

EXPLORING THE NEW TESTAMENT (NTEN5300)
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
New Testament Department, Biblical Studies Division
Internet Course, Fall Semester 2015

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NOBTS MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary is to equip leaders to fulfill the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.

COURSE PURPOSE, CORE VALUE FOCUS, AND CURRICULUM COMPETENCIES

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary focuses on five core values: Doctrinal Integrity, Spiritual Vitality, Mission Focus, Characteristic Excellence, and Servant Leadership. These values shape both the context and manner in which all curricula are taught, with “doctrinal integrity” and “academic excellence” especially highlighted in this course. Mission Focus is the core value focus for the academic year 2015-16.

NOBTS also has seven basic competencies that guide our Master’s degree programs: Biblical Exposition, Christian Theological Heritage, Disciple Making, Interpersonal Skills, Servant Leadership, Spiritual and Character Formation, and Worship Leadership. This course especially addresses the “Biblical Exposition” competency by means of helping the student learn to interpret the Bible accurately.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of this course is to introduce the student to the literature of the New Testament by means of studying both the Biblical text and the historical and cultural factors that shaped it. The historical background, certain aspects of contemporary scholarship, and especially the themes and general teachings of the New Testament books will be discussed.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

1. Students should know the basic content of the New Testament and be able to give a brief description of the major themes and emphases of the New Testament books as well as have an essential understanding of the historical and cultural milieu of the NT period.
2. Students should gain an increased appreciation for how a formal, historically-based study of the NT enhances Biblical interpretation.
3. Students should acquire the ability to utilize the information from the course as well as foundational resources in their on-going study of the New Testament resulting in the sound interpretation of the text.

COURSE METHODS

1. The primary method of instruction in the course will be on-line, with lectures, notes, media clips, discussions, and other resources accessible through Blackboard, and independent readings to be done by the student in accordance with the schedule listed in this syllabus.
2. The readings will be supplemented with on-line group discussions in order to engage students in learning the material.
3. Written assignments and tests will also be used to provide students with an opportunity to review the material of the course and demonstrate competency in the subject matter.

TEXTBOOKS

Required

- The Bible (any fairly recognized translation or the GNT for NT portions)
- John Drane, *Introducing the New Testament*, revised edition or 3rd edition
- Everett Ferguson, *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*, 3rd edition

Choice of one of the following for book review:

- Bruce Longenecker, *The Lost Letters of Pergamum: A Story from the New Testament World*
- Scot McKnight, *The King Jesus Gospel: The Original Good News Revisited*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Blackboard Discussion:
Students are expected to **read** the New Testament books as they are covered, and to **participate** on a regular, weekly basis in the on-line discussions on Blackboard. Failure to do so will result in a grade penalty as reflected in the Grading Policies. While much of the work can be done independently, the on-line discussions on Blackboard will enable us to interact as a learning community. As a general protocol for the discussions, respect for others, considerate wording of posts, and Christian charity when good intentions are misunderstood are required. Remember, we are sisters and brothers in Christ seeking to know our Lord better and to proclaim Him more faithfully, so let's enjoy the discussion, participate regularly, and exemplify Christ in how we do so. Thanks for being a part of this learning community.
2. Readings/Quizzes:
The assigned readings must be completed **as early as possible** in the week for which the material is to be discussed. Readings form the core of this course, and so are considered essential for the successful completion of the course. The student must complete a **reading log** to indicate the date on which the material was read. A form for reporting this is posted under the course documents on Blackboard. The reading reports can be submitted with the notebook at the end of the course. **Quizzes** will be given each week on the assigned readings for that week, so be careful not to fall behind in the readings. The quizzes will be

varied in types, with many being objective, and some being discussion oriented or short essays.

3. Book Critique:

A two-page, single-spaced critique of the book *The Lost Letters of Pergamum* is due the **Wednesday after fall break (OCT 28)**. By submitting a critique, the student is affirming that he or she has read the entire book. The contents of the book will be discussed on Blackboard after the date on which the critique is due.

In regard to format, the paper must be 2 pages, single-spaced and typed in Times New Roman 12 point font with 1" margins. Keep in mind, 2 pages literally means filling up 2 pages, not 1.5 for example.

In regard to content, the critique is exactly what it sounds like--a critique. To put it negatively, it is NOT a summary. In your critique, state the purpose or thesis of the book. What is the argument that is driving the book? Why did the author write this particular book? Also, discuss strengths and weaknesses. The discussion of strengths and weaknesses should comprise most of the critique. Finally, you should include a statement of whether or not the author achieved his goal and why you think that he did or did not. Note that reading the preface of this particular book should help you all with your critiques.

Keep in mind, simply summarizing the book is not a critique and will not lead to the highest possible grade for this assignment. We want you to interact with this book using the information you are learning from this course. You all will do fine should you stick to these guidelines found here.

4. Notebook:

A notebook must be kept including the following items: **notes** from the readings and Blackboard discussions, **reading reports**, and completed **worksheets** on each of the New Testament books. A guide for the worksheets is posted under the course documents on Blackboard (within Unit 3). The format of the notebook can vary, but a suggested organization would be to use the outline of Introductory notes and then a book-by-book (sometimes with some grouping of the books) overview of the NT books, with the reading reports and worksheets at the beginning of each section. The notebook is **due at the time of the final exam (DEC 17)** and can be submitted either in **Word or in PDF format** online. The late penalty for this and other work is **5 points per day**, so be sure to submit it by the deadline. Arrangements must be made as soon as possible with the professor to avoid this penalty if extenuating circumstances occur.

5. Examinations:

Three major exams will be given as indicated in the class schedule. Anyone taking the test after the date listed on the syllabus and posted on Blackboard must get **prior approval** from the professor. Note that the two sectional exams will **not** be available after the end of the week on which they are to be taken (look on Blackboard for the exact time). The final exam will only be available **until the evening of the Wednesday of finals week (DEC 16)**, so you must take it by that time.

COURSE EVALUATION

Blackboard Discussion:	10%
Session Quizzes:	15%
Book Critique:	10%
Notebook:	20%
Major Exams:	45% (15% for each exam)

FINAL EXAM EMBEDDED ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTION:

The final exam includes an embedded assignment that will be completed by all students for all sections of this course. The rubric for grading this assignment is given here. Please complete the assignment according to this rubric.

1. A summative question will be answered thoroughly by the students as a take-home portion of the final exam. The question (or research problem) will require research of the historical context, genre, theology, and/or interpretive concerns of a selected period, event, or passage. Answers should be well-developed and provide thorough documentation and appropriate use of tools and resources. Students should use Times 12 pt. font, 1-inch margins, single-spaced, approximately two pages in length.
2. The student should show adequate application of the research to a selected need of the Christian community.
3. The student should communicate clearly how the answer of the research question might impact the faith and life of Christian believers with focus on the contemporary audience.

ASSIGNMENT EVALUATION AND RUBRIC:

0 = Inadequate, 1 = Basic, 2 = Competent, 3 = Good, 4 = Excellent

DOMAIN	LEVEL	EVALUATION				
		0	1	2	3	4
UNDERSTANDING The Student:	Understood thoroughly New Testament history, background, and canon, and selected themes of the New Testament					
APPLICATION The Student:	Applied adequately New Testament history, background, and canon, and selected New Testament themes to contemporary church needs					
COMMUNICATION The Student:	Communicated clearly New Testament history, background, and canon, and selected New Testament themes to a contemporary aud.					

COURSE SCHEDULE(D = DRANE, D3 = DRANE 3RD ED; F = FERGUSON)

EACH UNIT REPRESENTS ONE WEEK'S WORK

- Unit 1, Aug. 24: The NT World & Canon: History & Greco-Roman Culture F 5-47
- Unit 2, Aug. 30: The NT World: Hellenistic Judaism and Palestinian Judaism
D 9-45; D3 10-45; F 48-147
- Unit 3, Sep. 6: The Ministry of Jesus: The Synoptic Gospels, Mark, Matthew, and Luke
D 167-217; D3 161-207; F 300-316, 537-561
- Unit 4, Sep. 13: The Ministry of Jesus: John, Overview of Jesus' Message & Teachings
D 46-74 & 111-150; D3 46-108
- Unit 5, Sep. 20: The Ministry of Jesus: Jesus' Teachings D 151-166; D3 109-123; F 562-582
- Unit 6, Sep. 27: The Ministry of Jesus: Jesus' Death & Resurrection D 75-110; D3 124-160
SECTIONAL EXAM #1
- Unit 7, Oct. 4: The Early Church: Acts D 237-291; D3 224-277
- Unit 8, Oct. 11: Paul: Intro., 1-2 Thess., Galatians D 292-317; D3 278-302; F 592-620
- Fall Break, Oct. 18-24**
- Unit 9, Oct. 25: Paul: Romans and 1 Corinthians D 318-365; D3 303-348
CRITIQUE OF *THE LOST LETTERS* DUE BY WED OCT 28
- Unit 10, Nov. 1: Paul: 2 Corinthians and the Prison Epistles D 366-392; D3 349-374
- Unit 11, Nov. 8: Paul: The Pastoral Epistles D 393-408; D3 424-436
SECTIONAL EXAM #2
- Unit 12, Nov. 15: The General Epistles: Hebrews D 409-430; D3 375-391
- Thanksgiving Break, Nov. 22-28**
- Unit 13, Nov. 29: The General Epistles: James and 1 Peter D 431-445; D3 392-410
- Unit 14, Dec. 6: The General Epistles: 2 Peter, Jude, 1-3 John D 446-457; D3 411-423
- Unit 15, Dec. 13: The Book of Revelation D 458-465; D3 437-448; F 182-212

FINAL EXAM—MUST BE TAKEN BY WED DEC 16

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