



REL 112
INTRODUCTION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT

Spring 2022

Instructor: Richard Newton, PhD

Graduate Teaching Assistants: Emma Welch and Peyton Mitzel
(1/13/22)

Class Meetings: ten Hoor Hall 30, T/R 12:30-1:45pm

Zoom Office Hours:

Monday 10am-11am and by appointment: Emma Welch, GTA

Wednesday 2:30-3:30pm and by appointment: Dr. Newton

Friday 1:00-2pm and by appointment: Peyton Mitzel, GTA

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Prerequisites: n/a

Course Description and Credit Hours:

Introduction to the Hellenistic world of early Christianity, examining the early traditions about Jesus that were organized into the Gospels and the letters of Paul. **HU, 3 Credit Hours**

Student Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students will be able to do the following:

- (1) *Identify the principle methods advanced by the historical-critical approach to Biblical Studies.*
- (2) *Recognize the various writing genres presented in the New Testament.*
- (3) *Identify the rhetorical strategies of the different epistle and gospel writers.*

- (4) *Describe how the New Testament is structured and how this is related to the structure of the Hebrew Bible.*
- (5) *Explain the development of Hebrew Bible material in the New Testament*
- (6) *Explain the historical spread of Christianity beyond the confines of Palestine during the first century (CE).*

Required Course Materials

Bibliography

The following resources are required purchases. Please bring all of these materials to class with you everyday!

The HarperCollins Study Bible: NRSV, Fully Revised and Updated, ed. Harold W. Attridge (San Francisco: HarperCollins, 2006).

This scholarly study Bible will act as our course standard. You are responsible for reading not only the main text, but also the critical commentary at the beginning of each chapter and in the footnotes.

Daniel Lynwood Smith, *Into the World of the New Testament: Greco-Roman and Jewish Texts and Contexts* (New York: Bloomsbury/T&T Clark, 2015).

This book provides a look into the broader world in which the New Testament took shape. You'll be using this as a resource to help you tie together the geography and history with the literature.

Blackboard

This learning management software will house all of our assignments and where you will submit your completed work. I will also share an array of online resources to enrich your understanding of the New Testament. See this site as a digital representation of our classroom community. Since we will be making use of Blackboard as our main learning hub outside of class time, make sure that you're in the habit of checking it daily.

*Pro Tips: You can set Blackboard to email or text you all updates. Also since we will be using Blackboard for exams, make sure that your web browser and computer hardware are fully compatible. When taking tests, [make sure to review University's guidelines](#). . Failing to do so may inhibit your ability to successfully complete assignments (for which there will be no retake barring extreme situations determined at the instructor's discretion).

Outline of Topics:

Below you'll find a course calendar. Each box notes the content for the day and the materials you need to prepare prior to class. On Blackboard, the modules are divided by weeks for your convenience. So you will see the assigned reading and/or assignments along with a note about their role in the class. IN refers to our optional Interactive Notebook assignments.

Unit Focus	Assignments	Questions/Reminders
<p>Week 0</p> <p><i>Orientation</i></p>	<p>1/13 <i>Syllabus Day</i></p> <p>*Access the syllabus via Blackboard and bring it with you to class.</p>	
<p>Week 1</p> <p><i>What is the Academic Study of the New Testament?</i></p>	<p>1/18 <i>What is the Academic Study of Religion?</i></p> <p>McCutcheon, n.d., "An Introduction to the Study of Religion" (Required)</p> <p>Watch video: "Maya Cares about Religion, ep.1." (Recommended)</p> <p>IN- "What is the Academic Study of Religion?" (Recommended)</p> <p>*Begin Memorizing Unit 1 Map and Timeline</p> <p>1/20 <i>What is the Academic Study of the New Testament?</i></p> <p>Powell (2019), "How do Biblical Scholars Study the New Testament?" (Required)</p> <p>Henry (2014), "How did the New Testament Form?"</p>	<p>*January 19 is the last day to add/drop a course without a grade of "W."</p>

	<p><i>Religion for Breakfast.</i> (Required)</p> <p>IN- “It’s All New to Me” (Recommended)</p>	
<p>Week 2</p> <p><i>From Whence Does the New Testament Come?</i></p>	<p>1/25 <i>A Critical History of the World of the New Testament—Hellenization</i></p> <p>Smith, Chapter 2 (Required)</p> <p>IN- “The Kingdom of...God (Recommended)</p> <p>*Participation Quiz 1 Enabled</p> <p>1/27 <i>A Critical History of the World of the New Testament--Romanization</i></p> <p>Smith, Chapter 3 (Required)</p> <p>IN- “The Kingdom(s) of God” (Recommended)</p>	
<p>Week 3</p> <p><i>Gospels I</i></p>	<p>2/1 <i>No Class Meeting</i></p> <p>Exam 1 due by 11:59pm.</p> <p>Participation Quiz 1 due by 11:59pm.</p> <p>Optional Interactive Notebook Assignments due by 11:59pm for credit.</p>	

	<p>2/3 <i>The Earliest Canonical Gospel</i></p> <p>The Gospel of Mark--in its entirety, in one sitting, focus on narrative. (Required)</p> <p>IN-Hey Mark, What's Good? (Recommended)</p>	
<p>Week 4</p> <p><i>Gospels II</i></p>	<p>2/8 <i>Comparison and The Synoptic Problem</i></p> <p>Smith, Chapter 4 (Required)</p> <p>IN- "Sign Prophets" (Recommended)</p> <p>2/10 <i>Comparison and Evangelion</i></p> <p>Smith, Chapter 6 (Required)</p> <p>IN- "In the Name of Jesuses" (Recommended)</p> <p>*Participation Quiz 2 Enabled</p>	
<p>Week 5</p> <p><i>Gospels III</i></p>	<p>2/15 <i>The Gospel of Mark Revisited</i></p> <p>Mark 1-4; 8-16, read in light of Second Temple history (Required)</p> <p>IN- "Mark—Sitz im Leben" (Recommended)</p>	

	<p>2/17 <i>The Gospel of Matthew</i></p> <p>Matthew 1-5, 21-28, read in comparison to Mark (Required)</p> <p>IN- Free Notes (Recommended)</p>	
<p>Week 6</p> <p><i>Gospels IV</i></p>	<p>2/22 <i>Matthew and The Sermon on the Mount</i></p> <p>Matthew 5-7 (Required)</p> <p>IN- Sermon on the Mount (Recommended)</p> <p>2/24 <i>The Gospel of Luke</i></p> <p>Luke 1-6, 19-24 (Required)</p> <p>IN- Free Notes (Recommended)</p>	
<p>Week 7</p> <p><i>Gospels V</i></p>	<p>3/1 <i>Luke and the Parables of the Lost</i></p> <p>Luke 15 (Required)</p> <p>IN- Write Your Own Parable (Recommended)</p> <p>3/3 No Class Meeting</p> <p>Exam 2 due by 11:59pm.</p> <p>Participation Quizzes due by 11:59pm.</p> <p>Optional Interactive Notebook Assignments due by 11:59pm for credit.</p>	<p>* March 4 Midterm Grade Entry Deadline is 11:59pm.</p>

<p>Week 8</p> <p><i>Formative Christianity</i></p>	<p>3/8 <i>The Church as Collectives</i></p> <p>Smith, Chapter 5 (Required)</p> <p>IN-The Social Ladder (Recommended)</p> <p>*Begin Memorizing Unit 3 Map</p> <p>3/10 <i>Acts in Comparison</i></p> <p>Smith Chapter 8 (Required)</p> <p>IN-Doing Jewish (Recommended)</p>	
<p>SPRING BREAK</p>	<p>No Class Meetings on 3/15 and 3/17</p>	
<p>Week 9</p> <p><i>Luke-Acts I</i></p>	<p>3/22 <i>Connecting the Dots</i></p> <p>Smith, Chapter 7 (Required)</p> <p>IN- Students of the Way (Recommended)</p> <p>*Participation Quiz 3 Enabled</p> <p>3/24 <i>The Church as Collective</i></p> <p>Acts 1-7 (Required)</p> <p>*Note that the next reading is a bit longer. Read ahead if need be.</p> <p>IN- A Long Time Ago in a Land Far, Far, Away (Recommended)</p>	

<p>Week 10</p> <p><i>Luke-Acts II</i></p>	<p>3/29 <i>The Church as Collective (Continued)</i></p> <p>Acts 8-20</p> <p>IN-Free Notes</p> <p>3/31 <i>No Class Meeting</i></p> <p>Exam 3 due 11:59pm</p> <p>Participation Quizzes due by 11:59pm.</p> <p>Optional Interactive Notebook Assignments due by 11:59pm for credit.</p>	<p>March 30 is the last day to drop a course with a grade of "W."</p>
<p>Week 11</p> <p><i>The Pauline Mission I</i></p>	<p>4/5 <i>Theorizing Rhetoric and Sources in the Epistles</i></p> <p>Smith, Chapter 9 (Required)</p> <p>IN- The Letter Campaign (Recommended)</p> <p>4/7 <i>Honor-Shame and Social Scientific Criticism of the New Testament</i></p> <p>Smith, Chapter 10 (Required)</p> <p>IN- The Cross Way (Recommended)</p>	
<p>Week 12</p> <p><i>The Pauline Mission II</i></p>	<p>4/12 <i>Thessalonica</i></p> <p>1 Thessalonians (Required)</p>	

	<p>IN-1 Thessalonians (Recommended)</p> <p>*Quiz 4 Enabled</p> <p><i>4/14 Galatia</i></p> <p>Galatians (Required)</p> <p>IN-Galatians (Recommended)</p>	
<p>Week 13</p> <p><i>The Pauline Mission III</i></p>	<p><i>4/19 Philippi</i></p> <p>Philippians (Required)</p> <p>IN- Philippians (Recommended)</p> <p><i>4/21 Church and Empire Reconsidered</i></p> <p>Smith, Chapter 11 (Required)</p> <p>IN- Faith-Filled Collectives (Recommended)</p>	
<p>Week 14</p> <p><i>Revelation</i></p>	<p>4/26</p> <p>Smith, Chapter 12, 181-187 (Required)</p> <p>Revelation 1:1-3:13 (Required)</p> <p>IN- Jesus: The Same, Always (Recommended)</p> <p>4/28</p> <p>Smith, Chapter 12, 188-195 (Required)</p>	<p>April 29 is the last day to withdraw from the course.</p>

	Revelation: 3:14-22//3:11-18//15: 1-18// 21:1- 22:5 (Required) IN- Jesus Returns (Recommended)	
Finals	Exam: Monday, May 2, 2021 10:30am – 12:30pm Group Project: Final Project Submissions Due at 10:30am Participation Quizzes due by 12:30pm. Optional Interactive Notebook Assignments due by 12:30pm for credit.	

Exams and Assignments

The level to which you’ve met our Student Learning Outcomes will be measured by the following assignments:

PARTICIPATION QUIZZES:

Learning is an active process that requires preparation, practice, and questioning. While I will not be calling roll in this large-enrollment course, I presume that you are working to develop the content knowledge and skills to a level indicative of success in this course. Prior to each of the exams, I will give you a quiz to help you see where you are. The dates of these quizzes are listed on the calendar. We will take the quiz at the beginning of class and go over the results. This is a completion grade, but you must attempt the quiz by the exam date to receive credit.

INTERACTIVE NOTEBOOK:

Notetaking is not simply recording information, but also training your mind to process it so that you can retrieve and use it as needed. For nearly every reading, I have created an interactive notebook page to help guide you through our course content. Past students have found that these help tremendously on quizzes and exams. **Completing them is not required, but if you complete each activity in an exam unit prior to the deadline, you will get full credit for that participation quiz OR 10 points on the related exam grade** in the case that you have received full credit for participation (=equivalent to 2pts added to your overall course average). While you are free to take notes in a format that is worthwhile for you and submit these for credit, you must define the words listed and show serious intellectual engagement equivalent to what I’ve outlined. This is all or nothing, and note that I reserve the right to determine whether an attempted entry constitutes sufficient effort so as to count as “completed.” Ask well in advance if you have questions.

EXAMS:

These short exams are your opportunity to demonstrate your handle of the course material. They will be taken via Blackboard within a designated window equivalent to our course time. The questions will be a combination of map identifications, timeline sequencing, multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and matching. The exams are not cumulative but skills and theories are scaffolded so you would do well to make sure you've mastered prior concepts. Should you take seriously the interactive notebook assignment and class participation, you will be ready to perform well on the exam. They are closed and timed exams. You may not use or have near you any resources (i.e. handouts, cellphones, books, notes, online resources). Nothing should be open on your computer beside the exam on Blackboard. In accordance with The Capstone Creed, I am trusting that you take this exam with integrity.

ProTip: With the various extra credit activities, you can earn over 100 on an exam.

FINAL PROJECT— *Bible in Culture* Magazine.

Students who have a B+ or above after completing Exam 3 are eligible to complete the following final group project in lieu of all remaining quizzes and exams.

With the help of our GTAs, students will form groups and create an issue of our course “zine,” the *Bible in Culture*. Your issue will focus on a text or issue of your choosing (so long as it was discussed in our course and has been approved by Dr. Newton).

Your group's issue will derive from your reading session. The teaching assistant and instructor will assign you a time for individual and group proposals for approval. More details will be provided later. Each participant will write about 1250 words and engage scholarship on the subject. [You can learn about a version of this project here.](#)

Successful completion of the assignment will allow you to retain or raise your overall grade. Students who are unsuccessful in completing the assignment will need to complete the Final Exam during the scheduled exam period. [In this case, the participation quiz grade will be that earned as of Exam 3 unless it is subsequently improved by the final deadline).

EXTRA CREDIT-REL GOES TO THE MOVIES

Throughout the semester, the Department of Religious Studies shows and discusses thought-provoking films as part of the course REL310: REL Goes to the Movies. Students who attend a film viewing and discussion will receive full credit for (1) participation quiz OR 10 points on their lowest exam grade in the case that they have thus far received full credit for participation (=equivalent to 2pts added to your overall course average). Students have found this to be an enriching experience.

Assignment Type	Percentage
Participation Quizzes	20%
Exam I	20%

Exam II	20%
Exam III	20%
Exam IV (Final)	20%

C. Grading Scale

59 > =F	Unacceptable Performance
60-63 =D-	Insufficient Performance
64-66 =D	Needs Improvement
67-69 =D+	Adequate Performance
70-73 =C-	Acceptable Performance
74-76 =C	Satisfactory Performance
77-79 =C+	Promising Performance
80-83 =B-	Good Performance
84-86 =B	Commendable Performance
87-89 =B+	Great Performance
90-93 =A-	Advanced Performance
94-96 =A	Excellent Performance
97-100=A+	Superior Performance

Classroom Policies

ATTENDANCE

This course is taught from the perspective that higher education is a professional endeavor. Just as there are ramifications for missing a job, there are ramifications for missing class. While I will not be taking attendance, the student learning outcomes for this course presume active class participation. I will release multi-media resources available so that students can stay current with in-class activities and lectures as we move through the course. And please make use of office hours as soon as possible if you are struggling to keep up with course material or just want to solidify your grasp of the material.

MISSED EXAMS AND COURSEWORK

Anytime you miss class, you should take the following steps (in this order): (1) work through any supplementary online course materials and notes, (2) schedule an appointment with a teaching assistant to get clarity on missed activities, (3) study the material and come back ready to actively participate in class, and (4) meet with Dr. Newton if you have further questions.

You are still responsible for submitting assignments by their deadlines. Late work and exams are only accepted in the most extreme circumstances—that is, matters of life and death, not pass or fail. I implore you to be proactive and keep me posted within in 24 hours of any issue so that I can help you. Tardiness here will leave me less equipped to be flexible.

I do not permit incompletes except in the most extreme circumstances. Should you find yourself considering an incomplete or dropping the class, come see me first to discuss. I can only work with you if you are doing your part to work with me and with the class.

OFFICE HOURS AND COMMUNICATION

Office hours are an opportunity for you to get one-on-one assistance with the course. I invite you to come prepared with questions and to take advantage of the opportunity. I don't worry about students who come to office hours. I worry about those who never do. Please email me or my GTAs to schedule an appointment. Do not be afraid to ask for help on learning something you don't know well. That's precisely what we're here to do.

Online communication is a wonderful convenience, but it can give a false impression of engagement. Please note that I will generally respond to emails within 36 hours of receipt during the work week. I may not see emails during the weekend or otherwise noted occasions, so please be patient. Similarly, my communications with you will happen primarily during the work week.

DEVICE/TECHNOLOGY POLICY

Technology is a tool, and in world in which digital technologies are increasingly abundant, the classroom environment must take them into account. This class will use technology in a guided way. You will certainly be using computers/devices for homework activities and exams. And I may invite you to use technology for an in-class activity.

Please make sure your devices are silenced or on vibrate for the duration of the class. If you need to answer a call, text, or email, quietly excuse yourself from the classroom to do so. Also note, that all slides will be uploaded to class, so you do not (and should not) copy slides down. Your notes should be more engaging.

UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE POLICIES

Notification of Changes

The instructor will make every effort to follow the guidelines of this syllabus as listed; however, the instructor reserves the right to amend this document as the need arises. In such instances, the instructor will notify students in class and/or via Blackboard and will endeavor to provide reasonable time for students to adjust to any changes.

COVID-19

All University faculty, staff, and students are expected to maintain a commitment to the health and safety of our campus community. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, specific health

and safety standards are in place to minimize exposure and community spread on campus. In the interest of your health and safety and that of all UA students, faculty and staff, the University reserves the right to change the mode of instruction or schedule of instruction at any time, based upon prevailing public health and other guidance. While the method of delivery may change, educational instruction and opportunities will continue. As such, the University will not provide a refund of tuition, in whole or in-part, based on any such changes. Detailed information on changes in format or schedule can be found at studentaccounts.ua.edu and financialaid.ua.edu.

UA students, faculty and staff are required to comply with University Spring 2022 Operations (<https://healthinfo.ua.edu/news/university-spring-2022-operations/>) guidance regarding face coverings and other measures.

Getting vaccinated is the best way to Protect Our Herd. COVID-19 vaccines are being administered by the University Medical Center, the Student Health Center and various businesses and healthcare providers.

Statement on Academic Misconduct

Students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the official [Code of Academic Conduct](#) provided in the Online Catalog.

Statement On Disability Accommodations

Contact the [Office of Disability Services \(ODS\)](#) as detailed in the Online Catalog.

Severe Weather Protocol

Please see the latest [Severe Weather Guidelines](#) in the Online Catalog.

Pregnant Student Accommodations

Title IX protects against discrimination related to pregnancy or parental status. If you are pregnant and will need accommodations for this class, please review the University's FAQs on the [UAct website](#).

Religious Observances

Under the Guidelines for Religious Holiday Observances, students should notify the instructor in writing or via email during the first two weeks of the semester of their intention to be absent from class for religious observance. The instructor will work to provide reasonable opportunity to complete academic responsibilities as long as that does not interfere with the academic integrity of the course. See full guidelines at [Religious Holiday Observances Guidelines](#).

UAct Statement

The [UAct website](#) provides an overview of The University's expectations regarding respect and civility.