

<Syllabus subject to change, but required texts will not change>

**New Testament Introduction
Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary**

**BIBNT500
Spring 2020**

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Instructor: René Such Schreiner, PhD Rene.Schreiner@Garrett.Edu

Office: Schaffer 716 (first floor at north end of main building)

COURSE DESCRIPTION: The overall goal of this course is to facilitate informed and ethical engagement with New Testament texts.

- **Informed** engagement with the biblical text requires the acquisition of core knowledge about the biblical texts themselves, and the literary and socio-historical backgrounds that inform the biblical texts.
- **Ethical** engagement with the biblical text requires that the student understand and assume responsibility for the worldview that informs his/her/their interpretation of the biblical texts, as well as the effect that his/her/their interpretation may have on others (others include fellow students, future or present congregants, the diverse Christian community, and the wider world including people of other faiths and creation as a whole).

Thus the intentional, reflective, and critical employment of one's worldview, informed by the literary and socio-historical backgrounds of the biblical texts, will serve the ultimate goal of theological interpretation of the New Testament.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES: To achieve the goal of informed and ethical engagement of New Testament texts, each student will

- Demonstrate knowledge of the New Testament texts (assessed via short answer, multiple-choice and/or true/false quizzes).
- Demonstrate knowledge of the literary contexts and historical backgrounds of New Testament texts (assessed via classroom presentations; assessed in particular via the student's research inventory).
- Identify and reflect upon his/her/their social location, unique worldview, and how these affect the student's interpretation of New Testament texts (assessed via the student's self-reflection exercises in the reaction-reflection-critical analysis mode).
- Identify and critically evaluate resources for New Testament exegesis (assessed via all-class projects and the student's research inventory).
- Obtain and organize literary and historical information pertinent to a chosen New Testament passage (assessed via the student's research inventory).

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- Argue an exegetical thesis, defended with appropriate sources, and articulate the theological, practical, and ethical implications of that exegesis (assessed via the student's final exegetical essay).

Please note the required reading and assignment due on the first day of class (see Class Schedule below for details).

COURSE FORMAT:

A significant amount of in-class time will be devoted to class discussion and small group work engaging the primary (scripture) and secondary sources. Discussion and small group work will be interspersed with short lectures highlighting topics of particular importance or answering pertinent questions arising from the class. Guided discussions or other in-class activities will allow students an opportunity to listen to their colleagues as well as think critically in applying the work they have done in preparation for the class. Both in-class and out of class work are geared toward the capstone assignment: a well-researched exegetical essay on a passage of the student's choosing. As the course progresses, out of class work will entail the completion of a research inventory and thesis statement prepared in anticipation of the final essay. The instructor will provide the details for assignment completion on the course Moodle site and most assignments will be uploaded to Moodle for grading. Please see the class schedule below for the required reading and written response due on the first day of class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. **In-Class: Participation in Small Group Work (Guided Discussions, Exercises)**
Points gained for assigned reading (In-class Quizzes and Essay Questions)
Presentation of text material (as/if assigned)

(30% of final grade)

Active attendance is crucial. Students are expected to attend every class session having completed the readings and/or assignments for that particular day. Further, students should be prepared to apply the readings and assignments to the in-class small group work, through both active listening and critical engagement. Unjustified absences will significantly affect one's final grade. See below for more information about attendance and participation.

2. **Outside of Class: Assignments (Written Responses, Research Inventory)**
(40 % of final grade)

All assignments have to be turned in on the day specified in the Class Schedule. Late assignments will not be accepted unless prior arrangements have been made with the instructor.

Please note the required reading and assignment due on the first day of class (see Class Schedule below for details).

- Written Responses: Two to four paragraphs responding to questions you will receive from the instructor one week prior to due date (the number of paragraphs will be specified by the instructor). Do not summarize the content; read the instructions and questions from the instructor carefully.

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- Research Inventory: Specific instructions for completing the Research Inventory on your chosen and approved passages will be given in class and posted on the course Moodle site.
3. **Exegetical Essay** (30% of final grade) This will build on your Research Inventory. Detailed, paragraph-by-paragraph instructions will be given for writing this final essay. It will be approximately ten (10) to fifteen (15) **paragraphs**, with proper bibliography and footnoting according to G-ETS style sheet (available on MyGETS in the Registrar link) which is based on Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed., rev. by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007). This is a multi-part project that will require a passing grade on your Research Inventory and an approved Thesis Statement prior to writing the essay (see the Class Schedule below for due dates). Detailed guidelines for completion of the Research Inventory and development of the Thesis Statement will be provided. This essay must be submitted electronically.
4. **Creative Interpretation** (extra credit)
Students are encouraged to give an artistic rendition of a biblical passage studied during the class. Poetry, prayer, music, dance, drama, short story, painting, photography, etc., are some of the possible forms this exercise can take. It may be completed by groups or individually.

GRADING SYSTEM:

A 94-100	B- 80-83	D+ 67-69
A- 90-93	C+ 77-79	D 64-66
B+ 87-89	C 74-76	D- 60-63
B 84-86	C- 70-73	F 0-59

REQUIRED TEXTS:

An annotated Bible, preferably one you can mark up (take notes in) and brought to every class. Preferred translations include NRSV, NIV, Common English Bible. No King James Version or paraphrases such as *The Message* or *The New Living Translation* or *Good News Bible*. A particularly good choice would be:

The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha, NRSV, College Edition, 4th ed. (2010). (ISBN-13: 9780195289602, Price \$28.00 at BN.com)

Powell, Mark Allen, *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey*, 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2018. (ISBN: 978-0-8010-2868-7, Price: \$47.69 at BN.com)

Polaski, Sandra Hack, *A Feminist Introduction to Paul*. St. Louis: Chalis Press, 2005. (ISBN-13: 9780827210370, Price \$12.84 at BN.com)

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SUGGESTED TEXT (used extensively for reference; will be available in Styberg Library for shared use):

Croy, N. Clayton, *Prima Scriptura: An Introduction to New Testament Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011. (ISBN-13: 9780801035883, Price: \$30.00 at BN.com)

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY and PLAGIARISM:

The professor expects that each student will familiarize him or herself with the institution's expectations regarding plagiarism and academic integrity. Here's a link to the current plagiarism policy:

https://mygets.garrett.edu/ICS/Academic_Offices/Office_of_the_Registrar/Plagiarism_and_Academic_Integrity.jnz.

In the context of the requirements of this course, students are encouraged to ask the professor or teaching assistant any questions they may have about understanding and avoiding plagiarism. Do not assume that you already know what constitutes plagiarism. You are responsible for understanding Garrett-Evangelical's expectations regarding plagiarism.

DISABILITIES AND ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS:

Garrett-Evangelical is committed to providing a quality theological education and will provide reasonable accommodations for documented conditions. Students requiring specific assistance such as classroom changes, alternative ways of note-taking, different classroom procedures, or alternative testing formats are urged to request the appropriate accommodations from the director of academic studies/registrar. The director of academic studies/registrar can advise students on other support services and resources, for example, diagnostic testing. Students must complete a request for accommodations using the form available from the director of academic studies/registrar or through MyGETS documenting their condition(s) through appropriate verification methods.

ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION:

To cultivate a community of collaborative inquiry, we ask that students commit to punctual and regular attendance; active, informed, and respectful participation in class sessions and small group work; and conscientious completion of assigned readings and written work. Our class activities and discussions will supplement and integrate the assigned readings rather than repeat that material, and the approach used in the class requires your presence to process the material.

The use of electronic devices is "natural" to emerging digital natives, and most often a way to enhance multimodal learning. At the same time, misuse of devices can distract us from collegial, collective work. Please mind your usage in class, so that technology enhances and not impede our experience together.

All work must be satisfactorily completed, submitted on deadline and as assigned, in order for a student to pass the course. Absences will have an adverse effect on your cumulative course grade, as would partial absences due to tardiness or early departures. Should you need to miss class for any reason, please inform your teaching assistant in advance by email. Students who miss more than 20% of the class sessions should not expect to pass the class.

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Assignments must be submitted in a timely manner to receive full credit. Late work will not be accepted unless pre-approved by your instructor or teaching assistant, as late work disrupts individual and collective learning progress. Students must abide by the seminary's policy for end-of-term extension requests in cases of emergency.

TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE (please see the course Moodle page for the complete class schedule):

February 5 Introduction to the Pillars of Interpretation

REQUIRED READING: Powell Chapters 1, 2, and 3

DUE: Written Response on Powell Chapters 1, 2, and 3

Write three paragraphs total; one on each chapter following these instructions: Choose one concept from each chapter; explain why that concept is of particular interest to you and how it might influence your work in this course. **Upload to Moodle by noon on February 5th.** A sample written response, authored by your professor, will be available on the course Moodle site.

IN CLASS: Be prepared to share with your classmates one concept from each chapter; explain why that concept is of particular interest to you and how it might influence your work in this course (please make some notes to bring to class to aid in your sharing, or share from your written work).

February 12 Mark and Backgrounds

REQUIRED READING: The Gospel According to Mark
Powell Chapters 4 Jesus
Powell Chapter 5 The Gospels

If time allows: Powell Chapter 7 Mark

IN CLASS: Opportunity to gain points for required reading.
(Multiple Choice Quiz or Essay Question)

February 19 Matthew and Backgrounds

REQUIRED READING: The Gospel According to Matthew
A Journal Article or Essay may also be assigned

If time allows: Powell Chapter 6 Matthew

IN CLASS: Opportunity to gain points for required reading.
(Multiple Choice Quiz or Essay Question)

February 26 Ash Wednesday – no class

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The remainder of the class schedule will be posted on the course Moodle page. If you have questions about specific dates, deadlines, and/or requirements, please email Professor Schreiner at rene.schreiner@garrett.edu.