



WBUonline
School of Christian Studies

UNIVERSITY MISSION STATEMENT

Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused and distinctively Christian environment for professional success and service to God and humankind.

COURSE NUMBER AND TITLE

THST5373 VC01 Seminar on Topics in Christian Theology: Destiny of the Unevangelized

TERM AND DATES

Summer 2026 June 1-July 25, 2026

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME, OFFICE NUMBER, AND E-MAIL ADDRESS

Dr. J. M. Givens Jr.

Professor of Religion and Philosophy

Office) 806.291.1166 Assist) 806.291.1160 Fax) 806.291.1969 Mobile) 806.292.3957
jgivens@wbu.edu

Instant Messaging available through Blackboard IM (download through Tools section)

OFFICE LOCATION AND HOURS

Flores Bible Building office suite

Mon 10:00-12:00; 3:00-4:00; Tues 8:15-11:00; 2:00-3:00; Wed 10:00-11:00; 3:00-4:00; Thurs 8:15-11:00; Fri 9:00-10:00 CST/CDT (phone and instant messaging)

*Other times available by email and/or appointment; **Mobile phone for emergencies***

CLASS MEETING TIME AND LOCATION

Asynchronous interaction with specific deadlines; Virtual Campus Blackboard website

CATALOG DESCRIPTION

A study of various topics which are directly related to significant theological inquiry. Note: May be repeated when content varies.

PREREQUISITE(S)

None.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK AND RESOURCE MATERIALS

1. TEXTBOOKS

- A. Dennis L. Okholm and Timothy R. Phillips, eds. *Four Views on Salvation in a Pluralistic World*. Grand Rapids, IL: Zondervan, 1995.

- B. Gabriel J. Fackre, Ronald H. Nash, and John Sanders, eds. *What About Those Who Have Never Heard? Three Views on the Destiny of the Unevangelized*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1995.
 - C. Gerald R. McDermott, *Can Evangelicals Learn from World Religions? Jesus, Revelation, and Religious Traditions*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2000.
 - D. Gerald R. McDermott, *God's Rivals: Why Has God Allowed Different Religions? Insights from the Bible and the Early Church*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 2007.
 - E. Adam Hamilton, *Christianity and World Religions: Questions We Ask About Other Faiths*, rev. ed. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2018.
2. Bible, any modern translation recognized by mainstream Christianity

COURSE OUTCOME COMPETENCIES

The student will

1. describe different views of revelation and how the religions are to be understood in this light, including whether or not truth can be found in these religions and whether this truth might benefit Christian faith and practice
2. compare and contrast major doctrinal views on the destiny of the unevangelized: universalism, pluralism, inclusivism, and particularism/restrictivism (including variants within each position)
3. evaluate these views in light of key biblical passages and theological history
4. construct a statement of the student's personal belief about the destiny of the unevangelized in light of the biblical, historical, and contemporary evidence
5. critically reflect on the subject through research and writing

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance for online courses is defined fully in the [university catalog](#).
2. Students are expected to participate in all required instructional activities in their courses.
3. Student "attendance" in an online course is defined as active participation in the course as described in the course syllabus.
4. Students aware of necessary absences must inform the professor with as much advance notice as possible in order to make appropriate arrangements.
5. Any student absent 25 percent or more of the online course, i.e., non-participatory during 3 or more weeks of an 11 week term, may receive an F for that course.
6. Any student who has not actively participated in an online class prior to the census date for any given term is considered a "no-show" and will be administratively withdrawn from the class without record. To be counted as actively participating, it is not sufficient to log in and view the course. The student must be submitting work as described in the course syllabus.
7. When a student reaches a number of absences considered by the instructor to be excessive, the instructor will submit a Report of Unsatisfactory Progress to the student's WBU student email account and to appropriate university personnel.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Wayland Baptist University observes a zero tolerance policy regarding academic dishonesty.

Per university policy as described in the academic catalog, all cases of academic dishonesty will

be reported and second offenses will result in suspension from the university. Full statement of the policy is in the [university catalog](#).

No use of any generative AI tools permitted.

1. Students are required to create and produce all work themselves or with assigned group members. Any work submitted that has used an AI generative tool like ChatGPT will be in immediate violation of the academic integrity policies for the course and WBU.
2. All assignments must be fully created, designed, and prepared by the student(s).
3. Any work that uses generative AI will be treated as plagiarism.

DISABILITY STATEMENT

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university. The Disability Services Coordinator and Academic Coach serve as the coordinator of students with disabilities and must be contacted concerning accommodation requests (office (806) 291-1057). Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS/REQUIREMENTS

1. *Discussion Boards.* Students will participate in weekly discussions based on assigned readings. Through these boards, students will engage one another in discussion and analysis of issues related to the doctrines of revelation and salvation as these relate to the destiny of the unevangelized. These boards are intended to enhance student understanding of the issues, learn from other perspectives, clarify personal theological views, and develop reflective and critical thinking skills. Instructions and expectations will be provided in the Course Info section of the Blackboard course for the initial post and subsequent interaction.

NOTE: Because the university classroom is a place designed for the free exchange of ideas, students are encouraged to think aloud and to be honest about their theological perspectives and concerns. Students should respect the views of their peers, addressing any concerns or questions about another's views with charity and compassion, so that the whole body of Christ might be built up ([Eph. 4:11-15](#)).

2. *Chapter Review.* Students will write a **3-5 page** summary and analysis of an assigned chapter as described in the outline below. Student reviews will be posted in Blackboard and will serve as the point of discussion for the subsequent week's discussion, so students are responsible for submitting their papers in a timely manner and reading papers written by classmates on other texts. Detailed instructions will be provided in the Course Info section of Blackboard and at the start of term.
3. *Book Review.* Students will develop a **twenty minute presentation** over a text they read during the semester about the destiny of the unevangelized. The presentation will both

present key ideas from the text as well as provide critical evaluation of the case presented. The books will be selected during the start of the semester from a list provided in Blackboard. Where possible, students will select a text on a doctrinal position *other* than the student's current position. Student presentations will be posted in Blackboard and will serve as the point of discussion for the week after they are due, so students are responsible for submitting presentations in a timely manner. Detailed instructions will be provided in the Course Info section of Blackboard and at the start of term.

4. *Personal Position Papers.* Students will write reflective papers that contain a statement on their personal doctrine of the destiny of the unevangelized. An initial paper at least **3 pages in length** will be written at the start of the term on what the student's current view is. The final reflective paper will be based on the readings and research conducted during the term. The paper will be at least **10 pages in length** and must critically interact with the biblical story, key biblical texts, and theological issues discussed during the term, not only stating the student's view but arguing why it is the best interpretation (including how it is a better understanding of the biblical narrative and individual texts than other discussed interpretations). The purpose of the initial paper is to help the student evaluate the development of the student's position during the term while the final reflective paper is to synthesize the various facts of the course into a meaningful whole expressing your personal view. This will **not** be a summary of discussion board posts nor primarily a research paper (though you should reference works used). It is a reflective exercise describing the student's personal view over all reading and writing assignments throughout the term. Detailed instructions will be provided in the Course Info section of Blackboard at the start of term.
5. *Final Examination.* Students will take a comprehensive examination at the end of term, which will engage the different texts and topics discussed through the term.

GRADING CRITERIA

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. University Grading Scale 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Procedure Used for Computation of Final Grade 		
A	90-100	a. <i>Weekly Discussions</i>	20%
B	80-89	b. <i>Book Review Presentation</i>	25%
C	70-79	c. <i>Chapter Review</i>	20%
D	60-69	d. <i>Initial Position Paper</i>	5%
F	below 60	e. <i>Final Position Paper</i>	30%

Students shall have protection through orderly procedures against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using the student grade appeal process described in the Academic Catalog. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must

be submitted through the vice president of academic affairs to the Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised, or lowered to a more proper evaluation.

COURSE CONTENT & OUTLINE (readings and major assignments)

Week 1 – Introduction to the Destiny of the Unevangelized

Initial Position Paper Due (start of term)

- a. Read “Introduction” and “The Wise Men,” by Adam Hamilton in *Christianity and World Religions*
- b. Read Introduction by Dennis L. Okholm and Timothy R. Phillips in *Four Views*
- c. Read Introduction by John Sanders in *Three Views*
- d. Read “The Scandal of Particularity” by Gerald McDermott in *God’s Rivals*

Week 2 – Introduction to the Biblical Witness about Religions

- a. Read “A Biblical Perspective on the Religions—Old Testament,” by Calvin Shenk in *Who Do You Say That I Am?* (provided in Blackboard)
- b. Read “A Biblical Perspective on the Religions—New Testament,” by Calvin Shenk in *Who Do You Say That I Am?* (provided in Blackboard)
- c. Read “Not Even in Israel Have I Found Such Faith,” by Gerald McDermott in *God’s Rivals*
- d. Read “Biblical Suggestions,” by Gerald McDermott in *Can Evangelicals Learn from World Religions?*

Week 3 – Introduction to Restrictivism/Particularism/Exclusivism

- a. Read “Restrictivism” by Ronald Nash in *Three Views* (and responses)
- b. Read “A Particularist View: A Post-Enlightenment Approach” by Alister McGrath in *Four Views* (and responses)
- c. Read “A Particularist View: An Evidentialist Approach” by Douglas Geivett and Gary Phillips in *Four Views* (and responses)

Week 4 – Introduction to Inclusivism

- a. Read “An Inclusivist View,” by Clark Pinnock in *Four Views* (and responses)
- b. Read “Inclusivism,” by John Sanders in *Three Views* (and responses)
- c. Read “Divine Perseverance” by Gabriel Fackre in *Three Views* (and responses)

Week 5 – Introduction to Pluralism (and Universalism)

- a. Read “A Pluralist View,” by John Hick in *Four Views* (and responses)

Week 6 – Additional Biblical and Historical Views on Religions and Revelation

- a. Since the destiny of the unevangelized and the nature of revelation through nature/in other religions are related issues, students will look at views of select Christians on revelation and other religions
- b. Each student reads an assigned **chapter** (provided in Blackboard) and writes a **review** for classmates

Graduate Presentations Due

Week 7 – Discussion of Book Reviews

Read chapter reviews

Watch Presentations

Discuss reviews and presentations

Final Position Paper Due

Week 8 – Final Considerations on the Destiny of the Unevangelized

Continue discussion of reviews and presentations

Discuss Position Papers