

NT2: Introduction to the New Testament
The Letters of the New Testament (3 credits)
Rev. Dr. Todd Brewer, Spring 2017
Wednesday, 8:10-9:40, 11:00-12:30, Place TBD
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Course Description

This is the second of two survey courses on the New Testament, with a particular emphasis on its 22 epistles. The course explores the NT writings in accordance with their various theological and historical contents/settings. The course will both introduce students to modern biblical scholarship and aim to develop the interpretive tools for future self-directed study and reflection.

The course approaches the various writings of the New Testament in their historical, literary, and theological contexts. An attempt is made to situate each writing in its possible (probable?) historical and social setting, with attention also to its process of authorship or compilation, genre and structure, and other features of its literary artistry. The major themes, religious beliefs, and theological intentions of the individual texts are likewise explored.

PLEASE NOTE: NT2 treats many subjects about which competent scholars are not always in agreement. Areas in which there is substantial uncertainty will be indicated in class, and attention will be given to the positions held and theories advanced by a representative cross-section of modern authorities. Normally, it will be pointed out which views are most widely held and which views command less acceptance. Although it is important that each student understand the different major views and their supporting evidence, in *no case* will the student's standing in the course depend upon his/her agreeing with the instructor or the views presented in the required reading. By the same token, academic study of the New Testament can be a challenging, but fruitful endeavor intended to critically deepen one's knowledge and understanding. It is intended that the course will enable students to form their own intelligent, well-founded perspectives.

See course site log-in at <http://my.gts.edu/estudent/login.asp>

Required Texts

Johnson, Luke Timothy. The Writings of the New Testament – 3rd Ed. (Minneapolis: Fortress Press), 2010.

Longenecker, Bruce W. and Todd D. Still. Thinking Through Paul: A Survey of His Life, Letters, and Theology. (Grand Rapids: Zondervan), 2014.

Nienhuis, David R. and Robert W. Wall. Reading the Epistles of James, Peter, John, and Jude as Scripture. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans), 2013.

All other readings will be supplied electronically on the CAMS website and/or will be available on reserve in the library.

An NRSV Bible (with apocrypha), or an equivalent “word-for-word” translation.

Course Objectives

- To read, mark, learn and inwardly digest the form, content, context and theological issues of the epistles of the New Testament.
- To understand the formation of the New Testament texts and its effect on biblical interpretation.
- To identify and understand the theological ideas of various New Testament authors.
- To analyze contexts and frameworks of biblical interpretation for their political, ethical, and theological values.
- To gain the ability to be self-reflective about one's own reading strategies, frameworks, and contexts.

Written Requirements and Assessment of Objectives

- The first paper of 1,500 words (+/- 150) will be due by February 22nd. It will answer one of several essay questions provided by the instructor on February 1st. The essay should answer the essay question and support this answer on the basis of the biblical text(s) and related scholarship. The bibliography at the end of the paper should have no more than 6 sources, of which none can be from an internet publication (blogs, Huffington Post, etc.). This paper will count for 18% of the final grade.
- Four “Gobbet” exercises will be due on dates indicated below. These will be no more than 250 words, or one page single spaced. Your answer should include context, analysis, and evaluation. ‘Context’ means chiefly the literary context of the relevant passage (what is its place in the wider text, and what does this imply?); in addition, you could here say something about the historical situation (time, place, milieu) of the text, if applicable. ‘Analysis’ includes comments on the form of the passage, its style, the meaning of key terms, and the aims of the text. In the ‘evaluation’ you should provide a summarizing statement; here, you could also point to the historical or contemporary significance of the text or

challenges and difficulties for the modern reader. For this assignment, no bibliography is needed or expected. Each of the Gobbets will count for 8% of the final grade.

- A second paper of 2,500 words (+/- 250) is a longer exegesis of one of the Gobbet texts above is due March 14th, 11:59pm. The purpose of this paper, like the gobbet assignment, is to offer your own reading of the text, its context, analysis and an evaluation, and to demonstrate familiarity with the ways in which a text has been read differently by others. To the end of the paper a Bibliography must be added with at least 10 sources, of which none can be from an internet publication. This paper will count for 25% of the final grade.
- A Final Exam will be given consisting of several short answer questions and/or short essays. The date of this exam is TBD and will count 13% of the final grade.
- All classroom speaking & writing must reflect the seminary's Inclusive Language Policy on the Registrar's page.
- Presence and participation is 12% of final grade (.5 point/class). Please attend all classes. Likewise, complete the assigned reading –from the English Bible as well as from the textbooks and secondary sources – by class time on the dates indicated on the course schedule below.
- All papers must be submitted electronically by midnight on the date indicated below. Late papers will be docked 2% for each day they are not handed in after the due date. Extensions are always available, if needed, provided the proper paperwork is submitted *before* the paper's due date.

The Final Grade of the course will be comprised of the following:

First Paper – 18%

Gobbet 1 – 8%

Gobbet 2 – 8%

Gobbet 3 – 8%

Gobbet 4 – 8%

Second Paper – 25%

Final Exam – 13%

Attendance – 12%

Diverse Learning Styles

The Seminary is committed to meeting the needs of qualified students with disabilities who meet the academic and technical standards requisite for admission to the Seminary or participation in the Seminary's educational programs or activities. It is the Seminary's intent to provide reasonable accommodations to qualified students with disabilities in order to afford them full participation in the

Seminary's programs and activities and give them equal opportunity to attain the same quality of education as students without disabilities

Written Assignment Grading

To take a good deal of uncertainty out of the grading of written work, a rubric will be used and passed out on the first day by the instructor for all evaluation.

Plagiarism

Please be advised that plagiarism is not acceptable in any submitted work. Plagiarism is defined in Section G of the seminary's Academic Regulations as "the appropriating and presenting as one's own of the writings or other creative work of another person or persons without acknowledgment". Accordingly, "Plagiarism is subject to academic penalties including a failing grade for the course in which the plagiarism occurs. It is also subject to disciplinary penalties up to and including dismissal from the Seminary." As a rule of thumb for plagiarism, when in doubt, cite your sources.

Office Hours

Students who wish to discuss any aspect of the course are encouraged to speak with Dr. Brewer individually; unless otherwise posted his regular office hours are Tuesday and Thursday, from 10:30-12:30. Students may also email to set up another time to meet.

Course syllabus

Date	Topic	Assignment
Feb 1	Introduction to Paul	
	Who was Paul?	"Thinking" p.20-51
Feb 8	1 and 2 Thessalonians	1 & 2 Thes. and "Thinking" p.58-85
	Galatians, Part One	Galatians Essay Questions Handed Out
Feb 15	Galatians, Part Two Galatians, Part Three	"Thinking" p.87-106
Feb 22	The Corinthian Correspondence	1 & 2 Cor.
	The Corinthian Correspondence	"Thinking" p.107-138
Mar 1	NO CLASS (Ash Wed.)	Gobbet One Due, Galatians 3:27-28

Mar 8	The Corinthian Correspondence	“Thinking” p.139-162
	Romans, Part One	Romans
Mar 15	NO CLASS (Spring Break)	
Mar 22	Romans, Part Two	“Thinking” p.163-192
	Romans, Part Three	
Mar 29	Philippians and Philemon	Philippians and “Thinking” p.193-220
	Colossians-Ephesians	Col., Eph., and, “Thinking” p.220-260 Gobbet Two Due, 1 Cor. 11:23-27
Apr 5	The Pastoral Epistles	1 & 2 Tim., Titus, and “Thinking” p.261-296
	Hebrews, Part One	Hebrews First Paper Due
Apr 12	Hebrews, Part Two	Johnson, p. 405-422
	The Catholic Epistles, Introduction	Nienhuis & Wall, p.17-39 Gobbet Three Due, Philippians 3:17-21
Apr 19	James	James
	James	Nienhuis & Wall, p.74-94
Apr 26	1 and 2 Peter	1 & 2 Peter, Nienhuis & Wall, p.95-156
	The Johannine Epistles	1-3 John
	The Johannine Epistles (and Jude)	Nienhuis & Wall, p.157-218
May 3	Revelation	Revelation and Johnson, p.507-524 Gobbet Four Due, James 2:8-13
		SECOND PAPER DUE
TBD	Final Exam	