



THE SOUTHERN BAPTIST THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Ph.D. in Christian Apologetics Entrance Examination School of Theology

The entrance examination in the area of Philosophy, Apologetics, or Philosophy and Theological studies will consist of two questions. Prospective students are expected to be familiar with major thinkers in the history of philosophy and apologetics. Students should also be familiar with major components of conceptual systems including metaphysics and epistemology. The examination will require significant grounding in the following texts:

Augustine of Hippo. *On Christian Teaching*. Any edition.

John Frame. *A History of Western Philosophy and Theology*. Phillipsburg: P&R Publishing, 2015.

Brian Morley. *Mapping Apologetics*. Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2015.

Alvin Plantinga. *God, Freedom, and Evil*. Revised edition. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1989.

Prospective Ph.D. students will be randomly presented with two of the following four questions to answer. Because the questions will be randomly presented, prospective students must be prepared to answer any of the four questions.

Prospective students will answer these questions in two extended responses, written in paragraphs that mention sources as appropriate. Precise citations and exact quotations of sources are not required, but significant works should be mentioned by name. No resources of any kind—including but not limited to notes and content written previously by the student—may be utilized at any time when responding to any entrance examination question.

1. Describe and evaluate the (1) ontological, (2) cosmological, and (3) teleological arguments for the existence of God. Your response should demonstrate familiarity with classical apologetics in general and with Alvin Plantinga's work *God, Freedom, and Evil* in particular.
2. Describe and critically evaluate (1) classical apologetics, (2) evidential apologetics, (3) Van Tilian presuppositionalism, and (4) Reformed epistemology. Your response should show that you have carefully studied *Mapping Apologetics* as well as the texts that examine the history of philosophy and apologetics.
3. Select four Christian apologists or philosophers with whom you're familiar. Select (1) one of these apologists or philosophers from the ancient period, (2) one from the Middle Ages, (3) one from the early modern era, and (4) one from the twentieth or twenty-first centuries. Summarize each individual's key contributions and connect these summaries together in a way that provides a brief history of Christian thought. Your response should show that you have carefully studied the history of philosophy and apologetics.
4. According to Augustine of Hippo, "Anyone who is a good and true Christian should realize that all truth belongs to his Lord, wherever it is found. Christians should learn and receive truth from pagan literature, even as they reject superstitious vanities. We were not wrong to learn the alphabet just because the pagans said Mercury was its patron, nor should we avoid justice and virtue just because pagans dedicated temples to justice and virtue" (*On Christian Teaching*). In what way does "all truth belong to [the] Lord"? Describe how Augustine worked out the implications of this truth, then describe at least two distinct ways that other Christian thinkers throughout history have recognized that "all truth" belongs to God. Your response should demonstrate that you have carefully read *On Christian Teaching*.