IN 301
EXPLORING THE BIBLE
Fall 2015

Tuesday, 4:00–6:40 pm

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I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This classroom course is an introduction to the Bible, both Old and New Testaments, with special attention to the mission of God in Scripture. Students will study the Bible’s literary, historical, and theological dimensions. Attention will be devoted to its ancient contexts; its content and form; its various genres; and its major theological themes.

II. OBJECTIVES

After taking this course students will:

1. Be familiar with the individual books of the Bible and their content.
2. Understand the organization or form of the Bible (i.e. canon, literary sections, etc.).
3. Possess a basic knowledge of the historical and geographical background of the Old and New Testaments.
4. Understand the Bible’s various types of literature (genres) and their interpretation.
5. Grasp more fully how the Old and New Testaments fit together as the story of God’s mission to the world through Israel.

III. REQUIRED TEXTS


IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance:** Students should attend all sessions, except in emergency circumstances. Students who miss more than one of the ten class sessions will normally not be allowed to pass the course. In the event of an excused absence, contact the professor by email before class when possible.

2. **Quizzes:** There will be five quizzes based on the readings and classroom material. Students will be introduced to Moodle and will take the quizzes online.

3. **Readings:** Students are expected to read all the pages assigned in the required reading.

4. **Summaries:** Students will prepare a written summary (6-10 sentences) of biblical “focus texts” assigned for each class session by the professor. See the “Course Schedule” for the assignments.

5. **Presentation:** In groups of two, students will give a presentation on a New Testament epistle in the last week of class. Presentation outlines are due the week before (week 9). Instructions will be distributed in class.

6. **Paper:** Students will write an 8-10 page paper on how the Old and New Testaments fit together as the story of God’s mission to the world through Israel. Further instructions will be distributed in class. Due Friday of week 10, by email.

Papers should be double-spaced with one-inch margins, using 12-point Times font. Students must follow the style guidelines found in Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (8th ed.; University of Chicago Press, 2013). Please contact me early in the course if you have questions about what is expected.

V. LATE ASSIGNMENTS

All assignments must be completed on time. Assignments completed late will be accepted only on permission of the instructor and are subject to a 5% penalty per day. No assignments can be completed after the last day of the quarter without prior permission from the professor for an Incomplete. Such permission will not be granted unless the student can show good reason why he or she was prevented, beyond his or her control, from (unforeseeably) completing the assignment on time.
Examples are serious illness or a death in the family. Difficulties such as being too busy, computer problems, and not anticipating the time required to manage job, family, and school responsibilities are not grounds for an Incomplete.

VI. STUDENT EVALUATION

5%  Timeliness
10% Class Participation
10% Summaries of Biblical Texts
15% Presentation
25% Five Quizzes Averaged
35% Paper

VII. GRADING SCALE

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VIII. COURSE SCHEDULE

**Week 1**  
**Introduction: The Biblical Narrative**

*Reading*  
Johnston, pp. 19-48 [30 pp]
Glasser, pp. 17–28 [12 pp]
= 42 pp

**Week 2**  
**Interpreting the Bible**

*Reading*  
Johnston, pp. 1-17 [17 pp]
Fee & Stuart, pp. 21-35 [15 pp]
Gabel, pp. 15-41 [26 pp] *provided electronically
= 72 pp

*Focus Texts*  
Genesis 1

Online Quiz #1 due Saturday at 11:59pm
Week 3  The Pentateuch

Reading  Johnston, pp. 49-68 [20 pp]
Glasser, pp. 29-89 [61 pp]
Fee & Stuart, pp. 168-86 [18 pp]
Wright, “Preaching from the Law” [17 pp] *provided electronically
= 116 pp

Focus Texts  Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:4-6; Deuteronomy 6:20-25; 30:11-20

Week 4  The Historical Books

Reading  Johnston, pp. 69-94 [26 pp]
Glasser, pp. 90-124 [35 pp]
Fee & Stuart, pp. 93-111 [18 pp]
= 79 pp

Focus Texts  2 Samuel 7; 1 Kings 8; 2 Kings 21-25

Online Quiz #2 due Saturday at 11:59pm

Week 5  Israel’s Poetic Literature

Readings  Johnston, pp. 95-113 [19 pp]
Glasser, pp. 157-161 [5 pp]
Fee & Stuart, pp. 212-32 [21 pp]
Fee & Stuart, pp. 233-57 [25 pp]
Longman, pp. 129-136 [8 pp]
= 76 pp

Focus Texts  Proverbs 1-3, 10; Job 1-4, 38-42; Ecclesiastes 1-2;

Week 6  The Prophets

Readings  Johnston, pp. 115-139 [25 pp]
Fee & Stuart, pp. 187-211 [25 pp]
Reditt, “What is a Prophet?” [17 pp] *provided electronically
= 66 pp

Focus Texts  Isaiah 1, 6; Ezekiel 20; Obadiah 1

Online Quiz #3 due Saturday at 11:59pm
Week 7  Judgment & Restoration

Readings  Johnston, pp. 141-150, 159-167 [19 pp]
          Glasser, pp. 127–162 [36 pp]
          Wright, ch. 1 [49]
          = 104 pp  

Focus Texts  Isaiah 40; Haggai 1-2; Nehemiah 8-9, 13.

Week 8  Jesus: Israel's Messiah

Readings  Wright, chs. 3-4 [78 pp]
          = 78 pp  

Focus Texts  Isaiah 9:1-7; 11:1-5; Isaiah 53; Ezekiel 34, 37;

Online Quiz #4 due Saturday at 11:59pm

*Nov 24  NO CLASS – Thanksgiving Break

Week 9  The Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles

*Epistle presentation outlines due

          Fee & Stuart, pp. 132-53 [24 pp]
          = 71 pp  

Focus Texts  Matthew 5-7; Mark 13; Luke 15

Week 10  The Epistles and Revelation

*Epistle presentations in class

Readings  Johnston, pp. 215-272 [58 pp]
          Fee & Stuart, pp. 57-92, 258–73 [50 pp]
          = 108 pp  

Focus Texts  Romans 9-11; 1 Corinthians 15; Revelation 1

Online Quiz #5 due Saturday at 11:59pm
IX. OTHER READINGS (Provided electronically by the professor)


*Additional readings as required by instructor.

XII. PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the act of passing off as one’s own the words or ideas of someone else without providing proper acknowledgment or documentation. Plagiarism may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Submitting as one’s own material copied, borrowed, or purchased from some other source. This includes, but is not limited to, downloading term papers from the internet, purchasing a paper from a “term paper mill,” reproducing parts or all of an article or book section, copying another student’s paper, and so on.

- Copying verbatim or taking ideas from a source without providing documentation (i.e., footnote or quotation marks).

- Copying verbatim or taking ideas from a source and providing fraudulent or misleading documentation.

- Copying verbatim from a source without using quotation marks or a block quotation. When copied material is not properly identified with quotation marks, readers are led to believe that the material is the writer’s own words, when in fact it is someone else’s, which is the essence of plagiarism. Providing a footnote after copied material without using quotation marks is not adequate documentation and constitutes plagiarism.
Paraphrasing material that is too close to the original, whether documented properly or not. A paraphrase is unacceptable if it merely changes a few words or transposes phrases or sentences in the original source, but retains the bulk of the text as it originally appeared.

Since plagiarism is a form of claiming for ourselves what belongs to another, it constitutes an infringement on someone else’s intellectual property and is a form of stealing. It is a very serious violation of Christian ethics and raises profound questions about fitness for Christian ministry. The seminary takes these matters extremely seriously and will take disciplinary action against those who engage in plagiarism.

It is sometimes difficult to know whether or how to acknowledge and document certain kinds of material. When in doubt, consult Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 8th ed., 2013, especially those sections dealing with using quotations and footnotes. Students are expected to know and follow the guidelines in Turabian. Ignorance of them is no excuse.

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.

Diploma/Certificate Student Course Requirements
The amount of work required of Diploma/Certificate students will be at the discretion of the professor. Students will be responsible for contacting the professor about what assignments are required.

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. Attendance 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 bibliography, 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
Unless otherwise specified by the professor, 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.seminary.edu](http://moodle.seminary.edu). The evaluation will be open at the end of the course. If you need assistance connecting to Moodle or accessing the evaluation, please send an email to moodlehelp@seminary.edu.