by counselors will be discussed. Consideration will be given to intra-personal and interpersonal problems of human behavior with emphasis on biblical strategies for cultivating an integrated Christian personality.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this course are stated behaviorally. Thus, upon successful completion of the course the student should be able to:

1. Effectively critique scholarly material related to psychology and the Christian faith.
2. Articulate the presuppositions and key principles of theology which interact with psychological theory and methodology.
3. Explain the barriers and the varied approaches to the integration of psychology and theology.
4. Examine crucial theological doctrines as they appropriately influence pastoral counseling methodology.
5. Employ biblically and psychologically sound strategies for cultivating growth and maturity of the Christian personality.
6. Understand the psychological study of religious phenomena.
7. Utilize Scripture, prayer, spiritual and psychological resources, principles, and techniques in counseling under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
8. Provide evidence of participation in research projects which demonstrate involvement in appropriately utilizing psychology and theology.

TEXTBOOKS

Required:

Boa, K. *Augustine to Freud: What Theologians and Psychologists Tell Us About Human Nature*. Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman, 2004.

Carter, J. B., and Narramore, B. *The Integration of Psychology and Theology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids MI: Zondervan, 1979.

McMinn, Mark R. *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House, 1996.

Recommended:

Benner, D. G. and Hill, P.C. eds. *Baker Encyclopedia of Psychology and Counseling*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999.

METHODOLOGY

The course will consist of class lecture and discussion led by the professor, small group discussions, presentations, student research projects, and guest speakers.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/EVALUATION/GRADING PROCEDURES

1. **REQUIRED READINGS:** Student will be required to read all assigned readings. This will include *all* of the text books listed in the required reading and additional supplemental readings as assigned. Reading schedule and course content outline will be distributed the first day of class.
2. **BOOK CRITIQUE/INTERACTION #1:** Student will be expected to write a 2-3 page interaction/critique paper on Carter and Narramore's book- *The Integration of Psychology and Theology*. Student will interact with the four proposed models of integration and indicate which of the four models most closely aligns with his/her integration approach.
3. **BOOK CRITIQUE/INTERACTION #2:** Student will be expected to write a 4-5 page paper on Kenneth Boa's book—*Augustine to Freud*. The intent is to compare and contrast what selected theologians and psychologists have written about concerning the nature of human needs and human nature, in order to discover the extent to which the two accounts can be synthesized.
4. **RESEARCH PAPER:** The student will select one of the following topics of interest and present the issues of integrating psychology and the Christian Faith related to that topic. Paper should be 12 -15 pages in length. (Written text). Strict adherence to APA or Turabian format is required. The intent is to wrestle with these difficult and often controversial topics and make application of the course to real life issues. This list is not exhaustive and if the student has a topic that is of interest to him or her, please see the instructor.
 1. Hypnosis, ESP, Biofeedback
 2. Sin and Mental illness
 3. Guilt, Shame, & Conviction,
 4. Atonement and Psychological Implications
 5. Responsibility, Accountability, Free Will & Psychopathology
 6. Demon influence/possession and psychopathology

7. Homosexuality, Transgender Issues—Biological, Psychological & Theological Issues and Implications
 8. Reconciliation & Forgiveness
5. TESTS: Unless otherwise noted, there will be two exams, each worth 100 pts. They will attempt to assess mastery level in regards to application of course content. Anything in the required texts or what is covered class lectures and discussions is potential test material. Professor reserves the right to make the exams take home, essay, or “in class.”

GRADING PROCEDURE

Mid-Term Examination	25%
Final Examination	25%
Research Paper	25%
Book critique # 1	10%
Book critique #2	15%

BASIC OUTLINE

The course outline and calendar will be distributed in class.

****Professors reserve the right to modify the course requirements if necessary.**