STUDENT ACCESS TO INSTRUCTOR

Welcome! I want this semester to be as productive and edifying for you as possible, so please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have. However, I do ask that you make complete use of the course resources, especially the syllabus, before contacting me with questions. You may find your question already answered in those materials.

- Our Learning Management System, Moodle, has an excellent communication function. The best way to contact me is through Moodle messages. Here’s how: Click the "Participants" section of the course in the left side menu; choose my name; scroll to the end of the biographical information; choose the "Messages" tab; type your message; click "Send Message." I will respond through Moodle messages, usually within 24-36 hours.

- If you find yourself without Moodle access and need to contact me, you can send an email: andrew.snider@bmats.edu

- If some unusual circumstance requires immediate communication, you can call or text me at (661) 755-6696, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Central Time.

DELIVERY AND TERMS

This is NOT a self-paced course. There are deadlines for specific assignments as shown in the assignment schedule. The class begins January 19, 2015 and ends on May 14, 2015.
TEXTBOOKS

Please note: some of the required reading assignments for this class will advocate opinions that are contrary to Scripture. These readings are required in order to facilitate genuine critical interaction with primary sources on the topic.

1. For the topic of homosexuality

2. For the topic of biblical inerrancy

3. For the topic of creation & evolution

4. For the topic of evangelical inclusivism

COURSE DESCRIPTION

From BMATS catalog: Specialized and advanced studies are made in various topics of systematic and/or biblical theology. The distinctive theological emphases of a particular writer or of a certain book of the Bible may be studied.

For this semester: Targeted study in four theological topics with current relevance for Christians: homosexuality, biblical inerrancy, evangelical inclusivism, and origins.
COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon our mutual, diligent completion of this course:

1. You will be informed about several key issues that Christians currently face, the spectrum of opinions within the church on these issues, and the status of the discussion.
2. You will have developed criteria and strategies for formulating a biblically faithful response to sensitive theological and cultural issues.
3. You will be able to articulate a biblically based, culturally informed position on the major theological issues analyzed in this class.
4. You will be equipped to recognize theological, cultural, and political issues as opportunities for gospel thinking and action rather than merely political, cultural, or moral activism.

UNIT OBJECTIVES AND CONTENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>UNIT #</th>
<th>UNIT TOPIC</th>
<th>REQUIRED READING</th>
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▪ Allberry, *Is God Anti-Gay?* |

After completion of this section the student will be able to:

▪ Understand the spectrum of opinions on homosexuality and same-sex attraction
▪ Explain the biblical material that deals directly with homosexuality
▪ Formulate a biblically sound, culturally informed response to the issue of homosexuality
▪ Articulate this response in Christlike and redemptive love
▪ Lead other Christians in evaluating this issue and responding accordingly
**UNIT TWO**  
**BIBLICAL INERRANCY**  
(Feb. 17–Mar. 16)  
- Blomberg, *Can We Still Believe the Bible?*  
- Mohler, et al., *Five Views on Biblical Inerrancy*, Parts 1, 3, and 4

After completion of this section the student will be able to:
- Understand the spectrum of opinions on biblical inerrancy
- Explain the biblical material that deals directly and indirectly with the inerrancy of Scripture
- Formulate a biblically sound, culturally informed doctrine of biblical inerrancy
- Articulate this doctrine in Christlike and redemptive love
- Lead other Christians in evaluating this issue and responding accordingly

**UNIT THREE**  
**CREATION & EVOLUTION**  
(Mar. 17–Apr. 13)  
- Mortenson and Ury, eds., *Coming to Grips with Genesis*, chapters 1-8, appendix 2 (pp. 453-57)  
- Carter, ed., *Evolution's Achilles Heels*, any 5 chapters

After completion of this section the student will be able to:
- Understand the spectrum of opinions on creation and evolution (i.e., origins)
- Explain the biblical material that deals directly with origins
- Formulate a biblically sound, culturally informed response to the origins debate
- Articulate this response in Christlike and redemptive love
- Lead other Christians in evaluating this issue and responding accordingly

**UNIT FOUR**  
**EVANGELICAL INCLUSIVISM**  
(Apr. 14–May 11)  
- Morgan and Peterson, eds., *Faith Comes by Hearing*  
- Sanders, ed., *What About Those Who Have Never Heard?*

After completion of this section the student will be able to:
- Understand the spectrum of opinions on soteriological inclusivism
- Explain the biblical material that deals directly and indirectly with the question of whether someone can be saved without hearing the gospel of Jesus Christ
- Formulate a biblically sound, culturally informed doctrine of exclusivism
- Articulate this doctrine in Christlike and redemptive love
- Lead other Christians in evaluating this issue and responding accordingly
CIVILITY
This class will deal with issues that are debated in society and within the church. You will be interacting with me and other students in forums and written assignments, and in some cases you may find yourself with a differing opinion than another class participant. In all discussions, we will be committed, as followers of Jesus Christ, to embodying the fruit of the Spirit (love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control), remembering at all times to "be eager to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph 4:3). Any forum interaction or written assignment that does not conform to this standard will result in grade reduction and/or a personal admonition from me. Remember, the defining mark of Christian living is Christlike love (John 13:34-35), even in our zeal for the defense of biblical truth.

ASSIGNMENTS DUE
All assignments will be turned in on the date due or earlier. All assignments will be due on Monday night at 11:55 p.m. Central Time. Please contact me if you are experiencing a genuine emergency of some kind. If I agree that an extension is warranted, you will be permitted to turn in the assignment no more than one week late. If no such prior arrangements are made, you can expect a grade reduction of one letter grade up to one week late, and two letter grades after one week. Please note: all work must be turned in to receive a passing grade for the class.

LACK OF ENGAGEMENT
Online courses are designed for the student to participate promptly and become fully engaged in the coursework to ensure successful completion of the course. This includes completion of all assignments in a timely manner. I will follow the current Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary Student Handbook (page 3) process of assigning the grade of “F” if you fail to participate or engage in the course.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS
1. Moodle Forums
   a. Description
      You will participate in a total of five discussions on Moodle. Each will comprise 5% of your course grade. A question will be posed at the top of the forum, and you will compose an answer from your reading and research. Then you will interact with other class participants through replies.
   b. Grading Criteria
      You will do well on this assignment if you:
      - have your name on all discussion threads.
      - post your reply plus a thoughtful response to at least 2 other students.
      - meet the minimum word count in each post (see directions in each forum).
      - formulate complete sentences using good English.
      - embody the virtues discussed in the "Civility" section above.
      - follow the instructions in the "Guidelines for Forums" on the course home page.
2. Position Papers
   a. Description
      You will write a position paper on each of the four theological issues covered in this course. This paper will serve as a concise statement of your biblically grounded, culturally informed, and gospel motivated position on each issue in question.
   b. Grading Criteria
      The standard writing rubric for BMATS will be used. This rubric can be found in the "Course Syllabus" section of the Moodle course page.
   c. Length Requirement
      Each paper must be 7-10 pages of body text (not including title page and bibliography). Any papers less than 7 full pages of body text, and any papers over 11 pages will receive a grade penalty. Focus on your topic, and choose arguments that are the most weighty. Write clearly and concisely in order to stay within the allotted space.
   d. Content Requirements
      o These are research papers, so they must show evidence of scholarly activity. Sources, including required reading, should be used carefully and should be cited with properly formatted footnotes. Please note: plagiarism will not be tolerated. If you are using another's material, you must cite it properly. Please review the plagiarism statement in the BMATS Student Handbook, page 6.
      o Your paper must include three main elements: biblical argumentation, an understanding of the contrary position being addressed (i.e., you must show that you genuinely understand the opinion you are disagreeing with), and an explanation of how this issue impacts the church's gospel ministry. You may organize/structure your paper any way you like, but you must include these elements.
      o More specific instructions for content will be included in the Moodle assignment. Be sure to note these instructions carefully.
      o Your bibliography must include at least ten different sources. This is to be a "Works Consulted" bibliography, so you may include sources that were helpful to you in your research but not cited in the body of the paper.
   e. Format Requirement
      Turabian formatting is required. The paper must have a properly formatted title page and bibliography, must be double spaced, and footnotes must conform to Turabian style.
   f. Submission Requirement
      You must submit your paper in the appropriate place on Moodle, and the file must be in PDF format. If you submit a file in any other format (Word, Pages, etc.), you will be asked to resubmit in the proper format. If resubmission causes your paper to be late, you will be subject to late penalty. Your word processor will have a "Save As" or "Export" feature (usually in the "File" menu) that will let you save a copy of your file as a PDF. If you use Google Docs, use the "Download As" option on the "File" menu.
new for you, please practice ahead of time so that you don't have trouble submitting your file on the due date. If you still have trouble, please email me.

3. Reading Assignments

You will complete a reading report at the end of this course, certifying that you have completed the reading assignments. The reading for each unit must be completed by the due date of that unit's position paper. For example, your required reading on homosexuality must be completed by the due date for the position paper on homosexuality. On the reading report you will certify the amount of reading that you completed on time for each unit. For example, "I completed 100% of the reading on homosexuality by the due date."

**SEMESTER GRADE COMPUTATION**

All assignments will be graded on a 100-point scale, and each will have a differing weight in your final grade as noted in the Assignment Schedule below. To summarize:

- Forums (5 x 5%) = 25%
- Position Papers (4 x 15%) = 60%
- Reading Report = 15%

### ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE – SPRING 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ASSIGNMENT DUE</th>
<th>WHAT IT’S WORTH (% of course grade)</th>
<th>WHEN IT’S DUE (11:55 p.m.)</th>
<th>WHEN IT WILL APPEAR ON MOODLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Forum 2 – Same Sex Attraction (ETS recordings, student research)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Feb. 2-8*</td>
<td>Jan. 26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Paper 1 – Homosexuality</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Feb 16</td>
<td>Jan. 19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forum 3 – Biblical Inerrancy (compare &amp; contrast Mohler, Blomberg, Vanhoozer)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Mar. 2-8*</td>
<td>Feb. 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Paper 2 – Biblical Inerrancy</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Mar. 16</td>
<td>Feb. 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forum 4 – Creation &amp; Evolution (considering arguments against creation)</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Mar. 23-29*</td>
<td>Mar. 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Paper 3 – Creation &amp; Evolution</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Apr. 13</td>
<td>Mar. 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forum 5 – Evangelical Inclusivism</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Apr. 27-May 3*</td>
<td>Apr. 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Position Paper 4 – Evangelical Inclusivism</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>May 11</td>
<td>Apr. 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading Report</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>May 11</td>
<td>May 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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*Forums are discussions, so you must begin your participation no later than the first date in the due date (by 11:55 p.m., and complete your discussions no later than the second date (11:55 p.m.).
COURSE CONTRACT
By continuing with the course, you certify that you:

- have thoroughly read the syllabus and all relevant orientation information.
- understand that this course has a fixed start and end date.
- understand the delivery mode of this course is not self-paced.
- understand that this is not a watered-down course—you will use the same textbook and complete the same requirements as in a traditional classroom.
- agree to submit your assignments electronically or as instructed by your instructor within the accepted timeframe.
- are the student officially enrolled in this course and you are actually performing your own work.
- agree to the course conditions and requirements, especially the provisions of academic honesty and personal integrity in an online course.

Failing to fulfill the course contract will result in failure of the course and other appropriate disciplinary actions.