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# BS 750 The Human Person: Multidisciplinary Perspectives

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## BS/ST750

### The Human Person: Multidisciplinary Perspectives

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Fall 2002

3 semester units

Seminar: Thursdays, 2:30 - 4:15 pm

Symposium: 13-15 November 2002

Enrollment Limit: 15

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#### Course Description

This seminar probes the relationship of recent findings in the neurosciences to traditional Christian understandings of the human person by pressing two questions: (1) How do the innovations in our understanding of the human person which derive from the neurosciences impinge on the sort of portraits of the human person we find in Christian Scripture and classical Christian faith? (2) In terms of a coherent Christian faith, ethics, and the practices generally associated with Christian life and ministry (e.g., spirituality, evangelism, pastoral care), what is at stake in the interaction of science and theology at this point?

Enrollment in the Seminar requires full participation in “Minds, Souls, Persons—A Symposium” (13-15 November 2002).

*Prerequisites: OT520 and NT520 (or BS501-502), ST501 or DO501*

#### Course Objectives

Having successfully completed this course, students will be able to: identify central issues congregating at the interface of science and theology on the question of human personhood;

- evaluate competing views of the human person in light of basic neuroscientific findings, biblical anthropology, and systematic theology; and
- propose a coherent, Christian understanding of the human person, together with its implications for faithful life and ministry practices.

#### Course Reading (Required Texts)

Brown, Warren S., Nancey Murphy, and H. Newton Maloney, eds. *Whatever Happened to the Soul? Scientific and Theological Portraits of Human Nature*. Theology and the Sciences. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1998.

Conference papers, available from the instructor.

Damasio, Antonio R. *The Feeling of What Happens: Body and Emotion in the Making of Consciousness*. New York: Harcourt, 1999.

Gregersen, Niels Henrik, Willem B. Drees, and Ulf Görman, eds. *The Human Person in Science and Theology*. Issues in Science and Theology. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 2000.

Hasker, William. *The Emergent Self*. Ithaca/London: Cornell University Press, 1999.

Jeeves, Malcolm A. *Human Nature at the Millennium: Reflections on the Integration of Psychology and Christianity*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker, 1997.

### Course Reading (Recommended Texts)

Cooper, John W. *Body, Soul, and Life Everlasting: Biblical Anthropology and the Monism-Dualism Debate*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 1989.

Corcoran, Kevin, ed. *Soul, Body, and Survival: Essays on the Metaphysics of Human Persons*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001.

Russell, Robert John et al., eds. *Neuroscience and the Person*. Scientific Perspectives on Divine Action 4. Vatican City State/Vatican Observatory, 1999.

Wright, John P. and Paul Potter, eds. *Psyche and Soma: Physicians and Metaphysicians on the Mind-Body Problem from Antiquity to Enlightenment*. Oxford: Clarendon, 2000.

The instructor will make available to participants in the Seminar a wide-ranging bibliography on the topic of the course.

### Web Sites of Potential Interest

<http://artsci.wustl.edu/~philos/MindDict/index.html>

(an on-line dictionary devoted to philosophy of mind)

<http://psyche.cs.monash.edu.au/>

(an on-line, interdisciplinary journal devoted to the mind)

<http://aaai.org/Magazine/Editorial/magazine-contents.html>

(an on-line version of *AI*, a periodical concerned with artificial intelligence)

<http://www-psych.stanford.edu/cogsci/>

(an index of on-line, cognitive-science resources)

[http://www.personal.kent.edu/~brosmait/aibib\\_gs.html](http://www.personal.kent.edu/~brosmait/aibib_gs.html)

(an annotated bibliography on philosophy of mind, from Kent State faculty)

<http://www.uniroma3.it/kant/field/#links>

(guided tours of selected contributions to philosophy of the mind, from *A Field Guide to the Philosophy of the Mind*)

<http://www.u.arizona.edu/~chalmers/resources.html>

(web resources related to consciousness, philosophy of mind, et al.)

<http://www.u.arizona.edu/~chalmers/biblio.html>

(an annotated bibliography on consciousness, by David Chalmers)

<http://www.counterbalance.net/neuro/index-frame.html>

(brief, mixed media presentations on the nature of the human person, by Nancey Murphy)

### Course Requirements

*On questions of style, especially with regard to paper organization and references, see Carole Slade, Form and Style: Research Papers, Reports, Theses, 11th ed. (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2000).*

*Students should submit written materials on time; late papers will receive no written comments and the grade will be penalized.*

**1. Seminar Preparation, Attendance, and Participation:** Attendance at and readiness to participate in all sessions of the Seminar is expected. Persons who attend all sessions of the seminar and symposium will have 2 points added to their final grade. Discussion questions

will be posted to a Conference Folder on the Intranet in advance of most sessions to guide student preparation. Persons who participate frequently and substantively in the Seminar discussion, demonstrating their reflective interaction with course reading and posted questions, will have as many as 3 points added to their final grade.

**2. Book Review:** A review of either Hasker or Jeeves, approximately 1300-1600 words (i.e., 5-6 pages, with a standard 12-point font like Times New Roman and one-inch margins) in length, typed, double-spaced. This review should consist of two discrete sections:

- *A summary of the book's contents*, sketching the book's overall aim(s), method(s), argument(s), and conclusion(s). Your ability to represent well the content of your chosen book will constitute 75% of the grade of this assignment.
- *A bullet-list of questions* that you would like to ask of the author. Some of these might be questions for clarification (What do you mean when you say...?), while others should be of a critical character (What basis do you have to argue...? Have you considered this alternative...? etc.). Your ability to raise significant questions for discussion will constitute 20% of the grade of this assignment.

The other 5% of the grade is based on presentation (form, grammar, spelling). Students who choose to complete this assignment in groups of two or three will have 2 points added to the final grade of this assignment. Students desiring suggestions and comments prior to final submission of their Book Review may submit a penultimate draft no later than 1 November. Final drafts are due at the beginning of class, 7 November 2002. (30%)

**3. Symposium Reflections:** A log with critical reflections/questions documenting your full participation in and engagement with the presentations associated with "Minds, Souls, Persons—A Symposium" (13-15 November 2002): approximately 1300-1600 words (i.e., 5-6 pages, with a standard 12-point font like Times New Roman and one-inch margins) in length, typed, double-spaced. For each session of the Symposium, provide a brief paragraph summarizing the *intellectual content* of that session, followed by 2-3 *critical reflections/questions* generated by your participation in that session. Due at the beginning of class, 28 November 2002. (20%)

**4. Research Paper:** A major, constructive and critical essay on a topic directly related to the substance of this course: approximately 4200-5600 words (i.e., 15-20 pages, with a standard 12-point font like Times New Roman and one-inch margins, plus bibliography) in length, typed, double-spaced. Students are advised to discuss their proposed topics with the instructor at the earliest possible stages of the research-and-writing process. For more information on research paper expectations and grading criteria, see Intranet \ Students \ Lecture Power Points \ Green \ Course Assignments \ Research Papers. Students desiring suggestions and comments prior to final submission of their Research Paper may submit a penultimate draft no later than 5 December. Final drafts are due no later than 4:00 pm, 12 December 2002. (50%)

### Course Schedule

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|--------|---|
| 5 Sept | 1. What Is at Stake in Theological Anthropology? Ecclesiological, Ethical, Missional, and Psychological Ruminations. Body and Soul: A Historical and Contemporary Survey of Positions |
|--------|---|

- Required Reading:** Brown et al., pp. 1-29, 213-28.  
**Recommended Reading:** Wright and Potter
- 12 Sept 2. Body and Soul, Mind and Brain: The Self in Biblical, Theological, and Scientific Perspective  
**Required Reading:** Brown et al., Damasio, Gregersen et al.  
**Recommended Reading:** Russell et al.
- 19 Sept 3. Body and Soul, Mind and Brain: The Self in Biblical, Theological, and Scientific Perspective  
**Required Reading:** Brown et al., Damasio, Gregersen et al.  
**Recommended Reading:** Russell et al.
- 26 Sept 4. Body and Soul, Mind and Brain: The Self in Biblical, Theological, and Scientific Perspective  
**Required Reading:** Brown et al., Damasio, Gregersen et al.  
**Recommended Reading:** Corcoran
- 3 Oct 5. Body and Soul, Mind and Brain: The Self in Biblical, Theological, and Scientific Perspective  
**Required Reading:** Brown et al., Damasio, Gregersen et al.  
**Recommended Reading:** Corcoran
- 10 Oct 6. Body and Soul, Mind and Brain: The Self in Biblical, Theological, and Scientific Perspective  
**Required Reading:** Brown et al., Damasio, Gregersen et al.  
**Recommended Reading:** Corcoran
- 17 Oct 7. Body and Soul, Mind and Brain: The Self in Biblical, Theological, and Scientific Perspective  
**Required Reading:** Brown et al., Damasio, Gregersen et al.  
**Recommended Reading:** Corcoran
- 24 Oct 8. The Human Person and the Focus of Christian Mission
- 31 Oct 9. Mind-Brain Matters and Ethics at the Margins of Life
- 7 Nov 10. Emergent Self — Integrated Self: Critical Discussion on the Proposals of William Hasker and Malcolm Jeeves  
**Due:** Critical Review  
**Required Reading:** Hasker, Jeeves
- 13-15 Nov 11. “Minds, Souls, Persons—A Symposium”  
See the Symposium Schedule  
**Required Reading:** Conference Papers (available from the instructor)
- 21 Nov 12. Personhood, Psychology, and Pastoral Care  
**Due:** Symposium Reflections  
Guest Presenter: Dr. Stuart L. Palmer
- 28 Nov No Class: Reading Week
- 5 Dec 13. The Nature of Persons, Personal Identity, and Eschatology  
**Required Reading:** Hasker  
**Recommended Reading:** Cooper, Corcoran
- 12 Dec **Due:** Final Paper.