

EAST TEXAS BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

SYLLABUS FOR MINISTRY (MINS) 1132

Introduction to Christian Doctrine

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION: an introduction to the major features of the Christian faith, with an emphasis on God's work of creation, Trinitarian faith, the person and work of Christ, the Holy Spirit, the identity and mission of the Church, and eschatology. Persistent consideration will be given to the practical/ethical dimensions of Christian theology.

II. COURSE TEXTBOOKS:

- Grenz, Stanley. *What Christians Really Believe--& Why*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- The basic intent of the course is for the student to be able to reflect on and discuss the major doctrines of the Christian faith in a substantive, informed, and thoughtful manner.
- One intent of the course is to encourage the student to apply to his or her own Christian pilgrimage the sentiment of St. Anselm of the 11th century: *fides quaerens intellectum*--"faith seeking understanding."
- The student successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate substantive acquaintance with the major doctrinal themes of the Christian faith, their biblical foundations, their historical and contemporary interpretations, and the significance of such for discipleship in the contemporary context.
- One basic concern of this course is to emphasize the ecclesial dimensions of Christian theological reflection, that is, that proper theological inquiry presupposes and supports the life and practice of the church. So, one objective of the course is to enhance the student's appreciation of and commitment to life in the fellowship of faith.
- Important to successful completion of this course will be a balance between freedom and responsibility in personal theological reflections. On the one hand, the student should know a freedom to pursue significant questions about God, humanity, God's purposes, the person and work of Christ, etc.; a freedom to critically examine traditional understandings of these "theologia;" and a freedom to explore creative avenues of theological inquiry. On the other hand, the student should accept a sense of responsibility to biblical authority, wise voices from the past, and the contemporary demands of Christian witness and ministry in the present.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- Class attendance and participation
- Four major tests over reading assignments and class material.

Students who earn

- 90 points or above earn an A
- 80-89 points earn a B
- 70-79 points earn a C
- 60-69 points earn a D
- 59 points or less earn an F