

# BIBLE-THEOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

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The BIBLE AND THEOLOGY PROGRAM offers an in-depth exploration of biblical content and theology. Students may choose one of two majors:

1. The Pre-seminary major is designed to equip students for graduate level theological study. Specifically these majors have opportunity to develop the writing and research skills to succeed in seminary.
2. The Pre-ministry major is designed to prepare for ministry immediately following college. These majors take courses, among others, in preaching, pastoral theology, biblical interpretations, Christian Ministries, and marriage or family in order to be as equipped as possible to enter ministry without going to seminary. In both majors content, background, theological understanding, and interpretive skills are emphasized. Both programs facilitate understanding the Bible in its historical, cultural context and the ability to apply biblical principles to ministry in everyday life. In addition to studying individual books of the Old and New Testaments, students explore the rich historical and theological legacy of the Church and its implications for today.

BTH 100, OT 100, NT 100, and TH 300 are part of the general education requirements for all students and do not apply to the majors and minor listed below.

The purpose of the PHILOSOPHY PROGRAM at Asbury College is to acquaint the student with the field of philosophy, including its relevance to the formation of a Christian world view. In this process, philosophy becomes an important element in preparation for both meaningful vocation and general intellectual life.

1. The curriculum in philosophy acquaints the student with the history of philosophy, the world's great philosophers, basic schools of thought, key areas of philosophy, and the classic questions in the field. In addition to the information conveyed in the curriculum, philosophy at Asbury seeks to develop key cognitive skills in the student: clear thinking, analysis, logical argumentation, critique. Beyond the level of skill acquisition, the curriculum is also designed to nurture the higher intellectual functions of understanding and valuing, which have traditionally been associated with wisdom.

2. Philosophy serves as an attractive major or minor as well as an enriching elective for any other field of study. As an undergraduate major, philosophy serves as a basis for graduate work in philosophical, theological, or divinity programs. A student can also major in philosophy in order to do graduate work in other fields, provided that he or she has done the necessary preparation in that other field. Philosophy is a beneficial second major as well, since it equips the student with cognitive skills and expands his or her understanding. As a minor, philosophy fits well with any major, since it is flexible and provides additional insight into one's first major and into intellectual issues more broadly. Simply taking some philosophy courses as electives helps the student in pursuing intellectual interests outside his or her major field.

3. Some career options open to philosophy majors are law, medicine, business, politics, government service, journalism, and writing. Historically, only philosophy majors score 5% or more above the mean on these important exams: LSAT, GMAT, GRE Verbal, and GRE Quantitative. Philosophy majors as a group have a higher mean score on the GRE Verbal than students in any other major. Surveys of medical schools indicate that philosophy is the preferred major for applicants who are otherwise qualified in chemistry and biology.

4. Philosophy is essential to being a truly educated person -- that is, to being a person who understands our cultural heritage, sees life holistically, discerns and critiques the assumptions of competing world views, and acts upon principle. This kind of education lays a groundwork for success in any career because it enhances one's ability to deal with a wide variety of ideas and perspectives represented among different people, to solve complex problems, and to articulate a vision.

**BIBLE-THEOLOGY: PRE-MINISTRY** (48 hour major + general education + electives)

BTH 475; CM 201, 211, or 380; CM 213; COM 341; MIS 201 or 311; 9 hours of NT; 9 hours of OT; PHL 231 or 361; SOC 341 or 432; TH 320, 340; 6 hours of TH.

**BIBLE-THEOLOGY: PRE-SEMINARY** (43 hour major + general education + electives)

BTH 475; CM 201, 211, 380, COM 341, or MIS 311; HIS 313, 320, 321, PHL 211, 231, 242, 361, or 411; 12 hours of NT; 12 hours of OT; PHL 231 or 361; 9 hours of TH.

**PHILOSOPHY** (30 hour major + general education + electives)

PHL 211, 212, 221, 231, 393, 412, plus 12 hours of PHL (not including PHL 200).

**BIBLE-THEOLOGY** (18 hour minor)

3 hours of NT; 3 hours of OT; 3 hours of TH; 9 hours of any NT, OT or TH.

**PHILOSOPHY** (18 hour minor)

18 hours of PHL 211 or above.

The Department of Bible-Theology and Philosophy also offers a degree completion program with a major in **LEADERSHIP AND MINISTRY** through the Achieve program of the college. For information on that program see **ACHIEVE** in the index.

## **BIBLE COURSES**

**BTH 100 (3) Foundations of Biblical Thought**—A biblical and theological study of the Holy Scriptures as the revelation of God and his saving purposes in the Church and the world. While giving attention to the literary, historical, and cultural diversity within Scripture, this course focuses on the theological unity of the canon, grounded in the saving aims and character of God in his holiness and self-giving love.

**BTH 475 (1) Senior Seminar**—A discussion-oriented course examining issues in biblical and theological studies. Requirements include readings and written reflections, with a required ministry experience for pre-ministry majors. Credit/no credit. Passing grades are based on fulfillment of requirements, attendance and participation.

**NT, OT, TH 391 (1-3) Independent Study**—A directed and supervised investigation of a selected research problem or issue in biblical studies, including the preparation of a scholarly paper. A student may not take more than four (4) hours of independent study. Prerequisites: OT 100 and NT 100, or BTH 100, 3.0 gpa. and approval of instructor. Contract.

**NT, OT, TH 393 (1-3) Seminar**—Selected topics in Bible or Theology.

## **NEW TESTAMENT COURSES**

**NT 100 (3) Understanding the New Testament**—New Testament literature understood in the light of its historical contexts, its literary forms, and its diversity and unity of theological ideas.

**NT 210 (3) The Growth of the New Testament Church**—A study of the emergence of Christianity in relation to the historical, religious, and philosophical milieu of the first century. Attention is given to the birth and development of the apostolic church and the variety of ways in which it witnessed to the revelation of God in Christ. Prerequisite: NT 100 or BTH 100.

**NT 300 (3) Synoptic Gospels**—A study of the basic teachings of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels and the Synoptic Problem in light of critical studies. Prerequisite: NT 100 or BTH 100.

**NT 320 (3) Prison Epistles**—A study of the letters of Paul written in captivity. Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon will be examined with special attention given to Pauline Christology. Prerequisite: NT 100 or BTH 100.

**NT 330 (3) Hebrews and General Epistles**—Detailed exposition of Hebrews, James, I & II Peter and Jude. Each letter is interpreted in its historical, cultural and literary context. Prerequisite: NT 100 or BTH 100.

**NT 340 (3) The New Testament and the End Times**—A study of New Testament passages that deal with the end times, especially the Revelation. Various theological interpretations of the data are presented for analysis and discussion. Prerequisites: OT 100 and NT 100, or BTH 100.

**NT 350 (3) Writings of John**—A study of the Gospel of John and the three Epistles of John. Distinctive literary and theological features of the Johannine literature will be considered. Prerequisite: NT 100.

**NT 400 (3) Galatians and Romans**—An analysis of Paul's letters to Galatia and Rome, with special emphasis on the theological content of Pauline soteriology. Prerequisite: NT 100 or BTH 100 and one NT course at 300 level.

## **OLD TESTAMENT COURSES**

**OT 100 (3) Understanding the Old Testament**—Old Testament literature understood in the light of its historical contexts, its literary forms, and its diversity and unity of theological ideas.

**OT 200 (3) Pentateuch**—An analysis of the general content and spiritual teachings of each of the first five Old Testament books, with special attention to historical and theological features. Prerequisite: OT 100 or BTH 100.

**OT 210 (3) History of Israel**—A study of the history of ancient Israel from the conquest and settlement of Canaan to the post-exilic community are examined against the background of ancient Near Eastern literature, geography, and archaeology. The focus is on Israel's historical development within its political, social, and religious context. Prerequisite: OT 100 or BTH 100.

**OT 320 (3) Eighth Century Prophets**—The prophecies of Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, and Micah examined in their historical, literary, and theological context, utilizing a variety of exegetical approaches. Prerequisite: OT 100 or BTH 100.

**OT 330 (3) Wisdom Literature**—A study of wisdom in the Old Testament with an emphasis on Job, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. Some attention will be given to wisdom in its broader ancient Near Eastern context. Prerequisite: OT 100.

**OT 340 (3) Near East Archaeology and Geography**—An investigation of archaeological discoveries, mostly in Palestine, from the Stone Age to the Late Iron Age. Emphasis will be given to literature rather than to other remains such as

pottery. Also, exceedingly more attention will be given to archaeology than to geography. Prerequisite: OT 100 or BTH 100.

**OT 350 (3) Psalms**—Exegetical studies of selected Psalms, focusing upon the meaning and use of the Psalms in their Old Testament setting as well as their continued use in the Church. Prerequisite: OT 100 or BTH 100.

**OT 400 (3) Jeremiah**—An analysis of the contents of Jeremiah against the background of the decline and fall of the Southern Kingdom, and an evaluation of various attempts to determine the composition of the text. Prerequisite: OT 100 or BTH 100 and one OT course at 300 level.

## **PHILOSOPHY COURSES**

PHL 200, 212, or 231 serves as a prerequisite to all other PHL courses.

**PHL 200 (3) Introduction to Philosophy**—Introduction to the nature, methods, and purposes of philosophical inquiry. Investigates major topics such as reality, knowledge, and ethics. Surveys and evaluates important world views in an attempt to formulate a Christian world view.

**PHL 211 (3) Ancient & Medieval Philosophy**—Surveys the development of philosophical thought from the ancient Greeks to the late medieval period. Emphasis is placed on the philosophy of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, and Aquinas.

**PHL 212 (3) Modern Philosophy**—Surveys the development of philosophical thought during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Primarily studies Hobbes, Descartes, Spinoza, Leibniz, Locke, Hume, Reid, and Kant.

**PHL 221 (3) Logic**—Analyzes the methods of correct reasoning; covers propositional logic, term logic, and modern quantification theory. Employs symbolic notation while remaining sensitive to ordinary discourse. Some attention to informal fallacies.

**PHL 231 (3) Ethics**—Studies the major thinkers and positions in the field of ethics with attention to their relation to Christian thinking related to moral life. Among the views studied are forms of utilitarianism, Kantianism, hedonism, and virtue theory.

**PHL 242 (3) World Religions**—Presents the history and philosophy of the major living religions in the world outside the Judeo-Christian tradition: Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, Islam. Addresses issues related to the uniqueness of Christianity.

**PHL 251 (3) Seminar: Philosophy of C. S. Lewis**—A study of the philosophical works of Lewis dealing with arguments for the existence of God based on human rationality, the problem of suffering, objective truth, and moral law. Addresses

philosophical themes in the Narnia Chronicles and Lewis' thought in relation to popular culture. Includes viewing and discussion of pertinent videos.

**PHL 293 (3) Seminar**—Selects a significant issue, problem, theme, or thinker for intensive study.

**PHL 312 (3) Epistemology (Theory of Knowledge)**—Investigates the nature of human knowledge and belief. Addresses issues related to the sources, justification, and types of knowledge. Major epistemological theories are compared and contrasted.

**PHL 322 (3) Metaphysics (Theory of Reality)**—Employs a combination of classical and contemporary sources to discuss issues related to the nature and structure of reality. Each offering of this courses selects form a range of issues to cover: substance, matter and mind, free will and determinism, space and time, the relation of logic and ontology, and the like.

**PHL 343 (3) Political and Social Philosophy** —Surveys the nature and development of political and social theories with special interest in those factors which give cohesion to human community. Ideas pertaining to humanity, justice, law, and the social good are addressed.

**PHL 361 (3) Philosophy of Religion**—Surveys the classic topics in the field, such as the theistic arguments, the problem of evil, miracles, religious language, and the divine attributes. Also considers alternative approaches to the subject, such as fideism, natural theology, and Reformed epistemology.

**PHL 372 (3) Philosophy of Science**—Explores the presuppositions, methods, and role of science as a knowledge-seeking enterprise. Reviews major philosophies of science, such as positivism, Kuhnianism, and realism.

**PHL 391 (1-3) Independent Study**—Offered by consent of a supervising instructor. A topic is established by negotiation with instructor. A student may not take more than 3 hours per semester. Contract.

**PHL 393 (1-3) Seminar**—Selects a significant issue, theme, problem, or thinker for intensive and rigorous study. Conducted in seminar style; a major paper is required. Prerequisite: 9 hours in PHL including PHL 200.

**PHL 411 (3) Philosophical Theology**—Applies the methods of philosophical elucidation to major Christian doctrines, such as Creation, Revelation, Incarnation, Atonement, and the like. Seeks to clarify understanding of and trace the implications of the central concepts of these doctrines.

**PHL 412 (3) Contemporary Philosophy**—Concentrates on the analytic movement in philosophy, which shaped the tone of professional Anglo-American philosophy. The course surveys the work of such thinkers as Moore, Russell, Ayer, and Carnap, Quine, Strawson, and others. It usually features Wittgenstein for very concentrated study. Where possible, reference is made to other contemporary movements such as: existentialism, phenomenology, and postmodern hermeneutics.

## **THEOLOGY COURSES**

**TH 300 (3) Christian Theology**—An exploration of the Christian Faith from the perspective of biblical, historical, and systematic theology. This course includes emphases on the essentials of Wesleyan thought and contemporary ethical issues. Prerequisites: NT 100 and OT 100 or BTH 100; and one PHL course.

**TH 310 (3) History of the Early Church**—An introduction to the rise and development of the Christian church from its inception to the Council of Chalcedon in the fifth century. Prerequisite: TH 300.

**TH 320 (3) Biblical Interpretation**—A study of the methods and principles of biblical interpretation. It includes an application of interpretive principles to such areas as literary genre, historical and theological issues, the history of interpretation and the relationship between the testaments. Prerequisites: OT 100 and NT 100; or BTH 100.

**TH 330 (3) The Theology of John Wesley**—A study of John Wesley's theology with particular attention given to his theology of salvation. Special emphasis will be placed on his doctrine of Christian perfection. Prerequisite: TH 300.

**TH 340 (3) Pastoral Theology**—Designed to acquaint students with the office and functions of the pastor. Classical Christian sources and concepts are explored in order to develop a theory of pastoral care that is consistent with Scripture and the Wesleyan tradition. Prerequisite: TH 300.

**TH 400 (3) Historical Theology**—A study of the historical development of theology within the Christian tradition. Representative theologians and theological issues which have shaped the faith of the Christian church from post-biblical times to the modern period are investigated in the light of biblical, historical, and ethical concerns. Prerequisite: TH 300.

**TH 410 (3) Modern Theology**—A study of 20th century theologians who have been decisive in responding to post-Enlightenment skepticism and its critique of revealed religion. Seminar class. Prerequisite: TH 300.