



**THE 529 Theology, Psychology and  
Moral Behavior  
SYLLABUS**

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Spring 2009  
Mondays 1:30 to 4:15 pm

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is an interdisciplinary investigation into the history of integration attempts between the fields of theology and psychology. Integration has received renewed interest in the light of the growth of the impact of APA Division 36, Psychology of Religion. The course will investigate the concept of mental health from a biblical perspective, drawing from an understanding that normal discipleship, reflecting the teachings of Jesus, should logically lead to a healthy personality. Breakthroughs in the understanding of a Christian approach to cognitive-behavioral therapy have made it possible to consider and evaluate the possibilities of a distinctly Christian approach to psychotherapy. The moral and ethical implications for such a course of action will also be explored.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

Upon successful completion of the course students should be able to:

1. Function effectively as Christian counselors in a secular context while still feeling confident that they are fulfilling their Biblical mandate
2. Construct a biblical theology which explores the nature of human beings and their ultimate purpose and potential, creating a framework for counseling practice
3. Formulate therapeutic goals for their clients to promote their mental health and not just concentrate on resolving their psychopathologies
4. Create biblically congruent interventions for a local church's discipleship/mentoring program that would promote principles of mental and psychological health
5. Adapt their outcomes-based CBT skills and interventions to ethically utilize spiritually-based methodologies such as prayer, scriptures, and inner healing prayer with Christian clients
6. Develop a biblically sensitive moral framework within which they can evaluate such issues as abortion, right-to-life, pacifism and war, genetics, euthanasia, homosexuality, racism, capital punishment, corporate greed, terrorism, political refugees, illegal aliens, sexual trafficking, international aggression and poverty.

## REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Clinton, T. and Ohlschlager, G. (Eds.) (2002). *Competent Christian Counseling (Volume One): Foundations and practice of compassionate soul care*. Waterbrook Press: Colorado Springs, CO

Entwistle, D.N. (2004). *Integrative approaches to psychology and Christianity: An introduction to worldview issues, philosophical foundations, and models of integration*. Wipf and Stock Publishers: Eugene, OR.

Willard, D. (2002). *Renovation of the heart: Putting on the character of Christ*. Navpress: Colorado Springs, CO.

## RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS

McMinn, M.R. & Campbell, C.D. (2007). *Integrative psychotherapy: Toward a comprehensive Christian approach*. InterVarsity Press: Downers Grove, IL.

## METHODOLOGY

The format of the course will consist of lectures, guest speakers, class discussions, case studies, multi-media presentations, assignments, and a final comprehensive examination.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Professionalism and courtesy in regard to class attendance is expected.
2. Active participation in class discussions is expected and will account for 10% of the overall grade for the class. The quality of these participations will also be evaluated when the grade is determined.
3. Three reflection papers of 5 pages each will be presented on dates to be determined on the first day of class. The papers will cover the student's understanding of the three prescribed books and include the student's interactions and evaluations of the books. The first reflection paper will be due within two weeks of the start of the semester and will be on the work by Willard (2002). Since this is a 250 page book of dense prose, it is suggested that the student begins early to prepare this assignment. The second assignment on Entwistle (2004) and the third one on McMinn and Campbell (2007) will not cover the entire books. This will be explained in the first class period. These three reflection papers will count 15% of the total course grade each (a total of 45%).
4. A final comprehensive examination covering all text, lecture, class discussions, speakers, and multi-media presentations will account for a further 20% of the overall grade for the class.

5. A 12 to 15 page research paper on a topic approved by the professor will be submitted during the course of the semester.

Papers will be typed, double-spaced and properly referenced using the guidelines of the current APA style manual.

- All documents and assignments must be submitted electronically by email, double-spaced, in a Word format and written in New Times Roman (12 points). *No paper copies will be marked.*
- The document should be saved on your memory device using the following name “THE 529 Research Report/your name”.
- The subject line of your email must include the words “THE 529 Theology Psychology Moral Behavior/your name”. Nothing else should be written in the subject line.
- The email address to which the professor must reply must be included on the front page of the document. Failure to do so will result in the paper not being returned to the student.
- The reference list will consist of at least 12 resources (the vast majority less than 10 years old) and at least 8 being professional, peer-reviewed journal articles. Unless it can be substantiated, none of these resources will be internet-based resources

The paper will account for 25% of the overall grade for the class. The grade will be based on the correct use of APA guidelines, for the readability of the document (including spelling, vocabulary, syntax, logical presentation of ideas and paragraph structure) and the utility of the information that is presented in the document. The student will make a presentation on their research the week following their date of submission. The class presentation need not be more than 15 minutes and should provide the students in the class a summary of your research results. The use of a case study for this purpose is encouraged.

## GRADING PROCEDURES

Here is a summary of the weighted distribution of each element that will contribute to the overall class grade:

Spontaneous classroom participation	10%
Three reflection papers, 15% each	45%
Final examination	20%
Research Paper	25%

## GRADE BREAKDOWN

The following grade breakdown will be used in the course:

A+= Work is publishable

A = 94-100% (Excellent Work)  
A- = 90-93% (Excellent, but...)  
B+ = 87-89% (Very good work)  
B = 84-86% (Good work)  
B- = 80-83% (Good work, but...)  
C+ = 77-79% (Fair, but almost good enough)  
C = 74-76% (Fair work)  
C- = 70-73% (Just passable)  
D+ = 67-69% (Poor but almost made it)  
D = 64% -66% (Poor)  
D- = 60%-63% (Highly questionable)

*This syllabus was prepared by Dr. Johan Mostert on November 3, 2008. The professor reserves the right to expand, change, or otherwise alter this syllabus as may be necessary since this is the first time this course is being presented at AGTS.*