

SOUTHWESTERN  
BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

**PHREL 5373 A – Critical Thinking**

**William A. Dembski**

[updated 01.17.07]

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

**Course Description:**

How do we get people to believe things? This course examines the means by which we convince ourselves and others that something is true. Of special interest here are the pitfalls to logical thinking that prevent us from coming to the truth.

**Course Objective:**

The goal of this course is to help students become adept at making a persuasive case for the truth of the Christian worldview.

**Reading List:**

- [NCM] Nancey C. Murphy, *Reasoning and Rhetoric in Religion* (Valley Forge, Penn.: Trinity Press International, 1994; republished 2001 by Wipf & Stock).
- [GJ] Gary Jason, *Critical Thinking: Developing an Effective Worldview* (Belmont, Calif.: Wadsworth, 2001).
- [G&E] Robert Greene and Joost Elffers, *The 48 Laws of Power* (New York: Penguin Putnam, 2000).

**Semester Grade:**

- (1) Mid-term exam — 20 percent positive.
- (2) Final exam — 30 percent positive.
- (3) Exercises — 50 percent positive. Exercises appear at the end of each chapter in NCM. Answers to all these exercises need to be written out and handed in each week.
- (4) Single-page executive summary of YOU (with clearly recognizable embedded picture of yourself) — minus 5 percent if not handed in. Due beginning of second week of class.
- (5) Active class participation — up to 10 percent negative.
- (6) In-class quizzes — up to 20 percent negative.

**Readings:**

- (1) NCM, ch. 1. GJ, chs. 1-3.
- (2) NCM, ch. 2. GJ, chs. 4,5.
- (3) NCM, ch. 3. GJ, ch. 6. G&E, Laws 1-4.
- (4) NCM, ch. 4. GJ, chs. 7,11. G&E, Laws 5-8.
- (5) NCM, ch. 5. GJ, ch. 8. G&E, Laws 9-12.
- (6) NCM, ch. 6. GJ, ch. 9. G&E, Laws 13-16.
- (7) NCM, ch. 7. GJ, ch. 10. G&E, Laws 17-20.
- (8) NCM, ch. 8. GJ, ch. 12. G&E, Laws 21-24.
- (9) NCM, ch. 9. GJ, ch. 13. G&E, Laws 25-28.
- (10) NCM, ch. 10. GJ, ch. 14. G&E, Laws 29-32.
- (11) NCM, ch. 11. GJ, ch. 15. G&E, Laws 33-36.
- (12) NCM, ch. 12. GJ, ch. 16. G&E, Laws 37-40.
- (13) NCM, ch. 13. GJ, ch. 17. G&E, Laws 41-44.
- (14) NCM, ch. 14. GJ, ch. 18. G&E, Laws 45-48.

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Course: PHREL 5373 A  
Term: Spring 2007  
Time: TR 1:00-2:15 pm  
Place: Scarborough 14  
Online: <http://www.designinference.com/teaching/teaching.htm>