



BI 502 CO: PRINCIPLES OF EXEGESIS

Fall 2010

Columbia Campus: Mondays, 6:00-9:00 p.m., beginning August 30

Professor: Max Rogland

(Syllabus revised August 2010)

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OFFICE HOURS FOR FALL TERM 2010:

During Fall Term 2010 my office hours are 1:30-4:00 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday, but it is always advisable to call or email for an appointment first, just in case I have to be away for some unexpected reason. Other times may be available by appointment.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course introduces the student to the principles and practice of exegesis of the Old and New Testaments and surveys the history of the texts and translations of the Bible, as well as the ways the Old and New Testaments have been interpreted by the Church. Passages for exegetical practice are selected from both Testaments. *Three hours.*

COURSE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES:

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to “educate persons for service in the Christian Church.” This includes 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.” The purpose of this course is to enable students to study and interpret Biblical texts in an informed manner by incorporating exegetical tools and methods of interpretation of the Biblical text. By the completion of the course, the student should be able to:

- Define basic terms related to Biblical interpretation (e.g., exegesis, hermeneutics, textual variant, dynamic equivalence theory, etc.);
- Describe the process by which the texts of the Old and New Testaments have been written and transmitted;
- Make effective use of the basic tools necessary for responsible Biblical interpretation;
- Outline the history of the translation of the Bible into English;
- Identify the major types of literature found in the Old and New Testaments, and describe exegetical issues connected to each;
- Demonstrate the ability to exegete a Biblical text using the principles and procedures learned in the classroom.

In this class, as in many seminary-level classes, assignments frequently involve a substantial writing component. To do well in this class, therefore, it is essential that you have excellent writing skills. Students whose writing skills are weak are strongly encouraged to take PM 500 Writing for Ministry before taking this course.

ERSKINE DISTANCE EDUCATION NETWORK (EDEN):

This course utilizes Erskine's EDEN website as a place to make class resources available to you as well as the means for completing and submitting various assignments. Thus, you will need frequent access to a computer with a reliable internet connection. If you have never used the EDEN site before then see the directions below on how to set up an account (Appendix A). After you have set up an account you will need an enrollment key in order to access the BI 502 CO online classroom. Students must have their EDEN accounts set up by the first class session.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS:

Dorani, Daniel M., *Getting the Message. A Plan for Interpreting and Applying the Bible*. Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 1996. (ISBN: 978-0-87552-238-8)

Dorani, Daniel M., *Putting the Truth to Work. The Theory and Practice of Biblical Application*. Phillipsburg: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing, 2001. (ISBN: 978-0-87552-170-1)

Carson, D. A., *Exegetical Fallacies*, 2nd edition. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996. (ISBN: 978-0-8010-2086-5)

Soulen, Richard, and R. Kendall Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, 3rd edition. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2001. (ISBN: 978-0-664-22314-4)

RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOKS:

W. Grudem (ed.), *The ESV Study Bible*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2008. Many formats and bindings are available; the basic hardcover edition is ISBN 978-1-4335-0241-5.

Students continue to be responsible for securing their own required textbooks. As a convenience, there is a bookstore on the seminary's home page. To access this site and its information, locate textbooks, and compare prices, go to:

<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. A limited number of copies of each textbook will be available from the Erskine Campus Bookstore, and copies may be ordered through that Bookstore.

PLEASE NOTE: When ordering a book that has been published in more than one edition, make certain that you acquire the correct one (check the ISBN number when ordering); do not attempt to substitute an older edition of a required textbook.

ERSKINE THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY'S GRADING SCALE:

100-95	A	85-84	C+	71-70	D-
94-93	A-	83-80	C		
92-91	B+	79-78	C-	69-0	F
90-88	B	77-76	D+		
87-86	B-	75-72	D		

COURSE SCHEDULE, REQUIREMENTS, AND GRADING:

Your final grade will be based upon the following factors:

- A. Two quizzes: **20%** (worth 10% each)
- B. Greek alphabet quiz: **5%**
- C. Hebrew alphabet quiz: **5%**
- D. Homework and Assignments: **40%**

Details on these will be provided in class.

- E. Exegesis Paper: **30%**

Guidelines pertaining to the paper will be provided in class. This is due on **December 6**. See Appendix B for my grading criteria for exegesis papers. Some material to be used in preparing your paper will be made available on the course's EDEN classroom.

- F. Attendance and Participation: More than one absence, as well as poor classroom participation, will result in grade penalties at the instructor discretion.

Additional details regarding assignment due dates, the schedule of readings, and dates for quizzes will be provided in class. For now, take note of the following important dates:

- The first class meets on **August 30**.
- Your term paper is due on **December 6**.

CLASSROOM EXPECTATIONS AND SEMINARY POLICIES:

Registration: 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.

Official Seminary Class Attendance Policy and Policy on Absences: 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. In general, students are allowed up to three hours of unexcused absence without penalty. Students taking a class that meets four times over a semester/term must attend the first meeting of the class. Students who cannot attend the first course meeting should

not register for the course or, if already registered, should drop the course and complete the drop/add form. (If the drop/add form is not completed and turned in to the Registrar, the student will still be charged for the course and will receive an “F” grade.) If students have to be absent for part or all of another class meeting day, they are still responsible for all work missed and all work due. A student who misses as much as one full class day or its equivalent in late arrival or early departure should consult with the professor to see whether it is still possible to pass the course. Sleeping in class is counted as an absence. If you are aware of any conflicts that will prevent you from attending one of the class sessions, you should register for a different section or take the course at another time.

Late and/or Incomplete Work: Any work not submitted by the due date will be assessed a late penalty. Students should review the Seminary policy on “Incompletes” in the Seminary catalog. 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.”

Plagiarism: Any student who commits plagiarism is in violation of Seminary policy and is liable for dismissal. See the academic section of the Catalog for complete information.

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.

Taping Class Lectures: If you wish to tape a lecture using your own recording device, you must complete an “Audio Recording Request” form, which can be downloaded from the Seminary website at:

http://www.erskineseminary.org/Academics_Files/PdfDownloads.html

Style and Bibliographical Formatting Requirements: All written assignments 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).

Appendix A: First time EDEN users

If you have never created an EDEN account, please complete the following steps to access to the online classroom.

If you have taken an EDEN course previously, go to the web site listed below and enter your user name and password.

1. Go to the online classroom website: <http://eden.erskineseminary.net/>
2. Select the term for which you are enrolled.
3. Read carefully the text under the heading “*Is this your first time here?*” Click on the “*Start now by creating a new account*” button.
4. An email will be immediately sent to the email address you entered in the new account form. When it arrives read the email and click on the web link it contains. Your account will be confirmed and you will be logged in. This must be done in a timely manner – the confirmation will not stay for long in the system.
5. Find the course for which you are enrolled.
6. Enter the **enrollment key** in order to access the online classroom. You will be provided this key upon confirmation by the Registrar’s office.

** Notes:

- The **enrollment key** and your **user name and password** are different. Do not attempt to use one for the other.
- It is recommended that you write down your user name and password so that it won’t be forgotten. The EDEN office cannot provide you with this information.
- Please do not share the enrollment key with other students.

Appendix B: Professor Rogland's Grading Rubric for Exegesis Papers:

To begin with, be aware that my default grade on all papers is a "C". This can go up or down, depending upon how well you do in the following areas:

1. **PROMPTLY SUBMITTED AND DIRECTIONS FOLLOWED:** Have you carefully followed the instructor's directions by including all components of the paper (e.g. appendices, required number of bibliographical sources, etc.) in the required format (double-spaced with 12 point Times Roman font, etc.)? Have you submitted it on time? You either gain a "plus" or a "minus" for this.
2. **THESIS STATEMENT:** Is there a strong thesis statement at the conclusion of your introduction telling me what your paper is going to focus on?
3. **SUPPORTING ARGUMENTATION AND LOGICAL STRUCTURE:** Does the paper develop points that clearly support the thesis statement with relevant information and analysis? How often do I find myself wondering, "Why is s/he telling me this?" Is there a logical progression to the paper?
4. **WRITING MECHANICS:** Correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, with minimal typos; footnotes and bibliography in the proper form; etc.
5. **EVIDENCE OF RESEARCH:** Have you chosen good and relevant secondary sources, or did you just grab anything you could find in the church library or on the internet? Moreover, is it clear that you have actually tried to *use* and *interact* with these sources in a thoughtful way, or are they simply "padding" your bibliography? Have you discussed the correct translation of the Biblical text (either presenting your own translation of the original text or comparing/contrasting existing English translations)?
6. **CONTENT:** Is what you're telling me actually true and accurate? Does the paper cover the major substance of the passage, or are there large gaps in the text that you have skipped over? Have you attempted to bring out Christological themes in the text?
7. **"THAT SPECIAL SOMETHING":** Is the paper creative, insightful, interesting, engagingly written, etc.?

For most papers I expect that there will be room for improvement in some or all of these areas. However, doing well in one of these areas will result in your grade being "bumped up" a degree (i.e., a "C+" will become a "B-", a "B-" will become a "B", etc.). By the same token, however, doing an extremely *poor* job will cause your grade to be "bumped down" a degree ("C+" becomes a "C", etc.). Thus, if your paper has LOTS of mechanical errors, it will have a negative effect on your grade. Grade increases and decreases are cumulative, and are applied to the base grade of "C" according to the following chart:

	Strong (+)	Average (Ø)	Weak (-)
Thesis Statement			
On Time & Directions Followed			
Supporting Argumentation & Logical Structure			
Writing Mechanics			
Evidence of Research			
Content			
"That Special Something"			
Total "+" and "-"			
Net "+/-" applied to C default:			