



ERSKINE
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

For Christ and His Church

Christian Commitment and Excellence in Learning

NT 601CO
New Testament I
Fall Term, 2010
Mondays, 6-9 P.M.
Columbia Campus
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- I. Course Description:** This one-semester course explores the background, literary art, theological teaching and contemporary message of Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Acts. Attention is given to the canonical significance of these writings and to their value for ministry. *Required. Three hours.*
- II. Course Objectives:** The mission statement of Erskine Seminary indicates that its purpose is to educate persons “for service in the Christian Church”, in particular, the study of the Bible “in its own literary, historical and theological settings”, so that the student may “interpret it with relevance and meaning applicable for today.” This course examines the literary and historical aspects of the Gospels and Acts, as well as considering their particular characteristics and messages. Critical exegetical issues related to each New Testament genre will be explored. Emphasis will be laid upon acquiring a deeper understanding of the authors’ intentions, and communicating this message to the contemporary Church.
- III. Required Textbooks:** *A personal study Bible.* The NIV Bible text (Barker, Kenneth, general editor, The NIV Study Bible. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), notable for its affordable price, popular translation and excellent notes and maps, will be used in this course, and is a *suggested* study Bible. The selection of a Bible translation, however, will be left to the individual student.

Brown, Raymond E., *An Introduction to the New Testament*. New York: Doubleday, 1997. ISBN # 0-385-24767-2.

Roetzel, Calvin J., *The World that Shaped the New Testament*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2002. ISBN # 0-664-22415-6.

Goodacre, M. and N. Perrin, *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2004. ISBN # 0-8308-2769-2.

Evans, Craig A., *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2006. ISBN # 0-8308-3318-8.

In addition, there will be small reading assignments and/or handouts throughout the course to help the student organize and understand the relatively large amount of material to be learned.

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.

- I. Course Requirements:** Students are expected to attend every class meeting. If a student must be absent due to an emergency or illness for all or part of a session, the student is responsible for all work done and due for that session. *No more than three sessions may be missed.* Due to the nature of the course, missing classroom discussion will almost certainly adversely affect the student's performance on the scheduled exams.

Students are expected to be adequately prepared for each class session, particularly the Biblical translation assignments due. Classroom discussion will constitute an important element of our learning together, and will be adversely affected by poor preparation.

Three objective one-hour exams will be administered, and will be related to the Biblical, background or critical material covered in the previous session. The tests must be taken on the assigned dates. See course outline for test dates.

Additionally, there will a required book review of either *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique* or *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels*. This review will be an analysis of several critical essays/chapters found in each respective book. A guide sheet will be provided for this analysis.

- II. Evaluation:** The Seminary grade scale (p. 46, *Catalog*) will be used in determining a letter grade. The student's final grade will be calculated as follows:

Three one-hour tests (3 x 25%)	= 75%
Book review	25%

III. Class Meeting Dates: This course will meet Monday evenings from 6-9 P.M. See course outline below for details.

IV. 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 withdrawal 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 in 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 (1 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 student 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 the Fall Term, April 1 for the 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 Class 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 responsible 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.

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.

Exegesis Credit Policy for Bible Elective/Exegesis Course Syllabi

Students intending to use this course to fulfill their Old or New Testament exegesis requirement, must choose a passage and do a thorough exegetical study, using the exegetical procedure taught in the Principles of Exegesis course. Such students, then, must have successfully completed BI 502 Principles of Exegesis and, for those who began in Fall 2008 or after, BI 503 Introduction to the Biblical Languages prior to taking any course for exegesis credit. Additionally, students who are required to take the Biblical languages (Hebrew and Greek) must, in place of BI 503 Introduction to the Biblical Languages, successfully complete the respective language courses (Hebrew I & II for Old Testament courses; Greek I & II for New Testament courses) prior to taking any Bible course for exegesis credit. Students taking Bible electives without having met the exegesis and language course prerequisites may only count those courses as general Bible electives, and cannot receive exegesis credit for them.

Chapel Attendance Policy (FOR TUESDAY-THURSDAY ON-CAMPUS CLASSES)

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.

PORTFOLIO REQUIREMENTS

If your course contains a paper or project required as a portfolio submission, star or highlight the project and inform students it is their responsibility to submit the graded and polished document to the appropriate administrative person for filing in their portfolio.

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 a 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 of The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia and Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey, based upon a document adapted by LTSP, with permission, from "Princeton University Rights, Rules and Responsibilities," 1990 Edition. Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey.]

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

NOTE: Under no circumstances will the professor accept a paper containing others' 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" or "0". As in scholarly writing, the student may quote from a reference work using proper citations. The student may also reference others' 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.

Course Outline

Weeks 1-4: August 30, September 8, 13 and 20 (6-9:00 P.M.)

Introduction: The Study of the New Testament

- A. The New Testament as Literature
- B. The Development of the New Testament Canon
- C. Textual Development of the New Testament
- D. The World of the New Testament
- E. Geography of Palestine

Reading assignments for this session:

Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 3-93;

Read Calvin J. Roetzel, *The World that Shaped the New Testament*, pp. 1-36.

Weeks 5-8: September 27, October 4, 11 and 18 (6-9:00 P.M.) Please note that Fall Break (Thanksgiving) will be from Nov. 20-28!

Introduction: The Gospel Genre

- A. The Study of Jesus
- B. The Synoptic Gospels and their Development
- C. Critical Methodologies and the Study of the Gospels
- D. The Book of Mark and its Message

Reading assignments for this session:

Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 99-167;

Read the Gospel of Mark.

Note: *Test #1* will be administered during class on **September 27**.

The book review of *Questioning Q: A Multidimensional Critique* will be due **October 18**.

Weeks 9-12: October 25, November 1, 8 and 15 (6-9:00 P.M.)

Introduction: The Gospels in Context

- A. The Gospel of Matthew
- B. The Gospel of Luke
- C. The Gospel of John
- D. Unique Features of John's Gospel
- E. Hellenistic and Jewish Worldviews and Piety

Reading assignments for this session:

Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 171-275;

Read Calvin J. Roetzel, *The World that Shaped the New Testament*, 37-116;

Read the Gospels of Matthew, Luke and John.

Note: *Test #2* will be administered during class on **October 25**.

The book review of *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels* will be due on **November 15**.

Week 13: November 29 (6-9:00 P.M.)

A. Introduction:

- B. The Book of Acts as History and Genre

Reading assignments for this session:

Read Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, pp. 279-378;

Read Calvin J. Roetzel, *The World that Shaped the New Testament*; pp. 117-152.

Read the Book of Acts.

Note: *Test #3* will be administered during this class session.