

WESTERN SEMINARY - SACRAMENTO

EVANGELISM AND APOLOGETICS

PTS 503M: 2 Credit Hours

Dr. Tim Dally

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SYLLABUS – SPRING 2010

COURSE SCHEDULE: Jan. 29—30, Feb. 26—27

Friday 5:55 pm—9:55 pm, Saturday 9 am—5 pm; plus an additional 6 class hours allotted to group study for a group project/presentation. There are some assignments due through email.

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Evangelism and Apologetics will explore theology, history, philosophy, and the practices for “making disciples.” The student will learn and reflect on their own perspectives, ideas, and skills as they consider the mission of God and how congregations implement intentional strategies through the local church. In the course we will consider how to engage others in regard to faith in Christ. We will also consider biblically based approaches for apologetic practice and habit.

COURSE CONTRIBUTIONS TO STATED DEGREE OUTCOMES: The objectives of this course are linked to desired outcomes for the four seminary degrees for which this course is a requirement. Below is an excerpt of the degree outcomes to which this course refers.

Be a person whose Christ-like character is worthy of being emulated, and whose integrity imparts credibility to his/her ministry...and responsibilities mandated by God (MFM 500; SFS 501, 502; overarching)

Be able to think biblically and critically so that various truth claims can be effectively evaluated...has embraced a biblical worldview (THS 501-3, THS 508; overarching)...be able to apply the basic elements of critical analysis and sound reasoning (MFM 500; overarching)...sensitive to cultural variations in styles of thinking (overarching)...reflects an appropriately humble and charitable spirit in applying biblical criteria for truth (overarching).

Be a true life-long learner, building upon his/her seminary training...committed to pursuing growth and learning in key areas of need...able to access and manage information (including that available via computer/on-line resources) so that it is readily available when needed.

COURSE GOALS / OBJECTIVES: Upon completion of course a student shall...

1. Possess a theology for making disciples

2. Understand the components and processes of a worldview
3. Have a maturing knowledge of Christian Theism
4. Understand how contextual dynamics impact practical strategies
5. Be able to explain the Gospel in conversation
6. Understand and consider practices for personal and corporate evangelism
7. Discover the biblical portrayal of the mission of God
8. Be able to assess the health of congregational practices
9. Consider the role of ethics in evangelistic practices
10. To grapple with some of the key arguments that challenge Christian Theism

TEXTBOOKS

Please support your seminary by using the following link for all your Amazon purchases – a minimum of 4% comes to Western Seminary. Click [here](#) to order texts and other products.

1. Keller, Timothy (2008) *The Reason for God*, Dutton ISBN: 978-0-5259049-3
2. Grenz, Stanley J. (1996) *A Primer on Postmodernism*, Eerdmans ISBN: 0-8028-0864-6
3. Wells, David F. (1994) *God in the Wasteland*, Eerdmans ISBN: 978-8029-4179-7
4. Hitchens, Christopher (2007) *God Is Not Great*, Twelve ISBN: 978-0-446-69796-5

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Reading: Complete all reading required by the assigned dates so that you will be able to participate and benefit from class discussions. Reading should be done at a familiarity level (about 45 pages per hour) that assumes knowledge of the material assigned.

Assignments:

Class Participation – Attend and actively participate in discussions and activities. (10%)

Reading Summaries (Due dates listed on Schedule) – You will read the assigned texts and prepare a 2-3 page summary of content and key concepts. You will also rate with explanation each book (one to four stars) in the paper for the book's readability, insight on subject, practicality, and its relationship to the Bible and faith. (20%)

Book Review (Due at end of course) – With a book approved by the instructor you will select and read one additional book focused on evangelism and/or apologetics. You will write a 3-4 page review that includes your personal interaction and the three most important ideas that you feel the book contains for you and the subject matter of the course. (10%)

Church Research Project (Due at end of course) – Write a 4-5 page paper looking at a local church and its strategy and practice of evangelism. This process should include an interview with a pastor asking them about their philosophy and practices, and can include discussions with members. (20%)

The paper should include:

1. The theology, philosophy, and strategies.

2. A review of the effectiveness of strategies.
3. Reflection and rationale on ways you might agree, transform, or reshape such efforts.

Conversation Encounter (Due date listed on schedule, send by email) – You will create a 4-5 fictional verbatim conversation concerning the truth of Jesus. Create the conversation with a type of person that profiles a specific worldview (ex. Atheist, Agnostic, Hindu, Post-religious, etc). You will be graded in four areas—clarity, creativity, agility, and persuasiveness in the conversation. (20%)

The paper should include:

1. Page one should include the profile of worldview and the context.
2. Page two and following captures conversation and discussion about Jesus.
3. In the final page share some thoughts about your own story of faith.

Apologetics Team Project (Due as a presentation in class Feb. 27) – This learning experience is a team effort that involves you and fellow classmates in research and presentation. You and your team will select a topic in the first section of Keller's book that centers on challenges to the Christian faith. You will research, prepare and present your work to the class. The presentation of the topic should be presented with three views: how an uncommitted person with questions weighing the options might consider the issue, a skeptic of the Christian faith who does not want to believe using the issue to discourage faith, and as a believer of the faith who has some reasonable responses to the issue. Put these three views/people in the context of a coffee shop outside of a university.

The presentation should:

1. Demonstrate a knowledge of the issue
2. Give careful honest attention to the 'state' of the various people and viewpoints
3. Find a place of meaningful conversation between the three.

STANDARDS FOR WRITTEN WORK (MLA)

Papers must be written to a near-thesis standard. That is, minimum format standards must be met, as defined below. English grammar, idiom, and spelling must be up to graduate level. Always include a strong introduction paragraph (declare what you intend to show the reader) and conclusion paragraph. Qualities valued include clarity, succinctness, and precision.

This course employs the MLA (Modern Language Association) style guide. The basic elements are:

- Double-spacing, except for block quotes
- Single space block quotes
- Page numbers appear at the upper right on every text page
- Use footnotes or parenthetical citations.
- Footnotes and parenthetical references follow standard format.

Helpful web sites on MLA style include:

<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

<http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop/writers/citation/>

[These websites are expanded and pasted into Western Seminary's "How to Write a Research Paper" located at <http://www.westernseminary.edu/papers/Faculty/WGuideNu.doc>]

A good website with footnote/bibliography entries is:

<http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/Documentation.html>

For assignments that require the use of non-course texts and include a bibliography, of the resources mentioned in the bibliography for your project/paper, two must be from a physical library. Note the physical location of each book as an addendum to each bibliographical entry.

All work must reflect master's level use of the English language. Plagiarism will result in failure of assignment.

LIBRARY AND INTERNET RESEARCH - SACRAMENTO

All class assignments with a research element require library research annotated as such in the bibliography. A minimum of two resources must be from a physical library. Note the physical location of each resource as an addendum to each bibliographical entry.

For complete library information including: hours of operation, interlibrary loan, local library resources, etc., please:

- Visit www.westernseminary.edu/sacramento
- Click the link "Library Services" in the right navigation pane.

Reserve Collection

The library carries all required readings for this course.

Print Resources

Use the Western-Arcade Library catalog to find books and other materials. To search the library collection:

- Visit <http://www.westernseminary.edu/Library/SAC> .
- Click the link "Search the Library Collection Online".

Periodical & Research Databases

As you complete your assignments for this course, don't forget about the resources in the Western research databases. Remember to evaluate and cite your information too. To access the Western research databases:

- Visit <http://www.westernseminary.edu/Library/SAC> .
- Click the link "Research Databases" from the bottom menu.
- Click the link "Ebsco Host Research Databases".
- Log in. [**User ID:** westsem / **Password:** seminary]
- Click the link "EBSCOhost Web".

- Click the database(s) you wish to use. Start with *ATLA Religion Database with ATLASerials*.

To cite your information, consider the following MLA composers:

<http://www.noodletools.com> and <http://www.citationmachine.net>

Western-Arcade Library offers a variety of ministry related software for student use including BibleWorks, Logos Bible Software, and SeminaryLibrary.

Course Packs (if applicable)

To access the course pack(s) for this course:

1. Go to the library homepage: <http://www.westernseminary.edu/Library/SAC>
2. Click the link 'Course Packs'.

Reference and Research Contact Information

David Holifield, M.A., M.L.S. / (916) 488-3720, ext. 7 / dholfield@westernseminary.edu

CLASS POLICIES

Cover page: To safeguard confidentiality, provide a title page as a cover for all assignments. Include your student mailbox number in the upper right corner of the cover page.

Attendance and Late Assignments: Students are expected to attend all class meetings. Students who miss class are responsible for missed work. Unexcused absences and tardiness will impact a student's grade. Students who anticipate an absence should discuss it in advance with the instructor. Students who miss two or more classes will not pass the course, without a request for and the completion of additional assignments. Assignments submitted after the due date and time constitutes a drop in the student's letter grade for that assignment.

Enrichment Students: Enrichment students are encouraged, but not obligated, to participate in assignments and class discussions. Professors are not obligated to grade participation for these students, but may opt to do so depending on class size.

Incompletes: Faculty members determine their own procedures and due dates for the completion of course assignments. The final deadline for submitting all course work is the last day of the semester as noted in the Academic Calendar and in the Sacramento class schedule. In the case of serious illness, family emergency, or similar extenuating circumstances, the instructor may, **if it is initiated by the student**, grant an extension. A 1-3 week extension is typical in all except the most extreme cases, and in all cases the standard decrease of a full letter grade for late work applies. Extensions desired by the student beyond 3 weeks, with prof support, must be approved by the Sacramento Academic Coordinator, with 5 weeks after the end of the course being the longest possible extension for work being due to the prof; for this semester that date is **Saturday, 5/29/10**. (This allows a 6th week for the grading of work and a grade change request to be filed.) A temporary notation of "I" (incomplete) is assigned until a final grade can be determined. Under no circumstances may the six-week period (allots 1 week

to the prof for grading and grade change petition) be extended except by petition and approval of the Administrative Committee in Portland.

The Availability of Disability Services at Western Seminary: Western Seminary is committed to responding to the needs of students with disabilities as outlined in both the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Western students are assisted individually as their needs dictate. It is the responsibility of students with disabilities to identify themselves and the nature of the disability. Any student who has a disability should contact the seminary's Disability (Section 504) Coordinator, Ken Epp, at 503-517-1815/1-877-517-1800, ext. 1815. His office is at the Portland campus. Students at the northern California campuses may contact Carrie Priest (Student Services Coordinator – San José) or PJ Oswald (Director of Student Development – Sacramento), or they may contact Dr. Epp directly. Appropriate forms will be provided and must be submitted to the Disability Coordinator's office.

GRADING

A+	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-
99-100%	95-98%	93-94%	91-92%	88-90%	86-87%	84-85%	81-83%	79-80%	77-78%	74-76%	70-73%

Activity	Percent of Final Grade	Estimated Time to Complete (homework hrs)
Reading	40%	40 hrs
Church Research Project	20%	8 hrs
Conversation Encounter	10%	4 hrs
Group Study Project	20%	hrs (apart fr. classtime hrs)
Class Participation	10%	- -
Total	100%	60 hrs (outside of class time)

COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE

Date	Topics	Assignments Due
1/29	Mission of God Theology for "making disciples"	Grenz book summary Wells book summary
1/30	Worldviews Modern and Postmodern Contextualization	
2/14	(email assignment)	Conversation Encounter
2/26	Apologetics Then and Now Notions and Methods	Keller book summary Hitchens book summary

2/27

Jesus – Acts – Today

Team Presentations

3/15

(email assignment)

Book review – your choice
Church Research project