

NT110 COURSE SYLLABUS
INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT
Spring 2009

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Course Description: This course provides a survey of the New Testament writings, with a focus not only upon the basic content of the writings, but with attention to the variety of theological concepts and expression, the distinct literary genres and the socio-cultural concerns of the various communities that produced the texts of the New Testament.

Course Goals: This course should provide a(n):

- Examination of the New Testament writings
- Introduction to basic theological and biblical language and practice in the utilization of this language in class discussion and assignments
- Introduction to the variety of first-century “Christianities” as evidenced in the New Testament canon and extra-canonical literature
- Introduction to the critical conversation of current biblical scholarship
- Introduction to a variety of exegetical methodologies
- Contextualization of the NT writings into the broader 1st century political, religious, social and literary milieu

Course Requirements:

- Regular attendance—two absences or three partial class attendances may be considered as insufficient for the basic course requirements
- Class Participation—evidence of class preparation (including assigned readings and prepared questions) as well as active participation in discussion
- One research and citation assignment
- Exegetical methods assignments—3 passages will be analyzed with the appropriate critical method: text, redaction, literary

- Two 5 page essays: one on Jesus and one on Paul
- A final examination

Evaluation:

- Resource and Citation Assignment 5%
- 3 Exegetical Methods Assignments 15%
- Jesus Essay 20%
- Paul Essay 25%
- Final Exam 35%

A note on class readings and preparation: An introduction course requires a good deal of pre-class preparation. In this course, there are primary canonical readings each week, which should be the first work read, then most weeks include some extra-canonical readings, which should be your next priority. Occasionally other articles are required reading and there are selections that relate to the excursus of the day, which should be your lowest priority. The students' class preparation will be taken into account in the determination of the final grade for the course.

A note on the use of language: Students are expected to use inclusive language in both their written work and in the classroom discussions. Non-gender specific language can be achieved by using either plural pronouns or joint singular pronouns. Furthermore, such language with reference to God will be encouraged.

A note on written work: The student's work is expected to conform to traditional writing format and those papers which do not meet the specifications may be returned without comment until the form is acceptable. I recommend that every student obtain a copy of Kate L. Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed. (Chicago: U Press, 2007) to be used as a writing format guide.
FOR GRADING STANDARDS, SEE THE ACADEMIC CATALOGUE

No papers will be accepted beyond the due date unless arrangements have been made at least three days in advance with the instructor. In the event that late work is approved, it will be returned graded without written comments.

Textbooks:

Ehrman, Bart D. *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, 4th ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. (Noted as Ehrman below)

Ehrman, Bart. D. *Lost Scriptures: Books that Did Not Make It into the New Testament*. Oxford: University Press, 2003. (Noted as E2 below)

Throckmorton, Burton. *Gospel Parallels: A Synopsis of the First Three Gospels*, 5th ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1992.

E-copies of some recommended readings will be available at the NT110 Johnson course file online.

Other materials will be placed on reserve in the Dickhaut library.

Course Schedule:**FEB 3**

Course introduction
Sign up for Resource and Citation Assignment—Due Next Week
(**reminder: bring Throckmorton next 4 weeks)

Readings: Ehrman Ch 1

FEB 5

Introduction to the NT World
Intro to Text Criticism—Exegetical Assign. #1 Due Next Thursday

Readings: Ehrman Ch 2

FEB 10

Intro to the Gospels
Begin Mark

Readings: Ehrman Ch 3-5

RESOURCE AND CITATION ASSIGNMENT DUE**FEB 12**

Mark cont'd

Readings: E2: intro; Infancy
Gosp Thom

Additional Reading: Politics and Galilee—(Richard A. Horsley. *Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel*. Louisville: WJK, 2001 [esp. Ch. 2]).

EXEGETICAL ASSIGNMENT #1 DUE

FEB 17

Synoptic Problem
Begin Matthew
Intro to Redaction Criticism

Readings: Ehrman Ch 7-8

FEB 19

Matthew

Readings: E2: Gosp Naz 9-11
Gosp Heb 15-16
Gosp Thom 19-28
Didache 211-17

Assignment #2 due next Thursday

Additional Reading: 1st c. Judaism & Christianity—(Paula Fredriksen & Adele Reinhartz, eds. *Jesus, Judaism and Christian Anti Judaism: Reading the New Testament after the Holocaust*. Louisville: WJK, 2002 [esp. Ch. 1 & 5]).

FEB 24

Luke-Acts
Continue Redaction Criticism

Readings: Ehrman Ch 9-10

FEB 26

Luke-Acts

Readings: E2: Gosp Mary 35-37
Proto-James 63-72

Additional Reading: Historical Accuracy of Acts—(Gerd Lüdemann. *Early Christianity according to the Traditions in Acts*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989 [esp. Ch. 1]).

EXEGETICAL ASSIGNMENT #2 DUE

MAR 3

John and Johannine Literature

Readings: Ehrman Ch 11-13

Introduce Literary Criticism—Assignment Due Next Thursday after break week

MAR 5Johannine Literature cont'd
SophiaReadings: E2: Gosp Pet 31-34
Epis Apostles 73-77Additional Reading: Wisdom/Sophia & Jesus—(Sharon H. Ringe. *Wisdom's Friends: Community and Christology in the Fourth Gospel*. Louisville: WJK, 1999 [esp. Ch. 2-4]).**MAR 10 & 12—NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK WEEK****MAR 17**The Historical Jesus
Extra-Canonical Evidence

Readings: Ehrman Ch 14-16

MAR 19

The Jesus Seminar

Readings: Ehrman Ch 17-18

Excursus: The Jesus Seminar—(Robert W. Funk, Roy W. Hoover and The Jesus Seminar. *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus*. NY: HarperCollins, 1997 [esp. Preface & Intro]).**EXEGETICAL ASSIGNMENT # 3 DUE****MAR 24**Intro to Paul
Letter-Writing, Literacy in Antiquity

Readings: Ehrman Ch 19

Excursus: Letter writing in Antiquity/Pseudonymity—(John L. White. *Light from Ancient Letters*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986 [esp. pps. 189-220) and (David G. Meade. *Pseudonymity and Canon*. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1986).

MAR 26

1 Thessalonians
Galatians

Readings: Ehrman Ch 20, part of 21
E2: Ac Paul 109-12
Ac Thecla 113-21

Jesus Essay due next Tuesday

MAR 30

1 Corinthians

Readings: Ehrman, part of 21

JESUS ESSAY DUE**APR 2**

2 Corinthians

Readings: Ehrman, part of 21; 25
E2, 3RD Ltr Cor 156-59

Excursus: Paul & Women—(Carol A. Newsom & Sharon H. Ringe Eds. *The Women's Bible Commentary*. Louisville: WJK, 1992 [esp. sections on pauline letters]).

APR 7 & 9—NO CLASS—EASTER BREAK**APR 14**

Philippians
Philemon

Readings: Ehrman, part of 21; 23
Ac of Paul & Thecla

APR 16

Romans

Readings: Ehrman Ch 22
E2: Paul/Sen 160-64
Stendahl, 78-96

Excursus: Paul & Judaism/Conversion vs. Call—(Krister Stendahl. *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976. Chapter 1, heading #2.)

APR 21

Deutero-Pauline Letters
2 Thes

Readings: Ehrman, part 27
E2: Ltr Barn 219-35
Ltr Laod 165-66

APR 23

Colossians/ Ephesians
Household Codes

Readings: Ehrman, part 24

Excursus: Household Codes/Acclamation & Jesus/Paul movement—(Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. *In Memory of Her*. NY: Crossroad, 1983 [esp. Ch. 7]).

Paul Essay Due Next Tuesday

APR 28

Tritero-Pauline Letters
Pastoral Epistles

Readings: Ehrman, part 24

PAUL ESSAY DUE**APR 30**

Hebrews /James

Readings: Ehrman Ch 26, part 28

Excursus: Opponents—Jewish/Roman persecution—(Rodney Stark. *The Rise of Christianity*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997 [esp. Ch. 7-8]).

PAUL ESSAY DUE**MAY 5**

1 Peter, Jude, 2 Peter

Readings: Ehrman Ch 27, part 28

MAY 7

Revelation
Apocalyptic Literature

Readings: Ehrman Ch 29
E2: Shep Her 251-79

Excursus: Apocalypticism & Fundamentalism—modern trends—(Karen Armstrong. *The Battle for God: A History of Fundamentalism*. New York: Random House, 2000 [esp. Part 2]).

MAY 12

Canonization of the Text

Readings: Ehrman Ch 29
E2: Pearl 324-27
McDonald Ch 7-8 (137-90)

Course Review for Final

MAY 14

The Study of the New Testament
and Issues of Faith

(Elizabeth Schüssler Fiorenza. *Bread Not Stone: The Challenge of Feminist Biblical Interpretation*. Boston: Beacon, 1984 [esp. Ch. 2])

MAY 19—Final Exam from 9:30-11:20 a.m.

Resource and Citation Assignment

This assignment is designed to introduce you to the research sources in the library and to the process of proper written notation of sources in your papers. You are to search for resources for your assigned topics using various methods available in the library, including: *New Testament Abstracts*, the ATLA Religion database and the bibliographic indices in various books. You need to locate 10 significant items on the topic, including at least one of each of the following:

- Journal article
- Monograph
- Chapter in an edited volume

Then, for each of the 10 items, you need to create a bibliographic citation (to be included in one list of all 10 items in proper order and on a single page) and an endnote (to be collected together on a separate page). You must turn in a 10-item bibliography on that subject and an endnote page for each of the 10 items in accurate format (see Turabian's book). Your work will then be graded for accuracy and returned to you for correction if it does not follow the correct format or does not have adequate resources. You will have one week to return a corrected assignment for grading. This assignment will be evaluated for: 1) the accuracy of the two formats; and 2) the selection of sources.

EXEGETICAL ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments are to be typed (with the exception that handwritten mss abbreviations will be allowed on assignment #1)

Exegetical Assignment #1

Text Criticism

The selected textual problem is in Throckmorton Paragraph #1, note R. Following the procedures on the text criticism handout, 1) state the external evidence for the mss options and come to a preliminary conclusion about it; 2) state the internal evidence for the mss options and come to a preliminary conclusion about it; and 3) come to a final conclusion about the more ancient of the mss based upon the totality of the evidence.

Exegetical Assignment #2

Redaction Criticism

The selected redactional passages are in Throckmorton Paragraph #69 "Plucking Heads of Grain on the Sabbath." Following the procedures practiced in class, 1) state the thesis of Mark's passage, 2) note Matthew's deviations from Mark (additions, omission, editions) and come to a conclusion about Matthew's thesis, and 3) note Luke's deviations from Mark and come to a conclusion about Luke's thesis.

Exegetical Assignment #3

Literary Criticism

The selected literary passage is John 9. Following the procedures discussed in class note: setting, characters, direct discourse, repetition, irony, etc. and analyze how these literary elements direct the reader to various conclusions about the passage.

Jesus Essay

In 5 typed pages (12-point-font, double-spaced) compare/contrast one canonical and one non-canonical account of Jesus. You need to state a thesis for each of the writings, followed by numerous examples from those writings. This is not primarily a research paper, as your work should stem from the discussions and observations that have begun in class and from your own inquiry into the particular gospel accounts. However, reading some others' remarks on this topic might enhance your own discussion and their writings may be referred to in your paper with proper citation.

Your comparison may be based upon such aspects as: titles used for/by Jesus, the work of Jesus, his teachings, or descriptions of his birth/death. A few examples (but not nearly all) of proposed views of Jesus include: apocalyptic prophet, social reformer, teacher, healer, adopted son of God. In order to be successful, you must come to a conclusion (before you begin writing) about the authors' understanding of Jesus' essence and work.

This assignment will be evaluated based upon the accuracy of observation of the author, the clarity of the theses that you present about the authors, the ability to defend those conclusions with specifics from the writings, and the clear presentation of those conclusions in your own essay.

Paul Essay

In 5 typed pages (double-spaced, 12 point font), argue either: 1) that Paul understood Judaism as rendered ineffectual by Christ, or 2) that Paul saw Christ as primarily a means for justification by Gentiles, which did not nullify the justification through the Judaic law, or 3) some other medial position. Your conclusions are to be based upon an examination the 7 undisputed letters of Paul. Your conclusions must include citations and examples from at least 3 of Paul's writings.

As in Assignment #2, this is not primarily a research paper; your work should stem from the discussions in class and from your own observations as you read the undisputed pauline letters with this issue in mind. External discussions may enter into your own conclusions, but are not essential to the execution of this assignment. If you do rely upon others' ideas or words, both need to be properly cited in your work.

This assignment will be evaluated upon the basis of the clarity of your thesis, the accuracy with which the supporting evidence (drawn from Paul's letters) supports your thesis, the precision and clear presentation of your findings, and the mechanical technique with which your paper is composed.

Reserve Books for NT110

- Armstrong, Karen. *The Battle for God: A History of Fundamentalism*. New York: Random House, 2000.
- Fiorenza, Elizabeth Schüssler. *Bread Not Stone: The Challenge of Feminist Biblical Interpretation*. Boston: Beacon, 1984.
- _____. *In Memory of Her*. NY: Crossroad, 1983.
- Fredriksen, Paula and Adele Reinhartz, eds. *Jesus, Judaism and Christian Anti-Judaism: Reading the New Testament After the Holocaust*. Louisville: WJK, 2002.
- Funk, Robert W., Roy W. Hoover and The Jesus Seminar. *The Five Gospels: The Search for the Authentic Words of Jesus*. NY: HarperCollins, 1997.
- Horsley, Richard. *Hearing the Whole Story: The Politics of Plot in Mark's Gospel*. Louisville: WJK, 2001.
- Kyle, Richard. *Awaiting the Millennium: A History of End-time Thinking*. Leicester: IVP, 1998.
- Lüdemann, Gerd. *Early Christianity according to the Traditions in Acts*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1989.
- Meade, David G. *Pseudonymity and Canon*. Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 1986.
- McDonald, Lee M. *Formation of the Christian Biblical Canon*. 1995.
- Newsom, Carol A. and Sharon H. Ringe, eds. *The Women's Bible Commentary*. Louisville: WJK, 1992.
- Ringe, Sharon H. *Wisdom's Friends: Community and Christology in the Fourth Gospel*. Louisville: WJK, 1999.
- Stark, Rodney. *The Rise of Christianity*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1997.
- Stendahl, Krister. *Paul Among Jews and Gentiles*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1976.
- White, John L. *Light from Ancient Letters*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1986.