Northern Seminary
NT303 Letters to the Early Churches
Fall 2014
Mondays, 4:00-6:40pm
Scot McKnight
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Purpose of the Course (from catalog):
This course provides a basic introduction to the “catholic letters” of the New Testament, that is, those to the Hebrews, by James, Peter, John and Jude, including the Book of Revelation. The focus is on theological content and significance for the church today. Prerequisite: IN301.

Objectives/Outcomes:
The student, upon completion of this course, will be able to:

- Understand the major ideas in the Catholic Epistles and the Book of Revelation.
- Understand how the gospel is understood today and how gospel shapes New Testament theology.
- Write a competent, fair-minded, and critical review of a major on the interpretation of the Book of Revelation.
- Sketch in essay format (500 words) topics in the Catholic Epistles and the Book of Revelation.

Required Textbooks:


Course Requirements:
1. All assigned papers and essays are to be submitted on Moodle.
2. All assignments are due before 7am the day of class unless otherwise noted.
3. 500-1000 word essays are condensed and tight, full of evidence when needed, and not brief, breezy papers. I may ask you to read your paper aloud in class. (Write with that end in view.) They will be graded for comprehensive perception; articulation; display of evidence and inductive method; proper formatting.

4. Late submissions: for each day late in submission, the grade will be docked 10%.

5. **Book Review**: Each student is to submit a 1000 word critical book review of Michael Gorman, *Reading Revelation Responsibly*. That book review is to have a 250 word comprehensive, tight summary of the arguments of the book and a 750 word response. Write this review for publication. **Due date: December 3**.

6. Contribute meaningfully and in a civil manner to class discussions and lectures.

7. Do all assignments in the syllabus.

8. Class attendance: It is expected that students will attend and participate in all class sessions. Failure to attend at least 80% of class sessions is grounds for automatic failure. Students are expected to communicate with me in advance if they are to miss a class session.

9. All essays are to be submitted in accordance with Turabian, 8th edition.

10. Papers submitted electronically are to be in Word .doc or .docx (preferably the latter) format.

**Grading:**

Assignments marked with an asterisk (*) are for Diploma/Certificate students too.

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<th>Scale</th>
<th>A = 100-95</th>
<th>A- = 94-90</th>
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<td>D- = 62-60</td>
<td>F = 59 and below</td>
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**Course Outline and Weekly Assignments:**

**Week 1: Sept 22**  What is New Testament Theology? 1: Options

1. Assignments Due: Nothing.

2. Topic: What is NT Theology? Tradition, Postmodernity, Options

1. Assignment Due (7am): 500 word essay answering this question: What is New Testament theology?

2. Assignment: read S McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel*, first half


**Week 3: Oct 6** The Letter of James 1

1. Assignment Due: Sketch in 1000 words an essay answering this question: What is the gospel according to the New Testament?

2. Assignment: S McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel*, second half

3. **Quiz: McKnight**

4. Read the Letter of James three times; one sitting; less than one hour.

5. Topic: Letter of James: Rich and Poor


**Week 4: Oct 13** The Letter of James 2


2. **Quiz: Tamez, Hagner**


**Week 5: Oct 20** The Letter to the Hebrews 1

1. Assignment Due (7am): Write a 1000 word essay on James’ teaching about riches and poverty and their relationship to faith and works. Interact with the book by Elsa Tamez.

2. Assignment: Read Hebrews in one sitting in less than an hour.


4. **Quiz: Hagner**
5. Class Topic: Hebrews, Christology and Salvation


### Week 6: Oct 27

**The Letter to the Hebrews**

1. **Assignment**: Read the Letter to the Hebrews in one sitting in less than an hour.
2. **Topic**: Hebrews and Apostasy
3. **Further Reading**: *A Long Faithfulness*, my e-book on the Warning Passages in Hebrews. (Available only as an e-book.)

### Week 7: Nov 3

**1 Peter**

1. **Assignment**: Write a 1000-word essay on your understanding of the Warning Passages in the Book of Hebrews, showing your awareness of alternative views. Expound your view with occasional responses to the other view.
2. **Assignment**: Read 1 Peter 3x in one sitting in less than an hour.
4. **Quiz**: Hagner
5. **Topic**: 1 Peter: Salvation, Church, Suffering

### Week 8: Nov 10

**2 Peter and Jude**

1. **Assignment**: Write a 500 word essay on Salvation in 1 Peter. What is it? When is it?
2. **Assignment**: Read 2 Peter and Jude 2x in one sitting in less than one hour.
4. **Quiz**: Hagner
Week 9: Nov 17  Johannine Letters

1. Assignment: Read 1-3 John 2x in one sitting in less than one hour.
2. Assignment: Write a 500 word essay on the theme of the church in 1—3 John.
4. Quiz: Hagner
5. Topic: Church, Theology and Love in 1 John

Nov 24: No Class

Week 11: Dec 1  Revelation

1. Assignment: Read the Book of Revelation in one sitting in less than one hour.
2. Book Review Discussion.
4. Quiz: Hagner
5. Topic: Revelation: Apocalyptic, Hermeneutics, and Eschatology

POLICIES FOR ALL MASTERS CLASSES

NOTE: All communications from the seminary will go to your seminary email account. Contact ithelpdesk@seminary.edu if you need help forwarding your seminary email address to your personal email address.

As a seminary community we hold integrity/hospitality as core values. Individuals are able to do their best work and thinking when their peers are fully present and engaged. We expect each person to both participate in class and carefully listen to others with the belief that everyone's contribution is equally important. Therefore, the following policies have been established in order to provide clarity in regard to attendance expectations and relationships in the classroom.
**Class Attendance Policy**
It is expected that students will attend and participate in all class sessions. Failure to attend at least 80% of class sessions is grounds for automatic failure. A professor may set other attendance expectations. Students are always expected to communicate with a professor in advance if they will be absent. Expectations are higher for online and intensive courses (see syllabus for specific requirements).

**Class Tardiness Policy**
The third time a student is late to the start of class, it will be counted as a class absence. It is also expected that students will return from a break by the time specified by the professor.

**Late Work Policy**
If a student cannot complete the work for a course by the due date listed on the syllabus, they must submit a “Request for a Grade of Incomplete” form to the Registrar by 4:30 of the last day of the term. The form must be signed by the instructor and Dean of Students. The professor may set stipulations and grade reductions. In the absence of a formal request form, the student will receive a grade based upon work completed by the last day of the term.

**Turabian Format**
All papers, including footnotes and Reading for Further Study, must be submitted in the correct format according to Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th ed., 2013.

**Plagiarism**
Plagiarism is the act of passing off as one’s own the words or ideas of someone else without providing proper acknowledgement or documentation. See the “Academic Honesty Policy” in the Seminary Catalog for more information on plagiarism and how to avoid it.

**Electronic Format**
All work submitted electronically must be in a Word document format (.doc, .docx).

**Technology Use in the Classroom**
Unless it is directly tied to note-taking or research for the class, students are expected to refrain from using cell phones, laptops, or other electronic devices during class.

**Course Evaluation in Moodle**
Students must complete an online course evaluation using the seminary Moodle system at [http://moodle.edu](http://moodle.edu) in order to receive a final grade for the course. The evaluation will be open for one week starting the last day of the term. If you need assistance connecting to Moodle or accessing the evaluation, please send an email to moodlehelp@seminary.edu.