

PR 5500 (PR6000): APOLOGETICS
FALL 2008, COURSE SYLLABUS
COLUMBUS, OHIO EXTENSION
TRINITY EVANGELICAL DIVINITY SCHOOL
INSTRUCTOR: TOM MCCALL
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COURSE DESCRIPTION: This course is an introduction to the discipline of apologetics. Focusing on the person of Christ, it treats some of the issues involved in defending a Christian worldview in an increasingly pluralistic age.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: After completing this course, the student should

1. Have an appreciation of the nature and significance of Christian apologetics, its relation to evangelism and broader theological concerns, as well as its role in ministries of the church.
2. Demonstrate a basic awareness of some of the major intellectual challenges to Christian faith in the contemporary world and the cultural context within which these challenges gain plausibility.
3. Be able to think through various intellectual challenges to Christian faith, understand some possible Christian responses to such challenges, and be familiar with resources available for further personal study.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Students are expected to attend all class sessions and read all course texts.
2. Students will take a mid-term exam and a final exam.

REQUIRED TEXTS:

Geivett, R. Douglas and Gary R. Habermas, eds. *In Defense of Miracles: A Comprehensive Case for God's Action in History*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1997.

Netland, Harold. *Encountering Religious Pluralism: The Challenge to Christian Faith and Mission*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2001.

Plantinga, Alvin. *Warranted Christian Belief*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000.

Sennett, James F. and Douglas Groothuis, eds. *In Defense of Natural Theology: A Post-Humean*

Assessment. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2005.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

22-23 August

Topics: Introduction: Objectives, Types, Approaches of Christian Apologetics; Freud-Marx Complaints; Problems of Evil

Reading: Alvin Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, pp. 67-107, 135-198, 458-499.

19-20 September

Topics: Pluralism and Naturalism

Reading: Alvin Plantinga, *Warranted Christian Belief*, pp. 199-240, 422-457; Harold Netland, *Encountering Religious Pluralism*, pp. 181-348.

14-15 November

Topic: The Existence of God

Reading: James Sennett and Douglas Groothuis, eds., *In Defense of Natural Theology*.

12-13 December

Topic: Jesus Christ

Reading: R. Douglas Geivett and Gary R. Habermas, eds., *In Defense of Miracles*.

THE APOLOGIST'S EVENING PRAYER

Thoughts are but coins. Let not me trust, instead
Of Thee, their thin-worn image of Thy head.
From all my thoughts, even from my thoughts of Thee,
O Thou fair Silence, fall, and set me free
Lord of the narrow gate and the needle's eye,
Take from me all my trumpery lest I die.

– C. S. Lewis