Conrad Grebel University College
University of Waterloo
TS 611: Studying the New Testament
Winter 2018

Fresco from the Catacomb of Marcellinus and Peter, Rome (4th century)

Class Time: Tuesdays 1-3:50 pm
Location: CGUC, Room 2201
Instructor: Dr. Alicia Batten
Office Hours: Wednesdays 10 am – 12 noon and by appointment
Office Location: CGUC, Room 2116
Phone: 519-885-0220 x24246
Email: abatten@uwaterloo.ca

Territorial Acknowledgement
We acknowledge that we are living and working on the traditional territory of the Attawandaron (also known as Neutral), Anishinaabe and Haudenosaunee peoples. The University of Waterloo is situated on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Six Nations that includes ten kilometres on each side of the Grand River. For more information about the purpose of territorial acknowledgements, please see the CAUT Guide to Acknowledging Traditional Territory (PDF).

Course Description

Course Objectives
1. Provide an overview of the content and diversity of material found within the collection of documents known as the New Testament.
2. Attend to the process of the creation and canonization of these texts.
3. Introduce some of the different methods for interpreting these texts, and some of the tools available for engaging in these approaches.
4. Wrestle with some of the hermeneutical and theological questions that arise in the critical study of the New Testament and the challenges posed for interpreting these texts in the 21st century.
5. Further develop reading, research, writing and discussion leadership skills.

Required Reading Materials

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 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 within the New Testament. Study Bibles, such as the New Oxford Annotated Bible, and the Harper Collins Study Bible, are useful as they are produced by committees of diverse biblical scholars (not one particular denomination). 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.

Suggested Writing Guide
If you do not have a good writing reference, the 8th edition of Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013, is excellent. It is important that you familiarize yourself with the Chicago Manual of Style format for essays. There is a link to a “Chicago Quick Guide” on the “Instructions for Writing Assignments.”

Learn Web Page
This course will make use of a WATERLOO LEARN website. This site will provide general information for the course, marks, and announcements regarding the course and other events on campus. I may occasionally post optional materials here. There is a DROPBOX set up for each paper.

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).

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.

For early Christian writings, including non-canonical texts, see Early Christian Writings.
Another good site for Christian writings in late antiquity is on the North American Patristics Society page.

Finally, the Bible Odyssey website, sponsored by the Society of Biblical Literature, may come in handy for bibliography or short peer reviewed articles.

Evaluation

1. Attendance and Participation.
   Students are expected to attend each class unless there is an illness or emergency (please let the instructor know), to have prepared the reading and taken notes, and to participate in class discussion. Although this portion of the evaluation is not formally marked, I may reduce the final course mark by 5% should students miss class with no explanation or not make any effort to prepare for and participate in class. As it is a graduate class, it is seminar format, although I will provide mini-lectures throughout.

2. 20 minute class discussion leadership. 5% (marked on a pass/fail basis)
   Once during the semester, each student should lead class discussion of a specific reading (the reading is bolded) for 20 minutes. The student should begin by identifying the thesis or main point of the article and evidence used to support the thesis or argument, then raise a couple of questions for discussion that emerge from the reading. The questions should not focus on whether or not people like the reading or agree or disagree with it, but on the implications for understanding the New Testament texts or figures and ideas. As well, you could raise one question or point about the implications of the material for understanding aspects of Christian faith and practice today.

3. Gospel assignment 35% - due February 16th in the LEARN DROPBOX (submit as a pdf to preserve formatting).


5. “Implications” paper 20% - due April 10th in the LEARN DROPBOX (submit as a pdf).

Course Schedule

Note: Please do the reading in the order listed on the syllabus. This usually means that you start with the New Testament text, then move to an essay in the NTT (these are general background essays) then the essay or article from the reader (on more specific topics). It is a good idea to take notes and write down questions and responses as you read.

Jan 9
Introductions
Why Study the New Testament Academically?
Textual Criticism
Translation Questions
Introduction to History of Interpretation (if time)

Jan 16
History of Interpretation; Methodological Developments
Canonization of the New Testament
The Context of Mediterranean Culture

**Reading:** Fernando F. Segovia, “Methods for Studying the New Testament” (NTT); Michael Holmes, “The Biblical Canon” (Pages 65-85 in Reader); Philip F. Esler, “Reading the Mediterranean Social Script” (Pages 11-20 in Reader); Richard L. Rohrbaugh, “Hermeneutics as Cross-Cultural Encounter: Obstacles to Understanding” (Pages 167-75 in Reader).

Jan 23
The Gospels, with a focus on the Gospel of Mark
**Reading:** Try to read the Gospel of Mark in one sitting. Write down what you noticed about this gospel after you have read it (the characterization of Jesus? The disciples? The pace of the gospel ... etc). Next, read Mary Ann Tolbert, “The Gospel of Mark” (NTT); David Rhoads, “Jesus and the Syrophoenician Woman” (Pages 148-164 in Reader).

Jan 30
Gospel of Matthew
**Reading:** Read through the Gospel of Matthew in the same manner that you did for Mark (if possible), taking notes on your responses to the text. Read Donald A. Hagner, “The Gospel of Matthew” (NTT); Halvor Moxnes, “A Man’s Place in Matthew 19:3-15” (Pages 115-124 in Reader).

Feb 6 – No Class – Work on the gospel assignment and read ahead.

Feb 13

Feb 16 – Submit Gospel assignment in the LEARN DROPBOX by 5 pm.

Feb 20 – Reading Week

Feb 27
Johannine Literature
**Reading:** Read through the Gospel of John in the same manner as above (if possible; pay specific attention to how John characterizes “the Jews”). Read 1, 2, 3 John. Read Gail R. O’Day, “Johannine Literature” (NTT); Jean K. Kim, “A Korean Feminist Reading of John 4:1-42” (Pages 88-98 in Reader); Sean Freyne, “Vilifying the Other and Defining the Self: Matthew’s and John’s Anti-Jewish Polemic in Focus” (Pages 50-63 in Reader).

March 6
Historical Jesus
Reading: John S. Kloppenborg Verbin, “The Life and Sayings of Jesus” (NTT); Bernard Brandon Scott, “From Parable to Ethics” (Pages 187-196 in Reader); Richard L. Rohrbaugh, “A Peasant Reading of the Parable of the Talent/Pounds: A Text of Terror” (Pages 178-185); Hal Taussig, “The Search for Community & the Historical Jesus” (Pages 198-206 in Reader; notes are on page 207).

March 13
Paul
Reading: Read 1 Thessalonians, Galatians, Romans, and Philippians; Read Marion L. Soards, “The Life and Writings of Paul (NTT); James D. G. Dunn, “Pauline Theology” (NTT); Paula Fredriksen, “Why Should a ‘Law Free’ Mission Mean a ‘Law Free’ Apostle?” (Pages 22-35 in Reader).

March 20
Paul and Deutero-Paul
Reading: Read 1 and 2 Corinthians, Philemon; Carolyn Osiek and Jennifer Pouya, “Constructions of Gender in the Roman Imperial World” (Pages 126-132 in Reader). Now read 2 Thessalonians, Colossians, Ephesians, 1 and 2 Timothy, Titus; Richard P. Carlson, “The Disputed Letters of Paul” (NTT).


March 27
Hebrews; Catholic Epistles
Reading: Hebrews, James, 1 and 2 Peter, Jude; Pheme Perkins, “Hebrews and the Catholic Epistles” (NTT); Clarice J. Martin, “The Haustafeln (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: Free Slaves and Subordinate Women” (Pages 100-112 in Reader). Also, please skim through Bernadette J. Brooten, “Research on the New Testament and Early Christian Literature May Assist the Churches in Setting Ethical Priorities” (Pages 1-8 in Reader).

April 3
Revelation and Revisiting Ways of Reading the New Testament
Reading: The Book of Revelation; M. Eugene Boring, “Revelation” (NTT); Heikki Räisänen, “Biblical Critics in the Global Village” (Pages 135-145 in Reader – 2 people prepare this discussion leadership).
Everyone: bring an outline (or even better, a draft) of your integrative paper to class. You do not need to hand it in but you will use it as a basis for discussion.

April 10 – “Implications” papers due in the LEARN DROPBOX by 5pm.

UWaterloo Policies
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.
Discipline: A student is expected to know what constitutes academic integrity, to avoid committing 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. For information on categories of offenses and types of penalties, students should refer to Policy 71 - Student Discipline.

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.

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.

Other sources of information for students:

Note for students with learning differences: The AccessAbility Services (AAS) office, located in Needles Hall Room 1132, 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 ASS office at the beginning of each academic term.

Counselling Services: Counselling Services provides free confidential counselling, in both individual and group sessions, with qualified professionals to help registered students, faculty and staff with personal concerns, educational career decisions, and strategies to studies and exams: www.adm.uwaterloo.ca/infocus, ext. 33528, NH Room 2080.

Accommodation for Illness: A medical certificate presented in support of an official petition for relief from normal academic requirements must provide all of the information requested on the “University of Waterloo Verification of Illness” form or it will not be accepted. More information can be obtained from Health Services and the form is available in pdf: https://uwaterloo.ca/health-services/student-medical-clinic/services/verification-illness

The Writing Centre: Writing Centre staff offer one-on-one support in planning assignments and presentations, using and documenting research, organizing and structuring papers, and revising for clarity and coherence. Make an appointment or drop in at the Library for quick questions or feedback. To book a 50-minute appointment and to see drop-in hours, visit www.uwaterloo.ca/writing-centre