

**Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary**  
**THEOLOGY FOR INTEGRATION**

IS/TS-670 (3 Units)  
Spring 2008  
Monday 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Professor: Mark D. Baker, Ph.D.  
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Office Hours: Tuesday 1:00-3:00  
Wed. 1:30-3:30

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

A survey of Old Testament Theology, New Testament Theology and Systematic Theology to provide the theological basis for the integration of psychology, counseling and theology.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

- To be able to describe and evaluate four approaches to integration of Christian theology and psychology
- To gain greater familiarity with the Bible
- To observe, learn from and evaluate an integrative work
- To critically and integratively analyze five systematic theological themes.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES ADDRESSED IN THIS COURSE**

The student will be able to

- 1.5 Witness persuasively to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in a postmodern secular context
- 2.1 Exegete biblical texts within a design that includes the descriptive, synthetic, hermeneutical, and pragmatic analytical tasks
  - o 2.1.1 Narrate the biblical story, integrating the major biblical theological themes of the Old and New Testaments and the relationship between the testaments
- 3.3.6 Write a paper that articulates a theological theme in a way that connects with and confronts a cultural context
- 4.1 Articulate integrative views of humanity, theology, and counseling
  - o 4.1.2 Discuss and compare a variety of theological and psychological perspectives on human nature in its fullness.

**COURSE TEXTS**

Alter, Margaret. *Resurrection Psychology*. Wipf & Stock, 2004 or Loyola, 1994.  
Bondi, Roberta. *Memories of God: Theological Reflections on a Life*. Abingdon, 1995.  
Hays, Richard. *The Moral Vision of the New Testament*. Harper, 1996.  
Kraus, C. Norman. *God Our Savior*. Herald Press, 1991.  
Longenecker, Bruce W. *The Lost Letters of Pergamum*. Baker Academic, 2003.  
Martens, Elmer. *God's Design: A Focus on OT Theology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.. Bibal Press, 1998.  
Stevenson, Eck & Hill. *Psychology & Christianity Integration: Seminal Works that Shaped the Movement*, CAPS, 2007

Texts are on reserve in the library.

**COURSE OUTLINE**

The reading load is much heavier in the first half of the course. It is highly recommended that students read the Stevenson, Eck & Hill book, and do the related written assignment before the

semester starts.

Non-MFCC students may take the course for two units. If they chose this option they would not have to read Martens and Hays, do the presentation, the exegetical paper and nor the Hays book review.

1 - January 28 **Introduction: Approaches to Integration**

2 - February 4 **Old Testament Theology**

Before class read: Martens, 3-236

3 - February 11 **Old Testament Theology, Continued**

Before class read: Martens, 237-369

*February 18 – No class, Presidents’ Day*

4 - February 25 **Old Testament Theology, Continued**

Student presentations

Exegetical/hermeneutical paper, first draft due

*March 3 – No class, Module Week, final version of exegetical/hermeneutical paper due March 5.*

5 - March 10 **New Testament Theology**

Before class read: Longenecker, 9-180 (see appendix for reflection questions)

Hays, 13-157, 169-205, 347-377

Write: Hays book review

6 - March 17 **New Testament Theology and Psychology**

Before class read: Alter, ix-88

7 - March 24 **New Testament Theology & Psychology**

Before class read: Alter, 89-170

Reading report on Stevenson, Eck & Hill due

8 - March 31 **Integration & Theology and Life**

Before class read: Bondi, 7-205 (see appendix for reflection questions)

Write: Reflective essay on Alter and integration

9 - April 7 **Theological Themes: God & Judgment/wrath**

Before class read: Kraus, 20-31, 68-102, 206-215

10 - April 14 **Theological Themes: Anthropology & Sin**

Before class read: Kraus, 31-35, 102-130 & Stevenson, Eck & Hill, 155-175

11 - April 21 **Theological Themes: Atonement**

Before class read: Kraus, 33-35

12 - April 28 **Theological Themes: Atonement & Salvation**

Before class read: Frank, Doug "Naked but Unashamed," 94-103  
McNichols, Mike, "Jesus, The Ultimate Outsider," 112-117

Best draft of theological theme reflection paper due on Wednesday April 30

13 - May 5 Meet individually with professor to discuss theological theme paper

14 - May 12 **Conclusion**

Final draft of theological theme reflection paper due

## ASSIGNMENTS

### ***Psychology & Christianity Integration: Seminal Works that Shaped the Movement Reading***

**Log and Response Letters:** This course is a theology course that aims to give you theological tools for use in integration. Although it is not a course on either the theory or practice of integration, space will be given to begin to make integrative connections between the theological content and psychology/counseling. Therefore a basic understanding of integration will be of value for this course and especially in the future as you move toward actual integrative work. This book will introduce you to terminology and approaches to integration, introduce you to examples of integration and make you aware of issues under debate in regards to integration. Read the following: Pages 1-7; Chapters 7,9,13,16,17,18,20,21,22,24,26,27,28,29,32; it is also recommended that you read the short introductions to each section. Keep a reading log recording insights and questions produced by each chapter (brief). Choose two chapters that you found especially engaging and important. Write two letters, one for each chapter, to another counseling student or counselor explaining a few insights from the chapter and why you think they are important for you as a counselor (not a summary of the chapter). Each letter should be one-and-half to two pages (single-spaced). Give one copy to the person it is addressed to and give a copy to the professor.

The letters will be graded on clarity of thought and communication, depth of analysis, and level of personal engagement. Grading standards: B for clearly communicating content, displaying some analysis, but with little or no personal engagement; B+ for adequately meeting the above criteria; B- or lower for failing to meet the stated criteria; A- or A for excellent depth of insight and analysis, a high level of personal engagement and a high quality of writing.

**Presentation on an Old Testament Book:** Students will introduce the rest of the class to an Old Testament book, including the historical setting, theology, and potential issues relating to psychology and counseling. If you desire, you may partner with another student. Your preparation should include reading the text a number of times, reading dictionary articles on your book and related topics (cross-listed articles), reflecting on your book through the lens of the

Martens text, and reading about your book in an Old Testament theology book (such as: *An Introduction to Old Testament* by W. Brueggemann, or *Old Testament Theology* by P. House, both on 2 hour reserve). Creativity in communicating your central points is encouraged, the ultimate goal, however, is communication of and appropriation of the content. Presentations will be about 15 minutes. You will be told the exact time allowance the second class session.

Grading standards: B for clearly communicating the information listed above; B- or lower for lack of clarity or failing to cover one of the required areas; B+ for communicating the information in an engaging manner or displaying depth of insight; A- and A will display both communicate in an engaging manner and display exceptional depth of insight.

**Exegetical/Hermeneutical Paper:** Choose a text from the O. T. book you are doing your presentation on, and use the methods you learned in BI-505 to do an exegetical/hermeneutical study of that textual unit. In both the selection of the text and in the hermeneutical work on the text students are encouraged to keep integrative issues in mind. Just as the work you do preparing for your presentation will contribute to this project, so your work on a portion of the text will contribute to your presentation. Follow instructions (assignment #6) and template (Appendix B) from the syllabus for BI-505 (except for length 7 to 9 pages, double-spaced). A first draft is due the day of your presentation. After receiving input from the professor you will write a final draft, due no later than March 5.

**Moral Vision Book Review:** Based on what you read, describe the theological emphasis of Paul, the Pauline tradition, Mark, Matthew, Luke, John and the author of Revelation. What integration insights do you gain and what integration questions are raised by the text? What are the three common themes that Hays proposes to synthesize the diversity found in the New Testament? How does he propose we use these images? Two to Three pages, single-spaced, due at the beginning of the fifth class session.

**Resurrection Psychology Reflective Essay on Integration:** What have you learned about integration from watching Alter do it? Does she match up with approaches described in *Psychology & Christianity Integration*? How will it help you as a therapist? What questions did this book answer for you? What new questions does it leave you with? Two to three pages, single spaced, due at the beginning of eighth class session.

**Theological Theme Reflection Paper:** Choose one of the six theological themes covered in class (God, judgment/wrath, anthropology, sin, atonement, salvation) or another one with approval of the professor. Part I. Describe different misconceptions people have of this theme (ideally these will be concepts the student has actually encountered, and may include examples from Bondi) and, for each different conceptualization, analyze how the person's theology might impact their behavior and mental health. Part II. Describe any changes and new insights you have experienced in relation to this particular theme through this course, specifically, and through your seminary time in general. Briefly give a theological statement that reflects your current understanding of this theological theme. Part III. Now place yourself in a therapy setting with individuals described in part one. How might you use the understanding you described in

part two to help these individuals? What are ways you could help them experience the healthier theology you describe in part two?

The paper should be eight to ten pages, double spaced. A “best draft” of this paper is due by April 30<sup>th</sup>. The professor will grade it and then discuss it with you. Make improvements based on that conversation and turn in the final draft (with a copy of the marked version of the best draft) by the final class session. (The best draft’s grade will be 1/3 and the final draft’s grade will be 2/3 of the grade for this project.) Grading standards: B include all the elements listed above; B+ the paper will have coherence, not just listing the above elements, and display some elements of insightful analysis that go beyond the norm; A- or A will be clearly written and organized in a coherent fashion that displays exceptional insight and analysis in various elements of the paper.

**Attendance and Cass participation:** To get an “A” in this category you must have perfect attendance and make significant contributions to class discussion. An “A-“ will be given to those with perfect attendance and good participation or to those with one absence and significant participation. Two absences will place a student in the “B” range; participation will determine whether it is a high or low “B.” Three absences could move the student in to the “C” range. Four or more absences place the student at risk of receiving an “F” in class participation, but also at risk of having their course grade lowered a full letter grade or of automatically failing the class. Students may talk to the professor about ways to partially make up for absences. Note that “significant participation” refers to quality of participation not just quantity.

#### **Academic Policies:**

MBBS academic policies (as well as other school policies) are described at <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/>. These policies provide guidance on academic integrity and plagiarism, accommodations for disability, incomplete course work, extensions, dates for changing registration, non-discriminatory and inclusive language, appeals, grading templates, etc. Students are expected to be familiar with these policies and will be held responsible for adhering to them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to you or to a situation that you face in your studies, please speak to your professor or consult the Registrar. Course evaluations are to be completed online and are due one week after the completion of the course. Official grades will not be posted until the student’s evaluation of the course is completed.

#### **Assignment policies for this course:**

1. Students are expected to submit assignments on time; if they are late they will be graded down one grade level (a B+ becomes a B).
2. All written work should have one inch margins and Times Roman 12pt font. Please number your pages. Any of the three standard citation styles is acceptable (Chicago, APA, MLA). Choose one and follow it consistently.
3. All assignments may be printed on scrap paper.
4. Confidentiality: If you wish to have your assignment results be more confidential you may submit the assignments in an envelope.

### **Grading Scheme For Three Units**

*Psychology & Christianity Integration* Reading log and letters 15%; Presentation 15%; Exegetical Paper 20%; Book Review 5%; Alter Essay 10%; Theological Theme Paper 25%; Attendance and class participation 10%.

### **Grading Scheme For Two Units**

*Psychology & Christianity Integration* Reading log and letters 20%; Alter Essay 25%; Theological Theme Paper 35%; Attendance and class participation 20%.

As stated in the MBBS academic policies/grading a “B” is the baseline grade. A “B” means the student is doing satisfactory work. The “B+” or higher grade indicates that the student has exceeded the baseline performance standard. The “C” grade indicates that the student has not achieved the baseline level. I will write a letter grade on your assignments. In my grade book each letter grade will be given a numerical equivalent (B+ = 3.33; A- = 3.67). At the end of the semester your numerical average will determine your final letter grade based on the following scale:

4.00 to 3.83 = A  
3.82 to 3.5 = A-  
3.49 to 3.17 = B+  
3.16 to 2.83 = B etc.

## **APPENDIX**

***The Lost Letters of Pergamum* Reflection Questions:** Come to class prepared to share three to four insights from the book that you found most significant and potentially beneficial as you read and interpret the New Testament and for your life and your ministry as a therapist.

***Memories of God* Reflection Questions:** Theology is not just the ideas contained within the covers of a systematic theology book, it is also the ideas about God, sin, salvation, the church, heaven, hell, etc. that people have in their minds and in their soul/emotion/being. As you read please observe (noting page numbers) ways in which poor theology hurts her and detracts from her thriving, and ways good theology contributes to her healing and helping her to thrive. What relationships do you observe between her personality, experiences, mental health and her theology?

One could say Roberta Bondi writes theologically about life or that she uses examples from her life to write about theology. What theological insights do you gain from this book?

The book itself is a narrative and contains some reflections on the power and importance of narrative. What have you learned in regards to narrative from this book in relation to theology? In relation to counseling?

What advice and counsel do you think Roberta Bondi would offer to therapists?