



Birmingham Theological Seminary
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Birmingham, Alabama 35243
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Biblical Counseling Anthropology and Theory Syllabus

Semester: Fall 2025

**Course: BC1820 Biblical Counseling
Anthropology and Theory**

Day & Time: Mondays, 5:30-7:20

Room: VC

Professor: Dr. Cheryl Blackmon

Credits: 2

Email: cmblackmon66@gmail.com

Phone: 205-835-5259

Course Note: This class will meet five times during the semester in a seminar format. Students should schedule time during every week of the semester to complete assignments for this class, which will include reading, writing and quizzes. In a seminar format, student preparation and participation are vital. Scheduled seminar dates include: 9/8, 9/15, 10/6, 11/3, 12/1.

Course Description: This course introduces students to the essential nature of the doctrine of man for the discipline of biblical counseling. The course contrasts secular theories of the origin of man, the nature of man, and the issues of humanity with biblical theories, including the doctrine of sin, the nature of man, and the implications of the Covenant of Grace.

Course Objectives:

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to

- Content
 - Refine their conceptualization of biblical counseling
 - Describe the significance of anthropology to biblical counseling
 - Delineate nine secular theories
 - Compare and contrast the presuppositions of various counseling theories
- Character
 - Value the relevance of understanding biblical doctrines as theory
 - Explain the origin of human problems as moral in nature with personal responsibility for responses to the pressures of life
 - Appreciate a biblical worldview in sifting counseling techniques to determine viability in biblical counseling
- Competency
 - Evaluate counseling theories in the context of biblical presuppositions
 - Converse intelligently with the professional counseling community
 - Complete assignments and quizzes as directed

Required Texts:

- *Corey, Gerald. *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy*. Boston: Cengage Learning, Inc., 2021, 2017, 2013. ISBN: 978-0-357-67142-9 (varies w/version)
*NOTE: This is a **secular textbook** used to meet course objectives. Though this textbook may be purchased on Amazon, it is **recommended that you rent it or buy a used copy**. Any edition (8 or above) is suitable. (336 pages will be assigned)
- Eyrich, Howard. *A Layman's Guide to Secular Counseling Theories*. Hoover, AL: Growth Advantage Communication, 2023. ISBN: 979-8858-19287-9 (80 pages)
- Ganschow, Julie. *Trauma Redeemed: A Biblical Response to Medicalized Suffering*. Pure Water Press, 2025. ISBN: 979-8-9889591-0-6 (219 pages)
- Strachan, Owen. *Reenchanting Humanity: A Theology of Mankind*. Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications Ltd., 2019. ISBN: 978-1-5271-0948-3 (383 pages)

Collateral or Recommended Texts:

- Farris, Joshua R. *An Introduction to Theological Anthropology: Humans, Both Creaturely and Divine*, Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020. ISBN: 978-1-5409-6216-4
- Hoekema, Anthony A. *Created in God's Image: The Christian Doctrine of Man*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986. ISBN: 978-0-8028-0850-9
- Vitz, Paul. *Psychology as Religion: The Cult of Self-Worship, 2nd Edition*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1994. ISBN: 978-0-8028-0725-0

Course Requirements and Assessments:

Seminar attendance is required unless providentially hindered. In that case, the student must schedule a two-hour make-up session with the professor or a designated substitute.

Complete each assignment as a WORD document. Submit documents with a Turabian style title page, unless otherwise advised by the professor (e.g., pre-class questions, post-class reflections etc.).

Due September 22: Write a one-to-two-page book review of *The Layman's Guide to Secular Counseling Theories* by Howard Eyrich. Your review should include a concise summary of the book that answers the following questions: What does this book seek to accomplish? Why is this important to the study of biblical counseling? What section, or element, of the book was of greatest interest to you? To what extent did the book accomplish what it set out to do? In what way will this book contribute to your personal interest in biblical counseling? Submit with a Turabian style title page.

Due October 13: Choose one chapter from *Reenchanting Humanity* by Owen Strachan on which to base a lesson outline for teaching a Sunday School class, Bible study, or youth group. Begin the outline with an introductory paragraph identifying your audience and the reason for your choice of topic, including your objective for the audience. This should be a sentence outline that would be helpful in teaching this group. Submit with a Turabian style title page.

Due December 8: Begin this journaling assignment when you start reading *Trauma Redeemed* by Julie Ganshow. While you read, highlight sentences or passages that introduce new, helpful or interesting information. For each chapter choose three of these significant points to briefly summarize in your own words as take-aways from the chapter. Identify each chapter by title and list your take-aways. Submit with a Turabian style title page.

Due December 12: Write a 1-2-page personal response essay about this course. How did it impact your understanding of worldview, counseling theory and anthropological presuppositions? How will this class contribute to your biblical counseling or pastoral ministry? Submit with a Turabian style title page.

COURSE REQUIREMENT	GRADE WEIGHT	COMMENTS
Attendance, Preparedness and In-Class Participation	20%	For each seminar bring three questions and three observations or applications for class discussion.
Book Review: Eyrich	20%	Due September 22 See Instructions above
Lesson Outline: Strachan	20%	Due October 13 See Instructions above
Journaling: Ganschow	20%	Due December 8 See Instructions above
Personal Response Essay	20%	Due December 12 See Instructions above

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:

DAY	DATE	ANTICIPATED AGENDA	ASSIGNMENT
Monday 5:30-7:20	9/8/25	Seminar Format/Syllabus Review Importance of Anthropology and Authority in Biblical Counseling	Due 9/15/25: Read Eyrich Read Strachan Chap. 1-2
Monday 5:30-7:20	9/15/25	The Puzzling World of Counseling Theories: A Presuppositional Approach	Due 10/6/25: Read Corey, Part 2 Chapters 4-8 Read Strachan Chapters 2-3
Monday 5:30-7:20	10/6/25	Can Secular Counseling and Biblical Counseling Fit Together	Due 11/3/25: Read Corey, Part 2 Chapters 9, 10, 11, 12 Read Strachan 4-9
Monday 5:30-7:20	11/3/25	Common Disorders: A Review of the DSM-5	Due 12/1/25 Read Ganshow Chapters 1-15
Monday 5:30-7:20	12/1/25	Biblically Informed Trauma Counseling	Due 12/12/25 Final: Responsive Essay

Attendance Policy:

Students are expected to demonstrate punctuality and attend all class sessions. See **Course Note**.

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	This class is about biblical application.
Reformed Theology	3	Textbooks, with 1 exception, are written from Reformed perspective.
Local Church	2	Students will be able to use this class in ministry in the future.
Wisdom	5	There are multiple writing assignments and class participation for growth in wisdom.
Discipleship	3	Application of learning will lead to discipleship.
Communication	5	The format of this class is seminar style.
Worldview	5	There will be comparison and contrast with presuppositions of secular and biblical counseling.
Leadership	3	By meeting the objectives of this class, the students will become informed leaders in the local church.