



**CH 753 THE HISTORY OF ENGLISH BIBLE TRANSLATION**  
**Thursday Evening, 6-9:00, Bowie Divinity Hall**  
**Fall 2010, Due West**  
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**Due West, SC 29639**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course explores the history and theological evolution from the Latin *Vulgate* to the English translations of the Bible from the 14<sup>th</sup> -21 century. Special attention is given to the Wyclif Bible, Coverdale Bible, Geneva Bible, King James Version and modern translations.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to educate persons for service in the Christian Church. Consistent with our mission, the Bible commands a primary place of importance in the seminary curriculum. While study of the biblical languages is supremely important, most students will work primary with the English text. It is thus extremely helpful for students of the Bible to trace the history of the English translation in all of its richness. It is a part of our rich historical and theological heritage. We believe the effectiveness of each student will be enhanced as a result of the successful completion of this class.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:** Each student will take **two essay type exams** and complete **two book critiques**. Each of these four measures carries the same weight. The dates for the exams and the book critiques are listed below in the course outline. The book critiques are strictly limited to one page so clear, concise polished prose is essential. Each critique must contain the following components: Basic bibliographic info of the book being critiqued, something about the author, topic and scope of the book, the critique and excerpts from a book review of the book from a theological journal. Fully 2/3rds of the page will be given to the actual critique of the book. Each student will base their critique largely upon the thesis of the book rather than merely a summary or review of the book. The assignment is a book critique/analysis, not a book review. In the critique the student will address the following questions: Is the thesis clear? Is it defensible? Does the author make a compelling case for the thesis? What kinds of sources does the author use to defend the thesis? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the book?

### **REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:**

Students are expected to secure their own copies of all required textbooks. As a convenience, the seminary has a bookstore portal of the website at <http://www.erskineseminary.org/bookstore.html>. There you will find links to familiar vendors (CBD, Amazon, B&N, and Books-A-Million) and can check availability of texts, compare prices, and place orders. The ETS SBA will receive a modest percentage of the profits from students' and professors' purchases through this portal. The Erskine Campus Bookstore will carry a limited number of copies of every required text and orders for books can be placed through the Campus Bookstore.

David Daniell, *The Bible in English: Its History and Influence*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003. ISBN-13: 978-0300099300 \$50.00

### **RECOMMENDED READING:**

- Benson Bobrick, *Wide as the Waters: The Story of the English Bible and the Revolution it Inspired*. NY: Penquin Books, 2001
- Adam Nicolson, *God's Secretaries: The Making of the King James Bible*.
- Alistair McGrath, *In the Beginning: The Story of the KJV and How it Changed A Nation, a Language and a Culture*. New York: Anchor Books, 2001
- D.A. Carson, *The King James Version Debate: A Plea for Realism*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1979
- Gustavus S. Paine, *The Men Behind the King James Version*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1959
- Neil R. Lightfoot, *How We Got Our Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2008
- Dewey M. Beegle, *God's Word Into English*. New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1960
- Sakae Kubo and Walter Specht, *So Many Versions? Twentieth Century English Versions of the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975
- F.F. Bruce, *The English Bible: A History of Translations from the earliest English Version to the New English Bible*. London: Lutterworth Press, 1961
- Herbert Gordon May, *Our English Bible in the Making*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, n.d.
- Ira Maurice Price, *The Ancestry of our English Bible*. New York: Harper and Brothers, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, 1956
- David Daniell, *William Tyndale: A Biography*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1994.
- Costen J. Harrell, *The Bible, Its Origin and Growth*. Nashville: Cokesbury Press
- Brian Edwards, *God's Outlaw*. Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1981
- Philip W. Comfort, *The Complete Guide to Bible Versions*. Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1991
- K.B. McFarlane, *John Wycliffe and the Beginnings of English Non-conformity*. London: English Universities Press, LTD. 1952
- John C. Greider, *English Bible Translation and History*. Xlibric Corp. 2007

## ERSKINE SEMINARY POLICIES

**Drop/Add/ and Course Withdrawal:** Once a student has completed, signed and submitted his/her registration to the Registrar for this class, it is a **binding contract** and billing will be based on this registration. If the student decides not to take this class, he/she must complete a “drop/add” form and secure the appropriate signatures **prior to the drop/add deadline during the second week of the semester or term.** If one wishes to withdraw from the course after the drop/add deadline, one must complete a withdraw form, and tuition will be refunded on a pro rated basis. Failure to withdraw from the class properly will result in the student’s receiving a grade of “F” for the course, and full tuition charges will apply. **No exceptions will be made to this policy.**

**Office Hours:** My normal office hours are printed on page one of this syllabus. However, due to meetings and unforeseen circumstances that may arise, my schedule may change. If you need to see me, I strongly recommend that you call or e-mail to schedule an appointment.

**Language about God and Humanity:** Although God transcends the distinction between male and female, the Bible and the Church’s historic creeds and confessions use masculine language in reference to God. Thus, the Seminary encourages all students to retain this masculine usage when speaking and writing about God. Furthermore, the Seminary recognizes that all human beings, male and female, are created equally in the image of God (Gen. 1:26-27), and believers of both sexes are fellow heirs of the grace of life (I Pet. 3:7). Accordingly, whenever students are speaking and writing about males and females, they should use language that clearly includes both men and women (for example, by saying/writing “humanity” rather than “man” or “people” rather than “men”).

**Conduct in Theological Discussions:** Erskine Seminary is committed to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, and it expects its students to show respect for all who identify with that one Church. In all written work, oral presentations, and discussions both inside and outside the classroom, the Seminary expects students to conduct discussions of controversial issues in a context of respect for those with whom one disagrees. Please see the Community Life Statement in the catalog for more information.

**Incompletes:** The grade of “I” or incomplete is given at the discretion of the professor. A grade of “I” is normally given when a student has substantially completed the requirements for a course but has been prevented by extraordinary circumstances from completing the remainder of the course requirements. A student who wishes to request an incomplete should normally complete an incomplete form prior to the end of the semester and ask the professor to grant the request. (Under unusual circumstances, the students may communicate with the professor by phone or email rather than in person, and the professor may then agree to fill out the form at the student’s request. Under exceptional circumstances, the professor may initiate the process by filling out the form on the student’s behalf.) If the professor grants the request, he/she will sign the incomplete form and turn it in with his/her final grade report. An “I” in any course must be removed

by March 1 for Fall term, April 1 for January Term, August 1 for the Spring term, and November 1 for the Summer Term. Only the Dean may grant extensions of incompletes beyond the established completion date. Otherwise, these grades automatically become “F.”

**Official Seminary Attendance Policy:** Class participation is considered an important part of the total educational experience at Erskine Seminary. Students are expected to attend classes on a regular basis and are responding for the mastery of all materials required in the course. Each professor will indicate in writing the specific class attendance policy at the beginning of each course. In general, students are allowed up to three hours of unexcused absence without penalty. Students wishing to take a course which meets four times over the semester **must** attend the first meeting of the course.

**Policy Regarding Absences:** Students are required to attend all class sessions. If students have to be absent for any reason, they are still responsible for all work missed and all work due. A student who misses more than three class sessions for any reason will automatically fail the course.

**Style and Bibliographical Formatting Requirements:** All papers must be typed/processed (12 point type, double-spaced, one-inch margins) and fully documented, following the standards in the “Style and Form Standards” (Erskine Seminary). In this course, footnotes and a bibliography are required in each paper. The paper’s cover page and bibliography are not counted towards page requirements.

**Chapel Attendance Policy:** All morning and afternoon on-campus classes (except for Friday and Saturday courses) carry a chapel attendance requirement. Consult the catalog for the specifics of the chapel attendance policy. There is a per chapel fee if you attend fewer chapels than required.

**PLAGIARISM:** Plagiarism is the use in writing of wording or ideas produced by others without crediting the author and/or source from which the material was taken. As the following statement indicates, plagiarism is a serious offense that undermines both the witness and the integrity of the Christian community:

*Plagiarism injures the community by inhibiting the recognition and cultivation of gifts imparted by the Spirit. Clearly unattributed use of the words and/or ideas of others fails to give appreciative recognition of their gifts. But this illegitimate appropriation of the gifts of others also blocks the recognition and cultivation of the actual gifts of the person engaged in plagiarism.*

*Plagiarism creates an atmosphere of falsehood in the community’s discernment and cultivation of gifts, both within the Christian community and in God’s larger creation. Since freedom comes only by way of truth (Jn. 8:32), such falsehood can only result in captivity, and therefore has no place in the Christian community.*

*On this basis, the Seminary adheres to the following general requirements for the acknowledgement of sources of academic work. These requirements apply to both print and electronic media.*

1. *Quotations. Any sentence or phrase that a student uses from another source must*

*be placed in quotation marks, or in the case of longer quotations, clearly indented beyond the regular margin. Any quotation must be accompanied (either within the text or in a note) by a precise indication of the source.*

*2. Paraphrasing. Any material that is paraphrased or summarized must also be specifically acknowledged in a note or in the text.*

*3. Ideas. Specific ideas that are borrowed should be acknowledged in a note or in the text, even if the idea has been further elaborated by the student.*

*4. Bibliography. All the sources consulted in the preparation of an essay or report should be listed in the bibliography.*

*In addition to plagiarism, the following related practices are also unacceptable compromises of the truth requisite to a free community:*

*1. Multiple submission. Failure to obtain prior written permission of the relevant instructors to submit work which has been submitted in identical or similar form in fulfillment of any other academic requirement at any institution.*

*2. False citation. The deliberate attribution to, or citation of, a source from which the material in question was not, in fact, obtained.*

*3. Submission of work done by someone else, either with or without that person's knowledge. Neither ignorance of the regulations concerning academic violations nor personal extenuating circumstances are an adequate defense against charges of plagiarism. The Seminary's provisions for "due process" apply in cases of alleged plagiarism.*

(The italicized statement above is used by permission from The Lutheran Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and Princeton University, based on a 1990 edition.)

For details refer to the Erskine Seminary Handbook under the Honor Code.

**NOTE:** Under no circumstances will the professor accept a paper containing other's work, either downloaded from Internet sites or used from other students' papers. (In other words, the purpose of the assignment is for the student to reflect critically on the topic at hand and to articulate those reflections in writing.) If the student turns in such a paper to the professor, the grade is an automatic "F." As in scholarly writing, the student may quote from a reference work in the student's own wording but must give proper credit by citing the original source. (See Turabian for instructions on footnotes, parenthetical references, citations, reference lists, and bibliographies.)

If the student is a published author and chooses to cite from his/her copyrighted material, Proper citations must be made as well. Not to do so is considered plagiarism.

Note: The above policies were copied from materials provided by the administrative offices of Erskine Theological Seminary, revised 5-26-10

## Course Outline: Lecture and Reading Schedule

**September**            Distribute syllabus, overview of course  
Lecture Topics for the month:  
Jerome, the Papacy's Bible Man and the Latin *Vulgate*  
The Bible in the Medieval Church  
Anglo-Saxon Fragments

*Film-* "The Indestructible Book" Part One

John Wyclif as Bible Translator

*Film-* "The Morningstar of the Reformation"

*Film-* "The Indestructible Book" Part Two

**Book Critique # 1 due: Sept. 30**

### October

Lecture Topics for the month:  
Erasmus and the Renaissance/Reformation  
The English Reformation

*Film-* "The Indestructible Book" Part One, Vol. 2

William Tyndale, Father of the English Bible

*Film-* "God's Outlaw"

**EXAM # 1 October 13**

Beyond Tyndale- The History of English Bible

### November

Lecture Topics for the month:  
The Geneva Bible, 1560  
John Knox and the Geneva Bible Translation  
The Bishop's Book

**Book Critique #2 due: Nov. 4**

**THANKGIVING BREAK: Nov. 20-28, No Classes**

### December

Lecture Topics for the month:  
The King James Translation, 1611, Parts One and Two  
Comments on Modern Translations

*Christian Commitment and Excellence in Learning*

## **FINAL EXAMINATION, DEC. 9**

End of course students evaluations

NOTE: The specific reading assignment of the text will be distributed on the first night of class. In addition to the text by David Daniell, the professor will give occasional reading assignments from handouts, and or place reading on Reserve in the Library.