



Birmingham Theological Seminary
2200 Briarwood Way
Birmingham, Alabama 35243
(205) 776-5650

Biblical Counseling: Sexuality and Gender Syllabus

Semester: Fall 2025

Day & Time: September 25-27

Professor: Dr. Chesley Kalehoff

Email: counselingcoordinator@briarwood.org

Course: BC1815

Room: A209/VC

Credits: 2

Course Description: The purpose of this course is to examine the beliefs and positions on human gender and sexuality of contemporary culture in the context of the biblical canon and historic Christianity, including creeds, confessions, and systematic theology for the purpose of better understanding how to disciple a broken generation through biblical counseling practices. The student will be challenged to develop specific counseling skills, practices, and techniques to shepherd and disciple persons through difficult questions of identity and personal needs to a biblical identity and biblical sexual fulfillment and practices.

Course Objectives:

1. The student will be able to define and describe biblical and covenantal sexuality.
2. The student will be able to define a biblical and covenantal view of gender.
3. The student will be able to define the terms and the nomenclature of the ongoing cultural conversation regarding sexuality.
4. The student will be able to cogently outline and discuss the contemporary interpretations of gender and sexuality.
5. The student will be able to articulate cultural, philosophical, and theological factors feeding contemporary drift from traditional views both in dominant cultural communities and the “mainline” church and the drifting “evangelical” church denominations.
6. The student will develop biblical discipleship and counseling practices pertaining to the person’s struggle with views on gender and sexuality.
7. The student will develop a biblical counseling framework that incorporates biblical views on gender and sexuality.
8. The student will develop a biblical counseling framework that incorporates biblical views on gender and sexuality for holistic personhood application.

Required Texts:

The Holy Bible, ESV

Pearcy, Nancy. *Love Thy Body*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2018. ISBN: 9780801075728

Trueman, Carl R. *Strange New World*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2022. ISBN: 9781433579301

Yuan, Christopher. *Holy Sexuality and the Gospel*. New York: Multnomah, 2018. ISBN: 9780735290914

Recommended Texts:

Burk, Denny and Heath Lambert. *Transforming Homosexuality*. Philipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2015. ISBN: 9781596381391

Butterfield, Rosaria. *Openness Unhindered*. Pittsburgh: Crown & Covenant Publications, 2015. ISBN: 9781884527999

Ferrer, Hillary Morgan. *Mama Bear Apologetics; Guide to Sexuality*. Harvest House Publishers, 2021. ISBN: 9780736983815

Shrier, Abigail. *Irreversible Damage*. Washington D.C.: Regnery, 2020. ISBN: 9781684512287

Walker, Andrew T. *God and the Transgender Debate*. The Good Book Company, 2017. ISBN: 9781784981785

Course Requirements:

Assignment 1: Using either the Association of Certified Biblical Counselors Resource Website or the Harvest USA website, select a resource surrounding gender and sexuality. In a 2–3-page paper, summarize the main points of the resource and provide a critique on potential problems when counseling through the topic presented. Due by October 10.

Assignment 2: After reading *Love Thy Body* by Nancy Percy, write a 5–7-page review interacting with three concepts previously unknown to you. You may include issues you have encountered in counseling, or raise questions brought up by reading the text. Due by October 31.

Assignment 3: Select one of the “Recommended Texts” from the syllabus. Write a 5–7-page review that interacts critically with a synopsis of the text, including how you would utilize it within your counseling ministry. Due by November 21.

Assignment 4: Reading Log – please submit a statement confirming your completion of reading the Required Texts as well as at least two of the Recommended Texts. Due by November 21.

BTS Format, Style, and Writing Standards:

All research papers must be formatted in accordance with Turabian Chicago standards including the title page. All papers are to be #12 font Times New Roman and Double-Spaced. Any paper not

conforming to these standards will automatically be dropped one letter grade. Please see the BTS Turabian Style Guide for more information on turning in papers and assignments.

The BTS Turabian Style Guide and other resources are available on the BTS Writing Center webpage: <https://www.btswritingcenter.net/>

In addition, the Writing Center runs 2-3 Writing Workshops every semester. They are very helpful and highly recommended.

BTS Plagiarism / Generative AI Policy

In addition to the BTS plagiarism policy, BTS is implementing a new Generative AI policy. Unless clearly directed by the instructor, the students should submit their own work, independent of artificial intelligence tools. Use of generative AI to write papers or to write significant portions of assignments is considered an ethical violation of our Student Code of Conduct and to be a violation of general academic integrity, which could result in a zero on the assignment and/or a lowered letter grade for the course by the professor. If determined to be an egregious violation, it could lead to further sanctions administered through the Academic Committee, including expulsion from BTS.

Course Schedule:

Thursday, September 25

3:00pm – 5:00pm: Introduction, Defining Terms, History of Social Movements

5:00pm – 6:30pm: Dinner

6:30pm – 9:00pm: Theological Struggles in the Current Climate (*Strange New World* should be completed by first meeting)

Friday, September 26

8:30am – 11:30am: Sexuality and the Category of “Orientation”

11:30am – 1:00pm: Lunch

1:00pm – 3:00pm: Identity and Identifying as Non-human

3:00pm – 3:30pm: Break

3:30pm – 5:00pm: Group and Class Discussion

Saturday, September 27

8:30am – 11:30am: Counseling Toward Biblical Sexuality in Teens and Adults

11:30am – 12:30pm: Lunch

12:30pm – 2:00pm: Helping Families Navigate Issues of Gender and Sexuality

Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to demonstrate punctuality and attend all class sessions. Any absences should be communicated to the professor beforehand. Students may miss up to three classes with impunity.

Class Policies and Procedures:

- BTS highly recommends using handwritten note taking methods in class and keeping computer usage to a minimum.
- Other electronics should be used sparingly.
- All assignments must be submitted by email by 11:59 (CDT/CST) on the due date.
- Late assignments will incur a -3 point deduction per weekday after the due date, except in cases of emergency communicated to the professor.
- Missed tests/exams may only be made up with an excused absence, preferably in advance of class. Excused absence tests/exams must be made up before the final day of the semester.

Video Conference Policies and Procedures:

- Please utilize the BTS “Best VC (Video Conference) Practices” information for the course.
- Laptops/Desktops are the preferred method of attending a video conference course. Information will be shared on the screen, so phones will be less useful.
- In Video Conference, it is preferable for the student to keep their video on (when possible) so that students and faculty may engage with one another. Extended periods of dark screen will result in follow-up and potential removal from class.
- Other electronics should be used sparingly.

GRADING CRITERIA AND ASSESSMENT RUBRIC

A to A-	B to B-	C to C-	D to D-
Correct spelling and grammar/punctuation	Minor errors in spelling or grammar/punctuation	Multiple errors in spelling or grammar/punctuation per page	Difficult to read due to English writing errors
Smooth writing that provides for effective and efficient reading	Writing is acceptable, but not as organized and coherent	Writing is not smooth, sometimes confusing and inconsistent	Writing lacks clarity, focus, structure, and is incoherent
Person and format are proper for assignment	Person and format are inconsistent	Person and format are not appropriate	Person and format are totally inappropriate
Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are appropriately used, cited, and clearly supports main argument	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are appropriate but need more depth and use of critical thinking	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are inadequate for main argument and do not reflect understanding	Scripture, paraphrases, quotes, and summaries are improperly used, over used, under used, or cited in error
Paper completely conforms to Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i>	Paper generally conforms to Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i>	Paper somewhat conforms to Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i>	Paper does not conform to Turabian's <i>Manual for Writers</i>

BTS Outcomes Evaluation

Please rank each outcome on a scale of 1-5

1: this outcome is not covered in this class

2: this outcome is only touched on in this class

3: this outcome is discussed in conjunction with class material

4: this outcome lightly assessed as part of course assessment (one assignment)

5: this outcome is fully integrated into the assessment of this course (multiple assignments)

1. Scripture: Students will effectively articulate the truth of Scripture and Scripture as truth, engaged with learning biblical knowledge and reformed principles of the supremacy of Scripture as God's word.
2. Reformed Theology: Students will be able to engage and reproduce the primary and essential elements of Reformed Theology.
3. Local Church: Students will be engaged in applied ministry projects in the local church
4. Wisdom: Students will grow in character; increasing in their demonstration of wisdom and its fruits.
5. Discipleship: Students will be able to understand and articulate the nature and importance of discipleship—both ordinary (means of grace) and extraordinary (biblical counseling).
6. Communication: Students will grow in the efficacy of their communication (articulation, teaching/speaking, and preaching—respective to various departments) both in content knowledge and rhetorical strategies.
7. Worldview: Students will demonstrate a growing ability to apply God's word to all spheres of life, evidenced through class discussion and other assigned assessments.
8. Leadership: Students will grow in their understanding of godly leadership and ability to lead others in service of the local church.

Outcome	Rank	Rationale (one sentence)
Scripture	5	Scripture is the primary authority in this course, with multiple assignments requiring interpretation and application of biblical truth to contemporary issues of gender and sexuality.
Reformed Theology	5	The course engages deeply with the confessions, creeds, and systematic theology of the Reformed tradition to address cultural and pastoral concerns.
Local Church	3	While students consider the local church's role in discipleship and counseling, this is discussed rather than directly implemented in fieldwork.
Wisdom	4	Students are challenged to apply biblical wisdom to complex pastoral counseling situations, with assessment through case studies and reflective assignments.
Discipleship	5	Discipleship is central to the course, particularly in equipping students to guide others toward biblical identity and sexual ethics through counseling.

Communication	4	Students develop communication skills through counseling practice, written responses, and possibly role-play, though public speaking or preaching is not the main emphasis.
Worldview	5	The course requires students to evaluate cultural perspectives and apply a biblical worldview to personal identity, sexuality, and counseling.
Leadership	3	Leadership principles are addressed in the context of guiding others pastorally, though leadership development is not the primary focus of the course.