# SOUTHWESTERN
## BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

*What you believe to be true will control you whether it's true or not.*
*–Jeremy LaBorde*

**Course Title:** PHILO 5373; Critical Thinking
**Class Dates, Time, and Term:** Monday mornings, 8:00-10:45am, Spring 2011
**Room:** TBD
**Professor:** William A. Dembski (F-215D, 817-923-1921 x4435)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION** An introductory study of the elements of correct reasoning which aims at developing the skills necessary for thinking well. Attention will be given to ways in which such reasoning contributes to accurate biblical exegesis. Three hours.

**COURSE GOALS** This course will help students to analyze arguments, understand the role of logic and evidence in theological reasoning, and formulate a persuasive case for the truth of the Christian worldview.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES** In this course the student will:
- Learn the basics of argumentation and reasoning.
- Learn the elements of symbolic logic.
- Understand how critical thinking relates to rhetoric.
- Apply critical thinking skills to theological and exegetical questions.

## COURSE TEXTS

### Required

[REASRHET]   Nancey C. Murphy, *Reasoning and Rhetoric in Religion* (Valley Forge, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 1994; republished 2001 by Wipf & Stock).

[INTRLOGIC]   Harry Gensler, *Introduction to Logic*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2010).

### Recommended

Edward P. J. Corbett, *Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998).

Robert Greene and Joost Elffers, *The 48 Laws of Power* (New York: Penguin Putnam, 2000).

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

*this is a paperless course – all assignments are to be emailed to dembski.grading.1+@gmail.com*

(1)   Midterm exam — 20 percent positive. <u>Due a stated number of hours after the exam is posted online</u>. It will be posted online at http://www.designinference.com (under "teaching") at the time that the final for this course is scheduled. It will appear as both a pdf and an rtf file.

(2)  Final exam — 30 percent positive. <u>Due a stated number of hours after the exam is posted online</u>. It will be posted online at http://www.designinference.com (under "teaching") at the time that the final for this course is scheduled. It will appear as both a pdf and an rtf file.

(3)  REASRHET exercises — 40 percent positive. <u>Due before each class</u>. Exercises appear at the end of each chapter in REASRHET. Answers to all these exercises need to be handed in each week.

(4)  INTRLOGIC exercises — 10 percent positive. <u>Due in class</u>. Problems from INTRLOGIC solved in class as either written or oral quiz. Download LogiCola program and work its problems (http://www.jcu.edu/philosophy/gensler/lc).

(5)  Active class participation — up to 10 percent negative.

(6)  200- to 300-word single-page one-sided executive summary of YOU (with clearly recognizable picture of yourself) — up to 5 percent negative if not handed in or carelessly done. <u>Due by second class meeting</u>.

**WRITTEN WORK**
To improve the quality of your written work, you may wish to take advantage of Southwestern's Writing Center — http://www.swbts.edu/writingcenter. Also, the critical review must follow Southwestern's Style Manual — http://www.swbts.edu/swstyle.

**GRADES**
Grades will be determined by the following scale:  100-98 (A+); 97-93 = A; 92-90 (A-); 89-88 (B+); 87-83 (B); 82-80 (B-); 79-78 (C+); 77-73 (C); 72-70 (C-); 69-68 (D+); 67-63 (D); 62-60 (D-); Below 60 = F.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**
Plagiarism is the misrepresentation of another's work as one's own.  When the professor concludes that a student has plagiarized an assignment, the student will receive the grade of zero for the assignment, and the office of the Vice President for Student Affairs will be notified about the incident.  The same actions apply to other acts of academic dishonesty such as cheating on examinations (see Ethical Conduct section in SWBTS catalog).

**SPECIAL NEEDS**
Individuals with documented impairments who may need special circumstances for exams, classroom participation, or assignments should contact the instructor at the beginning of the semester in order for special arrangements to be considered.

**CLASS SCHEDULE**
(1)  REASRHET, ch. 1; INTRLOGIC, ch. 1
(2)  REASRHET, ch. 2; INTRLOGIC, ch. 6
(3)  REASRHET, ch. 3; INTRLOGIC, ch. 3
(4)  REASRHET, ch. 4; INTRLOGIC, ch. 7
(5)  REASRHET, ch. 5; INTRLOGIC, ch. 4
(6)  REASRHET, ch. 6; INTRLOGIC, ch. 8
(7)  REASRHET, ch. 7; INTRLOGIC, ch. 5
(8)  REASRHET, ch. 8; INTRLOGIC, ch. 9
(9)  REASRHET, ch. 9; INTRLOGIC, ch. 10

(10)    REASRHET, ch. 10; INTRLOGIC, ch. 11
(11)    REASRHET, ch. 11; INTRLOGIC, ch. 16
(12)    REASRHET, ch. 12; INTRLOGIC, ch. 15
(13)    REASRHET, ch. 13; INTRLOGIC, ch. 18
(14)    REASRHET, ch. 14; INTRLOGIC, TBD

**COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY**

John L. Bell, David DeVidi, and Graham Solomon, *Logical Options: An Introduction to Classical and Alternative Logics* (Peterborough, Canada: Broadview, 2001).

George S. Boolos, John P. Burgess, and Richard C. Jeffrey, *Computability and Logic*, 5th ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Raymond Bradley and Norman Swartz, *Possible Worlds: An introduction to Logic and Its Philosophy* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1979).

S. Morris Engel, *With Good Reason: An Introduction to Informal Fallacies*, 5th ed. (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994).

Gary Jason, *Critical Thinking: Developing an Effective Worldview* (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 2001).

Richard A. Lanham, *A Handlist of Rhetorical Terms*, 2nd ed. (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1991).

J. P. Moreland and William Lane Craig, *Philosophical Foundations for a Christian Worldview* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity, 2003).

William Strunk Jr. and E. B. White, *The Elements of Style*, 3rd or 4th ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1979 or later).