



BSHM5310 Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Biblical Studies Division
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Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

Core Value Focus

The seminary has five core values.

1. **Doctrinal Integrity:** Knowing that the Bible is the Word of God, we believe it, teach it, proclaim it, and submit to it. Our confessional commitments are outlined in the "Articles of Religious Belief" and the Baptist Faith and Message 2000.
2. **Spiritual Vitality:** We are a worshiping community emphasizing both personal spirituality and gathering together as a Seminary family for the praise and adoration of God and instruction in His Word.
3. **Mission Focus:** We are not here merely to get an education or to give one. We are here to change the world by fulfilling the Great Commission and the Great Commandments through the local church and its ministries.
4. **Characteristic Excellence:** What we do, we do to the utmost of our abilities and resources as a testimony to the glory of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
5. **Servant Leadership:** We follow the model of Jesus and exert leadership and influence through the nurture and encouragement of those around us.

The core value focus for this academic year is Spiritual Vitality.

Curriculum Competencies

NOBTS faculty members realize that all ministers need to develop specific competencies if they are going to have an effective ministry. To increase the likelihood of NOBTS graduates having an effective ministry, the faculty developed a competency-based curriculum after identifying seven essential competencies necessary for effective ministry. All graduates are expected to have at least a minimum level of competency in all of the following areas:

1. **Biblical Exposition:** To interpret and communicate the Bible accurately.
2. **Christian Theological Heritage:** To understand and interpret Christian theological heritage and Baptist polity for the church.
3. **Disciple Making:** To stimulate church health through mobilizing the church for missions, evangelism, discipleship, and church growth.
4. **Interpersonal Skills:** To perform pastoral care effectively, with skills in communication and conflict management.
5. **Servant Leadership:** To serve churches effectively through team ministry.
6. **Spiritual and Character Formation:** To provide moral leadership by modeling and mentoring Christian character and devotion.
7. **Worship Leadership:** To facilitate worship effectively.

The curriculum competency addressed in this course is Biblical Exposition.

Course Description

This course includes a study of the principles of biblical interpretation, an introduction to the major resources available as an aid to biblical interpretation, and an exegetical study of selected passages from the various genres of biblical literature. Some attention is directed to current issues in biblical hermeneutics, but the major focus of the course is practical in nature in that the goal of the course is that the students develop a sound method for exegesis of biblical texts.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. The student will be able to understand the principles guiding the exegetical process for biblical interpretation.
2. The student will be able to use appropriate tools, resources, and methods to apply sound exegetical principles toward biblical interpretation.
3. The student will be able to communicate clearly the meaning of the biblical text to a contemporary audience.

Embedded Assignment Description

1. Using the research developed in the Stage One portion of the exegetical paper, write a polished, 7-8 page paper demonstrating the understanding of appropriate principles guiding the exegetical process for the particular genre assigned.
2. Indicate the use of appropriate tools, methods, and resources in the application of sound exegetical principles.
3. Communicate the meaning of the text, keeping in mind the contemporary audience.
4. The paper may take two forms: 1) a ready to deliver, word-for-word, sermon manuscript; 2) a teaching articles, such as an article for *Biblical Illustrator*.

DOMAIN	LEVEL	INADEQUATE (0 PTS)	BASIC (1 PT)	COMPETENT (2 PTS)	GOOD (3 PTS)	EXCELLENT (4 PTS)
UNDERSTANDING The Student:	Understood the principles guiding the exegetical process for biblical interpretation.					
APPLICATION The Student:	Used appropriate tools to apply sound exegetical principles toward biblical interpretation.					
COMMUNICATION The Student:	Communicated clearly the meaning of the biblical text to a contemporary audience					

Required Textbooks

Holy Bible, any modern translation (RSV, NRSV, NASB, ESV, CSB, NIV, etc.)
Fee, Gordon and Douglas Stuart, *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, 4th ed. (FS)
Duvall, J. Scott and J. Daniel Hays, *Grasping God's Word*, 3rd ed. (DH)

Optional Recommended Textbooks

Bray, Gerald, *Biblical Interpretation: Past and Present* (GB)
Klein, Blomberg, and Hubbard, *Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics* (KBH)
Porter, Stanley and Beth Stovall, *Biblical Hermeneutics: 5 Views* (P&S)

Help for Writing Papers at "The Write Stuff"

This is the official NOBTS Writing Center online help site for writing academic papers and essays (www.nobts.edu/writing/default.html). You will discover writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help you become a better writer. Go here for Turabian and APA style helps and guidelines. You will also find language fonts for Greek and Hebrew.

Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a zero tolerance policy for plagiarism. Please be aware that plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. Please refer to the NOBTS Student Handbook (www.nobts.edu/_resources/pdf/student-services/NOBTSHandbook.pdf) where the definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism are clearly defined.

Course Requirements

The following components comprise the student's grade for the course. Grades for each component will be calculated on the basis of the following percentages. Due dates are given in the Course Schedule below.

1. Reading Quizzes (10%)

Students are to read the assigned portions of the required texts by the date specified in the course schedule. A quiz will be opened for the student to take for the section of readings as outlined in the course schedule below and the quiz must be taken during the week of the unit covered. These quizzes are open book, but timed. The questions will come directly from the textbook readings for each weekly unit.

2. Application Exercises (10%)

The student will complete Application Exercises for most units. These exercises are designed to support the class materials from the Duvall & Hayes textbook. You will find the assignments at the end of each chapter in the Duvall & Hayes text. Students should consult Blackboard to learn which questions to answer for each Application Exercise. These assignments are designed to give students hands-on experience with the concepts learned in the DH readings. The Application Exercises are due by Saturday night each week.

3. Background Study (20%)

The historical-grammatical method of exegesis begins with a review of the historical background of the book under study. The purpose of the background study is to determine the proper setting for your particular book and passage. This information may be found in the major commentaries, dictionaries, and encyclopedias for your passage. The background study should be 8-12 pages, double-spaced following Turabian (or APA)* guidelines and include a bibliography of no less than 5-6 quality sources (no cover page necessary). The historical background study should include the following:

- a. background information on your assigned passage
- b. information on the setting, authorship, audience, date and place of writing, etc.
- c. information on the critical issues of the passage
- d. a discussion of the theological issues covered in the passage
- e. a section focused on the specific background topic assigned for each passage.

* Most divisions at NOBTS use Turabian style for writing papers. However, if your division uses APA style (e.g., Psychology and Counseling majors), we will accept this for your papers. Whichever style you use, be consistent throughout your assignments. Because all students take Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics, we want you to focus on learning to do solid exegesis rather than spending extra time learning a new style of writing. If you are uncertain which style to use, you should default to Turabian; however, you may reach out to your professors if you are still unclear.

4. Word Study (10%)

The historical-grammatical view gives focus to word studies and what words meant in their original context. The student will complete a word study on a word indicated from an assigned text (see the list below). The Duvall & Hayes textbook has a complete guide to performing a word study and you may also find samples on Blackboard. The paper should be 4-6 pages, double-spaced following Turabian (or APA) guidelines and include a bibliography of no less than 5-6 quality sources (no cover page necessary).

5. Two Stage Exegesis Paper Project (40% total)

Using the historical-grammatical method of exegesis, the student will exegete the selected passage. The major project in this course consists of a practical application in the form of an exegetical paper, which is to be produced in two stages.

Stage One (30%) - The first stage is a thorough exegetical study in which the student gathers all essential knowledge from the text for the task of constructing a sermon, teaching lesson, or teaching article. Stage One papers should be 15-20 pages, double-spaced, following Turabian or APA guidelines, and should include a cover page and a bibliography of no less than 7-8 quality sources. (The Blackboard shell for this course contains a guide to writing exegetical papers but students are encouraged to seek counsel from the professors if they are unclear about this assignment.)

Stage Two (10%) - This is the embedded assignment for this course. The second stage is designed to help students synthesize the information they have gathered from the background study, word study, and exegetical paper into a polished, well-written presentation. This paper should have an interesting introduction, well-developed body, and a conclusion that ties the paper together. The stage two paper may take the form of a sermon, teaching lesson, or academic paper/presentation. Stage Two papers should be 7-10 pages, double-spaced, following Turabian or APA guidelines, and should include both a cover page and bibliography.

6. Comprehensive Final Exam (10%)

The final exam will include material covered in the Duvall & Hayes textbook. The exam is open book, but will be timed.

7. Extra Credit

Up to 3 points may be added to the student's final average by completing the extra credit. Students may write a book review on any one of the three optional texts listed above. The student may submit a 7-8 page, double-spaced review of the book, stating the thesis of the book, the author's perspective, strengths and weaknesses, as well as how the book may be applied to the student's ministry setting.

Course Evaluation

Reading Quizzes	10%
Application Exercises	10%
Background Study	20%
Word Study	10%
Stage One Exegesis Paper	30%
Stage Two Embedded Assignment	10%
Comprehensive Final Exam	10%

Course Schedule

Unit	Topic	Readings/Assignments	Due Date
Unit 1	Part 1: How to Read the Book - Basic Tools DH - Ch. 1 Bible Translations FS - Ch. 2 The Basic Tool - A Good Translation	DH: Chapter 1 FS: Chapter 2 Reading Quiz Application Exercise	Jan 25
Unit 2	Part 1: How to Read the Book - Basic Tools DH - Ch. 2 The Interpretive Journey FS - Ch. 1 The Need to Interpret	DH: Chapter 2 FS: Chapter 1 Reading Quiz Application Exercise	Feb 1
Unit 3	Part 1: How to Read the Book - Basic Tools DH - Ch. 3 How to Read the Book - Sentences DH - Ch. 4 How to Read the Book - Paragraphs	DH: Chs 3-4 Reading Quiz Application Exercise	Feb 8
Unit 4	Part 1: How to Read the Book - Basic Tools DH - Ch. 5 How to Read the Book - Discourses	DH: Chapter 5 Reading Quiz Application Exercise	Feb 15

Unit 5	Part 2: Contexts - Now and Then DH - Ch. 6 The Historical-Cultural Context DH - Ch. 7 What Do We Bring to the Text? DH - Ch. 8 Literary Context	DH: Chs 6-8 Reading Quiz Application Exercise	Feb 22
Unit 6	Part 2: Contexts - Now and Then DH - Ch. 9 Word Studies	DH: Chapter 9 Reading Quiz Application Exercise	Feb 29
Unit 7	Part 3: Meaning and Application DH - Ch. 10 Who Controls Meaning? DH - Ch. 11 Levels of Meaning	DH: Chs 10-11 Reading Quiz Application Exercise Background Study due	Mar 7
Unit 8	Part 3: Meaning and Application DH - Ch. 12 The Role of the Holy Spirit DH - Ch. 13 Application	DH: Chs 12-13 Reading Quiz Application Exercise	Mar 14
SPRING BREAK March 16-20			
Unit 9	Part 4: The Interpretive Journey - NT DH - Ch. 14 NT Letters FS - Ch. 3 Epistles: Learning to Think Critically FS - Ch. 4 Epistles: The Hermeneutical Questions	DH: Chapter 14 FS: Chs 3-4 Reading Quiz Application Exercise Word Study due	Mar 28
Unit 10	Part 4: The Interpretive Journey - NT DH - Ch. 15 Gospels FS - Ch. 7 The Gospels: One Story, Many Dimensions FS - Ch. 8 Parables: Do You Get the Point?	DH: Chapter 15 FS: Chs 7-8 Reading Quiz Application Exercise	Apr 4
Unit 11	Part 4: The Interpretive Journey - NT DH - Ch. 16 - Acts DH - Ch. 17 - Revelation FS - Ch. 6 Acts: The Question of Historical Precedence FS - Ch. 13 Revelation	DH: Chs 16-17 FS: Chs 6, 13 Reading Quiz Application Exercise	Apr 11
Unit 12	Part 4: The Interpretive Journey - OT DH - Ch. 18 OT Narrative DH - Ch. 19 OT Law FS - Ch. 5 The OT Narratives FS - Ch. 9 The Law(s): Covenant Stipulations for Israel	DH: Chs 18-19 FS: Chs. 5, 9 Reading Quiz Application Exercise	Apr 18
Unit 13	Part 4: The Interpretive Journey - OT DH - Ch. 20 OT Poetry DH - Ch. 21 OT Prophets FS - Ch. 10 The Prophets: Enforcing the Covenant in Israel FS - Ch. 11 The Psalms: Israel's Prayers and Ours	DH : Chs 20-21 FS: Chs 10-11 Reading Quiz Stage One Paper due	Apr 25
Unit 14	Part 4: The Interpretive Journey - OT DH - Ch. 22 Wisdom FS - Ch. 12 Wisdom: Then and Now	DH: Chapter 22 FS: Chapter 12 Reading Quiz	May 2
Unit 15	Final Exam	Final Exam Stage Two Paper due	May 9

Paper Topics

The professors will divide students equally among OT and NT and you will select your passage on a first come, first served basis. Select a passage that you will use for all of your papers in this course. Note that your word study topic has been preselected for you. When you write your background paper, you will also need to include discussion on the specific background focus for your passage.

Old Testament

Narrative	Joshua 1:1-11
Background Paper Focus:	Strength in God
Word Study Paper Topic:	Strong, <i>chazaq</i> (חָזַק) (v.6)
Narrative	Ruth 3:1-18
Background Paper Focus:	Levirite Marriage
Word Study Paper Topic:	Kinsman Redeemer, <i>goel</i> (גֹּאֵל) (v. 9)
Law	Exodus 19:1-8
Background Paper Focus:	Covenants in the OT
Word Study Paper Topic:	Covenant, <i>berit</i> (בְּרִית) (v. 5)
Law	Deuteronomy 30:1-10
Background Paper Focus:	Obedience
Word Study Paper Topic:	Delight, <i>sus</i> (שׂוּשׂ) (v. 9)
Prophecy	Ezekiel 37:1-14
Background Paper Focus:	Resurrection in the OT
Word Study Paper Topic:	Spirit, spirit, wind, breath, <i>ruach</i> (רוּחַ) (v. 1)
Prophecy	Amos 6:1-8
Background Paper Focus:	Complacency
Word Study Paper Topic:	Woe, <i>hoy</i> (הוֹי) (v. 1)
Poetry	Psalms 18:1-19
Background Paper Focus:	Salvation in the OT
Word Study Paper Topic:	Sheol, <i>sheol</i> (שְׁאוֹל) (v. 5)
Poetry	Proverbs 1:8-19
Background Paper Focus:	Refrain from injustice/unrighteousness
Word Study Paper Topic:	Torah/instruction, <i>torah</i> (תּוֹרָה) (v. 8)
Wisdom	Proverbs 3:13-18
Background Paper Focus:	Tree of Life in the OT
Word Study Paper Topic:	Wisdom, <i>chokmah</i> (חִכְמָה) (v. 13)
Wisdom	Ecclesiastes 1:1-11
Background Paper Focus:	Futility of life apart from God
Word Study Paper Topic:	Vanity, <i>hevel</i> (הֶבֶל) (v. 2)

New Testament

Narrative—Gospels Background Paper Focus: Word Study Paper Topic:	Matt. 26:17–30 Passover Feast (history, celebration, constituent elements) Covenant, <i>diathēkē</i> (διαθήκη) (v. 28)
Narrative—Gospels Background Paper Focus: Word Study Paper Topic:	John 3:1–8 Pharisees (history, beliefs, first-century setting) Again, <i>anōthen</i> (ἀνωθεν) (v. 3)
Narrative—Parables Background Paper Focus: Word Study Paper Topic:	Luke 20:9–18 Economy (rich and poor) and Agriculture (tenant farmers) Parable, <i>parabolē</i> (παραβολή) (v. 9)
Narrative—History Background Paper Focus: Word Study Paper Topic:	Acts 8:4–25 Samaritans (history, beliefs, first-century setting) Baptize, <i>baptizō</i> (βαπτίζω) (v. 12)
Epistle—Pauline Background Paper Focus: Word Study Paper Topic:	Rom. 3:21–26 Righteous, Righteousness (in general, but also specifically “of God”) Propitiation, <i>hilastērion</i> (ἱλαστήριον) (v. 25)
Epistle—Pauline Background Paper Focus: Word Study Paper Topic:	1 Thess. 4:13–18 Resurrection (history of development, first-century Jewish belief) Parousia, <i>parousia</i> (παρουσία) (v. 15)
Epistle—General Background Paper Focus: Word Study Paper Topic:	Heb. 8:1–6 High Priest (Zadokite, Hasmonean history; cultic function) Covenant, <i>diathēkē</i> (διαθήκη) (v. 6)
Epistle—General Background Paper Focus: Word Study Paper Topic:	1 Pet. 5:1–9 Elders (Jewish cultural background; leadership roles) Christ, <i>Christos</i> (Χριστός) (v. 15)
Apocalyptic Background Paper Focus: Word Study Paper Topic:	Rev. 2:12–17 Pergamum (history, culture) Satan, <i>satanas</i> (σατανᾶς) (v. 13)
Apocalyptic Background Paper Focus: Word Study Paper Topic:	Rev. 12:7–12 Michael, the archangel (development of angels in Jewish belief) Dragon, <i>drakōn</i> (δρακὼν) (v. 7; Ancient Near Eastern background)

Course Policies

Reading Assignments

Students are responsible for completing all reading assignments by the required date.

Professors' Policy on Late Assignments

All work is due by the assigned date listed in the Course Schedule. Assignments submitted after this date will be penalized 5 points per day. The Blackboard shell for this course will close after Thursday, May 14 at which point any outstanding assignments will receive a grade of 0.

Professors' Availability and Feedback

The student may contact the professor(s) at any time using the email address providing in the course syllabus. The professors will make every effort to respond to emails within 24 hours during the week, 48 hours over the weekend. Assignments requiring grading will be returned to the student within a reasonable period of time. Student feedback on graded assignments will be provided through the grading rubric located in the student's Blackboard Grade Book. The student will find comments in the grading rubric as well as on graded paper assignments. The student may also email the course grader(s) with questions regarding grading.

Academic Honesty

All graduate and undergraduate NOBTS students—whether on-campus, internet, or extension center students—are expected to adhere to the highest Christian standard of honesty and integrity when completing academic assignments for all courses in every delivery system. The Bible provides our standard for academic integrity and honesty. This standard applies whether a student is taking quizzes/exams, writing papers, completing Discussion Boards, or any other course requirement.

Blackboard and ITC Technical Support

Blackboard is the learning management system (LMS) used in this class. Please make sure that your contact information is accurate and up-to-date. If you need assistance accessing Blackboard, SelfServe, or need other technical support, please contact the Information Technology Center (HSC 290 or 504.816.8180). Here are other helpful links to ITC assistance:

- selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support with the selfserve.nobts.edu site (access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
- blackboardhelpdesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard LMS (nobts.blackboard.com)
- itsupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests
- www.nobts.edu/itc - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website

Netiquette

Each student is expected to demonstrate appropriate Christian behavior when working online on Discussion Boards or whenever interaction occurs through web, digital, or other electronic media. The student is expected to interact with other students in a fashion that will promote learning and respect for the opinions of others in the course. A spirit of Christian charity is expected at all times in the online environment.

Academic Catalog Policies

Academic policies related to absences, grading scale, final examination schedules, and other topics can be found in the current online catalog: [New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary Academic Catalog](#).

Web-based Course Reminder/Warning

Web-based courses are, by nature, a different kind of learning experience than courses taught in the traditional classroom. Because of this structure, this web-based course is more reading and writing intensive than traditional classroom courses. Rigorous study of the deep things of God can be a rewarding experience for anyone who participates in it, but it also calls for extra diligence and integrity in completing the work. This reality does not mean that a web-based course cannot be successful in equipping you, the student, for effective, God-honoring ministry. It simply means utilizing a different strategy. Internet courses allow room for independent learners to thrive—to work at a responsible pace, to engage in student-led discussions, and to take ownership of the learning of course content. Note that your instructors are praying for your success.

Selected Bibliography

www.Denverseminary.edu has an annually updated bibliography for both OT and NT located in their Library section of their website.

www.bestcommentaries.com is another great website for finding commentaries.

General Introduction Books on Hermeneutics

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- Danker, Frederick W. *Multipurpose Tools for Bible Study*, Revised and Expanded. St. Louis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1993.
- Fee, Gordon D. *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991.
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- Mickelsen, A. Berkeley. *Interpreting the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963.
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- Ward, Wayne E. *The Word Comes Alive*. Nashville: Broadman Press, 1969.
- Wood, James D. *The Interpretation of the Bible: A Historical Introduction*. London: Gerald Duckworth and Co. Ltd., 1958.

The Text and Authority of the Bible

- Barr, James. *The Scope & Authority of the Bible*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980.
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- _____. *The Authoritative Word: Essays on the Nature of Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1983.
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The History of Interpretation

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- Brown, Jerry Wayne. *The Rise of Biblical Criticism in America, 1800-1870; The New England Scholars*. Middleton, Conn.: Wesleyan University Press, 1969.
- Cameron, Nigel M. de S. *Biblical Higher Criticism and the Defense of Infallibilism in 19th Century Britain*. In *Text and Studies in Religion*. Vol. 33. Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1987.
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- Froehlich, Karlfried, trans. and ed. *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church*. In *Sources of Early Christian Thought*. Edited by William G. Rusch. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.
- Grant, Robert with David Tracy. *A Short History of Interpretation of the Bible*. Second edition revised and enlarged. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.
- Neill, Stephen. *The Interpretation of the New Testament 1861-1961*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1966.
- Silva, Moisés. *Has the Church Misread the Bible? The History of Interpretation in the Light of Current Issues*. In *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*. Vol. 1. Edited by Moisés Silva. Grand Rapids: Academic Books, Zondervan Press, 1987.
- Wood, A. Skevington. *The Principles of Biblical Interpretation: As Enunciated by Irenaeus, Origen, Augustine, Luther and Calvin*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1967.

Contemporary Methodologies

- Hayes, John H. and Holladay, Carl R. *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*. Rev. ed. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1987.
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Various Works on the Theory and Practice of Interpretation

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