

SYLLABUS

WINTER 2020

TS 718 *Special Topics in New Testament*
NEW TESTAMENT EXEGESIS—EPHESIANS

Instructor: Thomas R. Yoder Neufeld
Telephone: 519 745-0979
E-mail: tyoderneufeld@uwaterloo.ca

Land 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 six miles on each side of the Grand River.

A. Purpose and Objectives of the Course

This course will offer opportunity for careful study of the *Letter to the Ephesians*, as well as practice in biblical exegesis. Ephesians will be placed within the larger horizon of the early beginnings of what came to be known as Christianity, in particular of the Pauline sphere of the movement. Judaism, Hellenism, and Roman empire will set the wide horizon. Questions of authorship and relationship to the rest of the Pauline writings will help frame the analysis of the document and serve to highlight its distinctive features. The chief objective, however, will be to engage the content, meaning, and significance of this document for faith and church today.

The course will be structured as a seminar in which students will come prepared through reading and reflection to join in the shared experience of investigation and learning. Questions of application and relevance to faith, spirituality, and contemporary church life, will be welcomed and encouraged.

NOTE: *Students should have had an introductory course in New Testament or Paul's letters (TS 611 or equivalent), or they must prepare in advance of or at the very outset of the course by reading the appropriate sections of an introduction to the New Testament dealing with the Pauline writings. Familiarity with such introductory matters, while briefly reviewed at the beginning of the course, will be assumed throughout the course.*

B. Texts

1. The *New Testament*, in particular the Letter to the Ephesians, is the primary text. While the use of Greek is *not required or expected* (although students with even a rudimentary ability in Greek will be strongly encouraged to use what they have), students will be expected to use several good translations (see list below). Students are encouraged to bring various translations to class. The following list is not exhaustive and does not indicate preference:
 - Common English Bible (CEB)
 - NAB (New American Bible),
 - NASB (New American Standard Bible) or the older ASV (American Standard Version)
 - NETBible (New English Translation, available for free download)
 - NIV (New International Version) or the TNIV (Today's New International Version)
 - NJB (New Jerusalem Bible) or the older JB (Jerusalem Bible)
 - NKJV (New King James Version) or the older Authorized or King James Version (KJV or AV).
 - NRSV (New Revised Standard Version) or the older RSV (Revised Standard Version)
 - REB (Revised English Bible) or the older NEB (New English Bible)
 - TYN (my commentary [see below] provides a schematic translation of Ephesians which depicts the grammatical structure of the Greek; pp. 326-338)

NOTE #1: Paraphrases are not suitable for exegetical purposes in this course.

NOTE #2: The internet allows easy access to various translations of the New Testament. For numerous versions of the Bible available online see [Online Translations of the Bible](#); ([New Testament Gateway](#); and [Biblegateway.com](#) - check under Bible Translations). See also [Oremus Bible Browser](#) for text without versification. You will need to break up Ephesians into several parts since Oremus cannot display more than 77 verses at one time. This site can be particularly useful for your first assignment.

2. Thomas R. Yoder Neufeld, *Ephesians* (Believers Church Bible Commentary; Waterloo, ON/Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2002). Available at online vendors as well as from Herald Press directly.

C. Requirements

1. **Students will come prepared for each class discussion.** They will have read the scheduled text from Ephesians in several translations. They will also have read the relevant TYN commentary section. (*Participation mark: 10%*)

NOTE: Given the nature of a seminar, attendance and preparation is essential. Your participation can affect the final mark.

2. **A brief reflective essay based on an initial reading of Ephesians** (~ 2000 words), reflecting on that reading and what insights or questions have emerged. This is not a research essay in terms of secondary literature, but strictly an initial and very personal familiarization with Ephesians. Suggestion: read the letter through from beginning to end in at least two very different translations (some “correspond” as much as possible to the Greek [e.g., NRSV, NIV, CEB], others seek to find “equivalent” language (e.g., . Conclude by making a one page outline of the letter. This outline should emerge from your reading, and not from secondary literature or from the headings some translations provide. Opportunity will be given at the January 10 class to share some of the content of your paper with the class.

Answer questions such as:

- My initial impressions, positive and/or negative
- New insights and/or surprises
- Questions to be explored during the course

Due date: beginning of the second meeting of class (Jan 17) 20%

3. **Students will prepare a section of Ephesians as the basis of class discussion.** Students will present a brief handout with an outline of the passage, a discussion of the main issues and critical problems (textual and interpretive issues) and identify questions that can begin the consideration of the text.

Due dates depending on the specific text portion 30%

4. **Students will prepare one exegetical paper** of a portion of text from Ephesians (12-15 pages; 3600-4500 words), to be determined in consultation with the instructor.

Due date: April 6 40%

D. Lecture/Discussion Schedule

Jan 10	AM	<p>The practice of exegesis Introduction to Ephesians</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical issues regarding the letter to the Ephesians: distinctive style, authorship, addressees, date, pseudepigraphy, relationship to Colossians; discussion of Pauline letter form
	PM	<p>The world in which Ephesians emerged</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul and his followers • Judaism, Hellenism, and Empire as context of the messianic movement centred on Jesus

- Jan 17** **AM** **1:3-14** **Opening Worship: the Blessing of God**
- Sharing of first papers
 - Opening act of worship in the form of a prayer
 - Ephesians' view of cosmos, history, salvation, election, the unifying of all things in Christ
- PM** **1:15-23** **Thanksgiving and Intercession**
- God's power expressed in Christ's resurrection and exaltation now operative in believers
 - Negotiation of assignments
- Jan 31** **AM** **2:1-10** **From Death to Life Together With Christ**
- Ephesians' view of the "powers"
 - Atonement as rescue and identification with Christ
 - Salvation by grace for "good works"
- PM** **2:11-22** **Christ is Our Peace**
- Stylistic feature of chiasm
 - A christological peace hymn: Christ is our Peace (the social dimension of "at-one-ment")
 - Jews and Gentiles together: the "new anthropos"
 - A living temple made up of erstwhile enemies
- Feb 14** **AM** **3:1-21** **The Apostle Paul: the Secret Revealed**
- Paul as guide into the mystery of Christ
 - The Christ within: the Church filled with God
- PM** **4:1-16** **Growing Together in Christ**
- The Church's identity and task
 - The purpose of roles/offices
 - The body of Christ (Church or cosmos?)
- Feb 28** **AM** **4:17-5:2** **The Old and New Human:
Two Ways of Walking**
- Taking off the old anthropos and putting on the new
 - The imitation of God: the practice of Christlike grace
- PM** **5:3-21** **Transforming Nonconformity**
- Light and darkness: ethical dualism in the service of transformation
 - Worship as Spirit-filled music, exhortation, praise, and mutual subordination
- Mar 13** **AM** **5:22-6:9** **The Household Code**
- Mutual Subordination: Oppressive or Liberating?

- Hermeneutical challenge: Jesus betrayed? Paul betrayed? Or vulnerable contextualization?

PM 6:10-24 The Saints at War With the Powers

- The democratization of the Divine Warrior
- How fitting is militant and violent imagery today?

Concluding assessment of Ephesians and the course

E. 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. Also see [undergraduate support](#).

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 advisory, or the Undergraduate Associate Dean of Arts. 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](#). For typical penalties check [Guidelines for the Assessment of Penalties](#).

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. When in doubt, please be certain to contact the department’s administrative assistant who will provide further assistance.

Appeals: A decision made or penalty imposed under Policy 70 - Student Petitions and Grievances (other than a petition) or Policy 71 - Student Discipline may be appealed if there is a ground. A student who believes he/she has a ground for an appeal should refer to [Policy 72 - Student Appeals](#).

F. Other information

Accommodation for Students with Disabilities

The AccessAbility Services 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 [Accessibility Services](#) 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. 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.

The Writing and Communication Centre

[Writing and Communication 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.