

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THE 529 Theology, Psychology & Moral Behavior

Jan. 11-12/Feb.8-9/Mar.7-8

Fridays 1:30-5:00 PM & 6:00-10:00 PM

Saturdays 9:00 AM-12:00 PM & 1:00-5:00 PM

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Spring 2008

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course examines human behavior and ethical issues facing contemporary Christians from a biblical worldview. Moral decision making both in the individual and societal contexts will be considered. Consideration will be given to problems of human behavior with emphasis on biblical strategies for cultivating an integrated Christian worldview which is balanced theologically, psychologically and ethically.

OBJECTIVES

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

1. Articulate the presuppositions and key principles of theology which interact with psychology and contemporary ethical issues.
2. Explain the barriers and the varied approaches to the integration of psychology and theology and moral behavior.
3. Effectively critique scholarly material related to psychology and the Christian faith.
4. Employ biblically and psychologically sound strategies for cultivating growth and maturity of the Christian personality.
5. Utilize Scripture, prayer, spiritual and psychological resources, principles, and techniques in counseling under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.
6. Analyze various basic ethical systems, particularly those utilized within the Christian tradition.
7. Integrate the ethical teachings of the Old and New Testaments and their underlying rationale into their approach to doing ethical decision making.
8. Formulate a model of ethical decision making that is both theologically and psychologically balanced.
9. Combine the biblical ethical principles with data about various ethical issues to arrive at satisfactory decisions.
10. Apply the norms of biblical ethics using a model of ethical decision making, to various specific ethical issues facing the contemporary Christian.

TEXTBOOKS

Required:

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.

Scott B. Rae. *Moral Choices: An Introduction to Ethics*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000.

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, student presentations and student research projects.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS/EVALUATION/GRADING PROCEDURES

CHAPEL: Friday, February 8, 1:30 - 2:45 pm.

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.
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. (This will be due on the first day of class, Friday, Jan. 11th.)
3. **BOOK CRITIQUE/INTERACTION #2:** Student will be expected to write a 2-3 page interaction/critique paper on Mark McMinn's book, *Psychology, Theology, and Spirituality in Christian Counseling*. (This will be due Friday, Feb. 8th)
4. **BOOK CRITIQUE/INTERACTION #3:** Student will be expected to write a 2-3 page paper on Scott B. Rae's book, *Moral Choices: An Introduction to Ethics*. (This will be due Friday, March 7th.)

5. RESEARCH PAPER: Student will select one of the following topics of interest (or another with the professor's permission) and discuss the issues surrounding the integration of theology, psychology and relevant ethical issues related to that topic. Paper should be 12 -15 pages in length (written text) and utilize a minimum of 12-15 scholarly references to demonstrate research base. Strict adherence to APA style is required. The intent is to wrestle with these substantive, challenging and often controversial topics and make application of the course to real life issues. Possible topics include:
 1. Hypnosis, ESP, and Biofeedback
 2. Sin, Mental Illness and Accountability
 3. Shame, Guilt and Conviction
 4. Psychological Implications and Dynamics of Atonement and Sanctification
 5. Demonic Influence/Possession and Psychopathology
 6. Homosexuality and Transgender Issues—Biological, Psychological and Theological Issues and Implications
 7. Confession, Apology, Restitution, Forgiveness and Reconciliation
 8. Abortion
 9. Reproductive Technologies and Genetics
 10. Euthanasia
 11. Race, Ethnicity and Discrimination and Prejudice
6. CLASS PRESENTATION: Student will select one of the above topics on which to make a 15-20 minute in-depth presentation to the class. The topic may be the same one chosen for the research paper. The student is encouraged to make their presentation as unique and creative as possible. The student will provide a bibliography of scholarly resources utilized. Presentation topics and dates will be scheduled the first day of class.
1. TEST: There will be a comprehensive final exam, worth 100 pts. It will attempt to assess mastery level 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 exam format take-home, essay, or in class.

GRADING PROCEDURE

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| Book critique #1 | 10% |
| Book critique #2 | 10% |
| Book critique #3 | 10% |
| Class attendance and participation | 10% |
| Research paper | 20% |
| Class presentation | 20% |
| Comprehensive final exam | 20% |

BASIC OUTLINE

The course outline and calendar will be distributed in class.

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