Syllabus – Fall 2016 - TS 611 – Reading and Teaching the New Testament

Time and Place: Tuesdays, 1-3:50 pm, Room 2201, CGUC
Instructor: Dr. Alicia Batten
Office: Room 2116, Academic Building, CGUC
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 10-11 am; Wednesdays 10-12 pm and by appointment
Telephone: (519) 885-0220 x24246
E-mail: abatten@uwaterloo.ca

Course Description

Catalogue: The study of literary genres, the history of composition, and the canonization of the New Testament texts. The course will examine various hermeneutical approaches to the New Testament, focusing on their implications for Christian theological interpretation. It will introduce some methods of teaching the New Testament in various settings. The course will consist of both lecture and discussion/seminar format.

Course Objectives

The course will

a) Provide an overview of the content and diversity of material found within the New Testament
b) Attend to the process of the creation and canonization of these texts
c) Introduce some of the different methods for interpreting these texts, and some of the tools available for engaging in these approaches
d) Wrestle with the hermeneutical questions that arise in the analysis of the New Testament, and the challenges posed for the interpretation and teaching of these texts in the 21st century
Texts

1) A Bible. You are welcome to bring a translation of your choice, and you are encouraged to read multiple translations. No translation lacks an interpretive dimension, but some are much more historically and contextually informed than others. It is especially helpful to have a Bible that includes the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical books given that they were used by some writers of the New Testament. Study Bibles, such as the New Oxford Annotated Bible, and the Harper Collins Study Bible are very useful as they are completed by a diversity of biblical scholars (not only one particular stream of Christianity or Judaism). Paraphrases, such as The Living Bible, or The New Living Bible, are not acceptable. If you have studied Greek, I encourage you to use it as much as possible.


4) Course reader (a selection of articles and book chapters), available for sale at the UWaterloo bookstore and one copy on 3-hour reserve in the CGUC library.

RESOURCES: There are many other resources available for theology and religion in the CGUC library (Milton Good Library), at St. Jerome’s library, Renison Library and at the Dana Porter library. You can also take out books from the Wilfrid Laurier library, which has a significant Religious Studies/Theology collection. The library liaison at the Porter library for Religious Studies is Sandra Keys (skeys@library.uwaterloo.ca) (X32279). The subject guide for Religious Studies is available at http://www.lib.uwaterloo.ca/discipline/religious/index.html

ONLINE RESOURCES: As you are probably aware, the World Wide Web is not always reliable. However, the following websites are scholarly and may come in handy when searching for bibliography and various translations of ancient Christian texts.

The online New Testament Gateway is a useful source for bibliography and comparing translations: www.ntgateway.com.

For a synopsis of the 4 gospels plus the Gospel of Thomas, see “The Five Gospel Parallels”: http://www.utoronto.ca/religion/synopsis/

For early Christian writings, including non-canonical texts, see http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/

Another good site for Christian writings in late antiquity is on the North American Patristics Society page: http://patristics.org/resources/early-christian-texts/
Finally, the Bible Odyssey website, sponsored by the Society of Biblical Literature, may come in handy for bibliography or short peer reviewed articles: http://www.bibleodyssey.org/

Please make sure that you have access to the Learn site, as that is how I will communicate with you and I will post materials there.

Finally, if you do not have a good writing reference, the 8th edition of Turabian (University of Chicago Press, 2013) is great! It is important that you familiarize yourself with the Chicago Manual of Style format for essays. There is a link to a “Quick Guide” on the “Instructions for Writing Assignments.”

Requirements

1. Participation. Students need to come prepared for each class discussion, having read the texts, primary and secondary, for the class. Since this is a seminar, attendance and participation is presumed. Please be prepared to share questions and comments that you have about the reading during each class session. 10%
2. Article/chapter review – presentation and 1 page hand-out. 10% - due dates depend on the article/chapter chosen. Any article/chapter highlighted in bold can be used for this assignment.
3. Analytical review of article/chapter. 10% (3-4 pages – 750-1000 words) – due one week after the presentation of the article/chapter review.
5. Letter or Revelation assignment. 25% (7-8 pages -1750-2000 words) – due Dec 2nd.
6. Integrative paper. 20% (6 pages – 1500 words) – due by December 12th. You can submit this either in hardcopy (at the reception desk at Grebel) or in the course dropbox on Learn.

There is some flexibility here. If a student chooses, he or she can write one larger Gospel or Letter assignment, and not do the other Gospel or Letter assignment. The Gospel or Letter assignment would then be worth 50% (and it would be longer – 14-16 pages, with double the bibliography) and would be due by December 2nd.

Note: I am glad to assist in finding bibliography, and look at drafts or outlines of any assignment. I just ask that you bring outlines or drafts in in person and we can discuss them.

SCHEDULE (Subject to change if necessary).

Note: Please do the reading in the order listed for each class. In general, the essays in the NTT are useful introductory background while the articles in the reader are more specific. Throughout the course you should be reading and rereading the New Testament texts. Start with the Gospel of Mark, then the other gospels and Acts (including the Gospel of Thomas, plus the Johannine letters), then Paul, Deutero-Paul, Catholic Epistles, Revelation.
Sept 13
Introductions
Why Study the New Testament?
Textual Criticism
Translation Issues
Introduction to History of Interpretation (if time)

Sept 20
More on Method and History of Interpretation
Canonization of the New Testament
Ancient Mediterranean Culture

Sept 27
Jesus and the Gospels, with a focus on the Gospel of Mark
Reading: The Gospel of Mark (preferably in one sitting); Mary A. Tolbert, “The Gospel of Mark” in NTT; David Rhoads, “Jesus and the Syrophoenician Woman;” The Gospel of Thomas (find it on www.earlychristianwritings.com); John S. Kloppenborg Verbin, “The Life and Sayings of Jesus” in NTT.

Oct 4

Oct 13 – Note that this is a Thursday due to the Fall Study Days.
Johannine Literature

Oct 18
Jesus of Nazareth – Focus on Parables and the Kingdom of God
Reading: Bernard Brandon Scott, “From Parable to Ethics” (reader); Richard L. Rohrbaugh, “A Peasant Reading of the Parable of the Talents/Pounds: A Text of Terror?” (reader).
Oct 25
Paul
Reading: Make sure that you have read 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, Romans, Philippians; Marion L. Soards, “The Life and Writings of Paul,” in NTT; James D. G. Dunn, “Pauline Theology” in NTT; Paula Fredriksen, “Why Should a ‘Law-Free’ Mission Mean a ‘Law-Free’ Apostle? (reader).

October 28 – This is a Friday, but your Gospel assignment is due by this date. Please submit to the LEARN DROPBOX or hand in a hardcopy at Grebel Reception.

Nov 1
Paul cont’d; Gender Questions.
Reading: 1 and 2 Corinthians, Carolyn Osiek and Jennifer Pouya, “Constructions of Gender in the Roman Imperial World” (reader); Halvor Moxnes, “A Man’s Place in Matthew 19: 3-15” (reader).

Nov 8
Slavery in Paul and Deutero-Paul

Nov 15
Hebrews and the Catholic Epistles
Reading: Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude; Pheme Perkins, “Hebrews and the Catholic Epistles,” in NTT; David G. Horrell, “Ethnicity, Empire, and Early Christian Identity: Social-Scientific Perspectives on 1 Peter” (ON LEARN).

Nov 22
Revelation and Revisiting Ways of Reading the Bible
Reading: The Book of Revelation; M. Eugene Boring, “Revelation” in NTT; Kenneth Newport, “’Be Thou Faithful unto Death’ (CF. Rev. 2.10): The Book of Revelation, the Branch Davidians and Apocalyptic (Self-) Destruction” (ON LEARN); Heikki Räisänen, “Biblical Critics in the Global Village,” (reader).

Nov 29
So….?
Reading: Michael D. Coogan, “The Great Gulf Between Scholars and the Pew” (ON LEARN).
Note: Please come to class with draft notes of what you think that you will write about in your integrative paper. We will discuss the different ideas/questions that students have in class.

Dec 2 – This is a Friday, but your Letter or Revelation assignment is due by this date OR if you have opted to do one larger paper, it is due on this date. Please submit to the LEARN DROPBOX or hand in at the Grebel reception.
December 12th – Integrative paper due. Please submit to the LEARN DROPBOX or hand in at the Grebel reception.

**********************

ELECTRONICS: I request that students turn off and “safely stow” cell phones during class. If you have to use a laptop, please limit the use to taking notes as engaging in other activities distracts other students.

LATE ASSIGNMENTS: Students are required to complete the assignments by the due dates indicated. Exceptions will be made only in the case of illness or some other emergency. Please let the instructor as soon as possible if there is some sort of emergency.

Academic Integrity: In order to maintain a culture of academic integrity, members of the University of Waterloo are expected to promote honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. [Check [www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/academicintegrity) and [http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html](http://arts.uwaterloo.ca/arts/ugrad/academic_responsibility.html) for more information.]

Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid academic offences, and to take responsibility for his/her actions. A student who is unsure whether an action constitutes an offence, or who needs help in learning how to avoid offences (e.g. plagiarism, cheating) or about “rules” for group work/collaboration should seek guidance from the course professor, academic advisor, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean. When misconduct has been found to have occurred, disciplinary penalties will be imposed under Policy 71 – Student Discipline, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy71.htm). For typical penalties check Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties, [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/guidelines/penaltyguidelines.htm).

Grievance: A student who believes that a decision affecting some aspect of his/her university life has been unfair or unreasonable may have grounds for initiating a grievance. Read policy 70 – Student Petitions and Grievances, Section 4 [www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm](http://www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy70.htm). When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Appeals: A student may appeal the finding and/or penalty in a decision made under Policy 70 – Student Petitions and Grievances (other than regarding a petition) or Policy 71 – Student Discipline if a ground for an appeal can be established. Read Policy 72 – Student Appeals, [www.Adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72htm](http://www.Adm.uwaterloo.ca/infosec/Policies/policy72.htm).

Note for Students with Disabilities: The [AccessAbility Services](http://www.uwaterloo.ca/accessability) office, located on the first floor of the Needles Hall extension (1401), collaborates with all academic departments to arrange appropriate accommodations for students with disabilities without compromising the academic integrity of the curriculum. If you require academic accommodations to lessen the impact of your disability, please register with the AS office at the beginning of each academic term.