

[Nov 1, 2024 draft]

Romans: Theology and Politics in Modern World (BIBNT 807)

Wednesday, 8–11am **Synchronous on Teams:** [link forthcoming]

Instructor: K. K. Yeo, PhD. T: 847-866-3881 (office) E: [kkyeo@garrett.edu](mailto:kkyeo@garrett.edu)

Feel free to write the instructor an email to schedule a Teams meeting; I try my best to reply email within 15 hours on weekdays.

## I. Learners Support and Awareness

### A: Accommodation Process

- Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary is committed to providing the most accessible learning environment as possible for students with disabilities. Should you ...
- If you have an **emergency situation** that you need an extension to turn in your assignment, send me an email message after you have taken care of the crisis.

### B. Tech guidelines and support for a **synchronous** course:

This class meets at scheduled times via a video conferencing tool, such as Teams or Zoom. The scheduled meetings cover the entirety of the required contact hours for the course.

- Pros: These online courses are most similar to in-classroom learning in that all instruction and student interaction can be conducted in real time but online/virtually—not in-person.
  - Cons—therefore be prepared to overcome the challenges in your learning practices: learners and teachers must have the time, bandwidth, and tools to participate in frequent, required video conferences at fixed times.
- Questions on your readiness to attend this synchronous course:

1. Do you have good wifi connection, and big computer monitor for a weekly 3-hour course?
    - Before the course, do reach out to the Technology Support Team at Garrett, or Northwestern University Information Technology for consultation and support of your educational needs:  
<https://www.it.northwestern.edu/support/service-desk/>
  2. Do you know how to access to online library research, such as using this website: <https://guides.garrett.edu/intro-nt-yeo/romans/>?
    - Before the course begins, do familiarize with the Styberg Library’s “online resources” (especially the video on “scripture resources”) and “suggested databases and guides” on this link: <https://guides.garrett.edu/intro-nt-yeo/john>
- C. Expectations: In a graduate course students are:
- expected to maintain high degrees of professionalism, commitment to active learning and participation in this course and also integrity in your behavior in the course.
  - expected to complete all assignments in order to earn a passing grade.
  - All assignments are due by midnight CST deadline. If your technology fails, there is a one-day grace period.
  - encouraged to familiarize yourself with the self-explanatory course syllabus, weekly modules, and various assignments of each week. Be sure to carefully follow the instructions from the weekly modules and the syllabus. And when in doubt, please contact the instructor.

### D. Netiquette guidelines: Forming good learning habits towards flourishing community of learners 😊

- Invite other students to join in the discussion rather than dominating it; listen well is part of speaking.
- Share tips with other learners.
- Present ideas appropriately, and be empathic, restraint from using offensive and ridiculing language.
- Keep an “open-mind” and be willing to listen and express minority opinion.
- Be cautious in using Internet language, e.g., capitalizing all letters suggests shouting.
- This is a cross-cultural course, so when using vernacular and/or slang, do explain them to the class.
- Think and edit before you push the “Send” button.
- Do not hesitate to ask for feedback.
- Do not use AI such as ChapGPT or Gemini to research or compose any of the assignments in this course.

## II. Course Description, Objectives, Assignments & Rubric

Romans: Theology and Politics

A selected study of the book of Romans primarily in the NRSV text (MTS and PhD students consult the Greek text), focusing on a cross-cultural reading, understood differently as Scriptural criticism, intertextual reading, postcolonial criticism, and from other literary and theological perspectives in the intersection between theology and politics.

Attention will be given not only to the history of scholarly discussion of Romans [“knowing”], but also to the practice of its hermeneutical meanings for diverse political cultures then and now [“doing”], as one seeks to be a competent and faithful interpreter of the biblical text in a world of profound diversity [“being”].

### Objectives

1. To have a graduate-level knowledge of current literature on the Apostle Paul and the political worlds, both then and now [if one has done the reading of assigned textbooks, attended classes, completed all the assignments];
2. To have a deeper understanding and appreciation of one Romans pericope in relation to the political life of early Christian movement, and a critical and creative appropriation of Paul’s theology in Romans in our modern world [evident by a successful writing of a term paper];
3. To begin showing a holistic growth (knowledge and love, individual and communal) of personal and social selves in biblical reception and hermeneutic [as demonstrated in the hermeneutical section of the term paper].

### Assignments & Rubric

#### **Before class:**

1) *reading* (see weekly schedule of assigned reading on Romans pericope [translation of the Greek text and textual criticism for doctoral students] and secondary literature [articles/essays assigned and Bible commentary either by Jewett or Gorman]);

#### 2) *writing:*

- (a) non-presenter of the reading: *write* 100-word summary of key points on Moodle forum by Tuesday midnight CST;
- (b) presenter of the reading in class: *write* a 1–2 page outline & title of each NT book and before class send your Word file to the instructor and whole class via email attachment. \*If you are *doing a presentation* that day, then *you don’t have* to do the Moodle discussion forum.

#### **During class:**

The course will be conducted primarily in seminars, beginning with a careful reading a Roman pericope assigned for the day (consult also a commentary, either by Jewett or Gorman), followed by:

- (a) a brief lecture or student’s presentation on the readings designated, and
- (b) proceeding with class discussion. Each student is asked to lead two assigned reading (see schedule). See

Rubric 1 on reading and writing. **\*Try to sign up for readings that you are most likely to use in your research paper.**

#### Term paper:

All the reading and the seminar have the purpose of resourcing you to know Romans in such a way to advance you into your own research paper. **\*The sooner you decide the topic or scope of your paper, the faster and better you will do your paper.** The term-paper assignment is to encourage the development of major exegetical and hermeneutical skills with the Romans material. Each student is required to conduct his/her own research and write one paper of 12 double-spaced pages (PhD student, 15-page paper): an exegetical or theological interpretation of a text/motif, and a cross-cultural reading of such text or theme [see any chapter in *Navigating Romans through Cultures* for examples]. See Rubric 2 on paper.

Expectations:

2. Submission of theology paper: Turn in a copy of the first complete draft to the instructor and the respondent at least 48 hours before the presentation. Presentation of the paper will not be graded. It is highly recommended that each presenter marks out the highlights of the paper he/she wishes to read. Research paper is presented orally (15 minutes maximum).

3. Respondent’s paper: Respondents are expected to write *at least one page* (500 words) of their response for the benefit of the students. Such response may consist of appreciative affirmation of the strengths or constructive criticism of the weaknesses. Respondents will send their written response to the instructor and to the student to whom he/she is responding. Peer response/review is for the sake of helping one another improve the paper, and grade will be given to the last version of paper due by \_\_\_\_\_.

### Rubric

The **first rubric** guides you to be intentional in your class presentation or Moodle discussion: reading-writing-discussion.

- 1) *reading* (Romans content, context, method, as well as secondary literature),
- 2) (a) non-presenter of the reading: *write* 100-word summary of key points on Moodle forum by Tuesday midnight;
- (b) presenter of the reading in class: *write* a 1–2 page summary with 2 study questions; email to the class by Tuesday midnight;

**Rubric 1:** Rubric for writing/discussion/presentation assignments of assigned readings

The term paper will be graded based on the following criteria:

- (a) consistent and proper style/documentation (20 pt);
- (b) clear and succinct writing/expression (20 pt);
- (c) ability to do theological research and use scholarly material (60 pt);
- (d) coherent and convincing content, argumentation, and procedure (60 pt);
- (e) relevant, creative, and coherent theological hermeneutics (40 pt). See more guidelines in Rubric 2 below:

**Rubric 2:** Rubric for term paper

Grade Summary of the Course (based on 400 points and 4-point scale)			
Class participation (and Moodle discussion)			100
Leading 2 sessions/presentations			50
Term paper			200
Response to peer's paper			50
		Total:	400
Grade on 100-point scale:			
A 94-100	A- 90-93 (91.5)		
B+ 87-89 (88)	B 84-86 (85)	B- 80-83 (81.5)	
C+ 77-79 (78)	C 74-76 (75)	C- 70-73 (71.5)	D 60-69 (65)

### III. Textbooks

#### A. Required:

1. Jewett, Robert. *Romans: A Commentary*. Hermeneia: A Critical & Historical Commentary on the Bible. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007. ISBN: 0800660846, \$80.00 = [Jewett](#) If you ever find Jewett is too challenging to read, use: Gorman, Michael. *Romans: A Theological and Pastoral Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2022. ASIN: B09HZG5V66, Kindle \$2.00 = [Gorman](#)
2. Elliott, Neil. *The Arrogance of Nations. Reading Romans in the Shadow of Empire*. Fortress, 2008. ISBN: 9780800 638443, \$15.00 = [Elliott](#)
3. Yeo, K. K., ed. *Navigating Romans through Cultures: Challenging Readings by Charting a New Course*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark International, 2004. ISBN: 0567025012 \$25.00 = [Navigating](#)
4. Gaventa, Beverly Roberts. *When in Romans. An Invitation to Linger with the Gospel According to Paul*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2016. ISBN: 1540960714, \$15.00 = [Gaventa](#)

#### B. Recommended (not required but good for your paper; see also recommended texts in the Bibliography):

5. Aland, Kurt and Barbara Aland. *The Text of the New Testament*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989.
- Omanson, Roger L. *A Textual Guide to the Greek New Testament*. Stuttgart: German Bible Society, 2006.
6. Bray, Gerald, ed. *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture*. New Testament VI: *Romans*. Chicago and London: Fitzroy Dearborn, 1998.
7. Cosgrove, C., H. Weiss, and K.K. Yeo, *Cross-Cultural Paul: Journeys to Others, Journeys to Ourselves*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005. = [CHY](#)
8. Donfried, Karl P., ed. *The Romans Debate*. Rev. and exp. ed. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1991. [See also: A. Andrew Das, *Solving the Romans Debate*. Fortress, 2006.]
9. Fitzmyer, Joseph. *Romans*. Anchor Bible. New York: Doubleday, 1993.
10. Gorman, Michael. *Romans: A Theological and Pastoral Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2022.

11. Reasoner, Mark. *Romans in Full Circle: A History of Interpretation*. Louisville: Westminster, 2005.
12. Yeo, K. K., edited. *From Rome to Beijing: Symposia on Robert Jewett's Commentary on Romans* (Lincoln: Kairos Studies, 2013). ASIN: B009YJT511, \$9.99 Kindle = [Symposia](#)

#### IV. Class Schedule and Assignments

below means a session you can sign up to lead two discussions/readings

##### Jan 1, 2025—Before class: Preparation

Greetings! Welcome to Romans course, which will focus on cross-cultural readings of the text in light of diverse cultural contexts with regard to the relationship between theology and politics. You can facilitate your study in this course by:

- 1) Downloading the syllabus and other resources from Moodle, get familiarize with the course structure and goals, assignments and expectations, as well as bibliography and resources;
- 2) Deciding which two assigned readings you like to lead the class discussion, and let me ([kkyeo@garrett.edu](mailto:kkyeo@garrett.edu)) know asap. You will report to the class the reading you sign up for—for each reading one to two pages (double-spaced) with 2 discussion questions; \*pick a reading that will mostly be used by you in your term paper
- 3) Considering which pericope in Romans or theological theme of Romans that interests you. This pericope and/or theme could easily become your research paper, and you could start the library research early (see basic material here: <https://guides.garrett.edu/intro-nt-yeo/romans> ). The research paper will be presented on December 1, and final paper due \_\_\_\_.

##### Feb 5: Paul and the Gospel Mission: Empire and Obedience of Faith

**Text:** (doctoral students translate Rom 1:1–7; 16:25–27) read Rom 15:1–7 in English/NRSV (read also Jewett or Gorman's commentary on Rom 15:1–7)

**Reading:**

Jewett, pp. 46–91 [or Gorman, kindle has no page numbers, please locate “Introduction” section before the “Commentary” section]:

Elliott, pp. 1–58:

Gaventa, pp. 1–46 (“Horizon”)

Supplemental readings [all “supplemental readings” are *not required, but recommended for your paper*]: Symposia, pp. 5–34; Navigating, “Introduction” chap.; CHY, “Introduction” chap.

##### Feb 12: Justice/Righteousness of God and Arrogance of Nations

**Text:** (doctoral students translate) read Rom 1:16–17; 3:19–26 (read also Jewett's or Gorman commentary on Rom 1:16–17)

**Reading:**

Navigating, chap. 3 and/or 6:

Elliott, pp. 59–86:

##### Feb 19: Law, Cultural Superiority and Despair, Salvation

**Text:** (doctoral students translate) read Rom 7:14–25 (read also Jewett or Gorman's commentary on Rom 7:14–25)

**Reading:**

K. K. Yeo, “Culture and Intersubjectivity as Criteria for Negotiating Meanings in Cross-cultural Interpretations,” in *The Meanings We Choose*, ed. Charles H. Cosgrove (Edinburgh: Sheffield/T&T Clark International, 2004), 81–100:

Elsa Tamez, “A Latin American Rereading of Romans 7,” in *Translating the New Testament: Text, Translation, Theology*, ed. Stanley E. Porter and Mark J. Boda (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 290–305.

Gaventa, pp. 75–96 (“Glory”):

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## Feb 26: Mercy of God, African Peoplehood and Freedom

**Text:** (doctoral students translate Rom 2:25–29) read Rom 3:1–9 in English (read also Jewett or Gorman’s commentary on Rom 3:1–9)

**Reading:**

Navigating, chap. 2:

Elliott, 87–120:

**March 5:** Ash Wednesday, no class (2-hour library research)

## March 12: Amnesty of Grace, Latino(es), Ethnic Piety

**Text:** (doctoral students translate Rom 10:1–7) read Rom 9–11 in English (read also Jewett or Gorman’s commentary on Rom 10:1–7)

**Reading:**

Elliott, pp. 121–142

Navigating, chap. 4:

Elsa Tamez, *The Amnesty of Grace: Justification by Faith from a Latin American Perspective*, trans. Sharon H. Ringe (Nashville: Abingdon, 1993), 93–117.

## March 19: Paul’s Visit to Romania, Russia, and Canada

**Text:** ((doctoral students translate Rom 8:1–11) read Rom 8 (read also Jewett or Gorman’s commentary on Rom 8:1–11))

**Reading:**

Navigating, chap. 1 (Europe):

CHY, chap. 6 (Russia):

## March 26: Native Cosmology and Pauline Theology

**Text:** (doctoral students translate) read Rom 8:18–27 (read also Jewett or Gorman’s commentary on Rom 8:18–27)

**Reading:**

George Tinker, “An American Indian Reading of the Bible,” in *New Interpreter’s Bible*, ed. Leander E. Keck, et al. (Nashville: Abingdon, 1994), 1:174–180.

CHY, chap. 5

## April 2: Asia and Christian West

**Text:** (doctoral students translate Rom 8:28–35 and) read Romans 5–6 (read also Jewett or Gorman’s commentary)

**Reading:**

Lawrence, “The Letter to the Romans,” in Thomaskutty ed., *An Asian Introduction to the New Testament* (Fortress, 2022), 183–213.

Yeo, “The Logos and Pneuma of Creation: Cross-cultural Reading of Romans 8 and the Inspired World,” in *Spirit Wind: The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit in Global Theology—A Chinese Perspective*, edited by Peter L. H. Tie and Justin T. T. Tan (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick, 2021), 147–161. [on Moodle]

## April 9: Virtue, Gift, and Economy

**Text:** (doctoral students translate Rom 13:1–7 and) read Rom 12:1–12 (read also Jewett or Gorman’s commentary on Rom 13:1–7)

**Reading:**

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Yeo, “A Metaphorical Interpretation of *Charis* and *Charisma* in Romans 12: A Cultural-Critical Understanding of ‘Gift,’” in Yeo edited, *Scripture, Cultures, and Criticism* (Oregon: Pickwick, 2022) [on Moodle] [\[ \]](#)

**April 16: Welcome One Another**

**Text:** (doctoral students translate Rom 14:1, 16:1–2) read Rom 14:1, 15:1–7, 16:1–2 (read also Jewett or Gorman’s commentary on Rom 14:1, 16:1–2)

**Reading:** no secondary literature assigned, no presentation, no Moodle forum—focus on your paper!

**April 23: Presentations:** \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_; \_\_\_\_\_ [TBD]

**April 30: Library research, no class. Final Paper due by.**

**D. Grade Summary** (based on 400 points and 4-point scale)

Class participation (and translation for Ph.D. students)	80
Leading 2 sessions	60
Term paper	200
Response to peer’s paper	60
Total:	400

Or on 100-point scale:

A 94–100	A– 90–93 (91.5)		
B+ 87–89 (88)	B 84–86 (85)	B– 80–83 (81.5)	
C+ 77–79 (78)	C 74–76 (75)	C– 70–73 (71.5)	D 60–69 (65)

**E. Bibliography**