

1-1-2009

## BS 505 Introduction to Biblical Studies: New Testament

Ruth Anne Reese

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## Syllabus

**Course:** BS505 W1 (JA 2009)

**Title:** Intro to Biblical Studies: New Testament

**Hours:** 2.00

**Published:** Yes, on 12/05/2008

**Prerequisites:**

*None*

**Department:** Biblical Studies

**Faculty:** Dr. Ruth Anne Reese



Email: [ruthanne.reese@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:ruthanne.reese@asburyseminary.edu)

Office: AD

SPO: 923

### **Meetings:**

During 01/06/2009 to 01/09/2009 on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 9:30a to 12:30p in SH224.

During 01/12/2009 to 01/15/2009 on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from 9:30a to 12:30p in SH224.

**Maximum Registration:** 32

**Catalog Description:** This course is a concise introduction to the New Testament in its historical, literary, and canonical contexts. Throughout the semester, students will be introduced to the concept and significance of the canon of scripture, to the Jewish and Greco-Roman background of the New Testament, and to particular books of the New Testament. Course participation, reading, and projects will be configured in part so as to reflect the character of the degree specialization represented among the course participants.

### **Objectives:**

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**BS505 Introduction to Biblical Studies: New Testament**  
**2 Credit Hours**

Dr. Ruth Anne Reese J-Term 2009

Office: FM 105 Phone: 859-858-2184

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## Course Description

A concise introduction to the New Testament in its historical, literary, and canonical contexts. During the course students will be introduced to the concept and significance of the canon of Scripture, to the Jewish and Greco-Roman background of the New Testament, and to particular books of the New Testament. Course participation, reading, and projects will be configured in part so as to reflect the character of the degree specialization represented among the course participants.

## Objectives

Having successfully completed this course, the student will be able to:

1. trace the development of canonization, discuss the meaning and significance of the canon and of the canonicity of the New Testament, and articulate the major issues involved in the relationship between the testaments;
2. discuss the historical background of the Bible and critical historical issues surrounding the production of the various New Testament books;
3. demonstrate the ability to make appropriate use of this historical information in the interpretation of the biblical text;
4. identify major issues in interpretation;
5. demonstrate the ability to make use of these interpretive insights in the actual reading and appropriation of New Testament texts; and
6. articulate issues involved in the integration of biblical studies and the avenue(s) of ministry for which the student's degree plan is preparation.

## Course Requirements

On matters of style consult Carole Slade, *Form and Style: Research Papers, Reports, and Theses* (11th ed., Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1999).

Turning in assignments on time is a high priority. Late assignments will be penalized 1/3 of a letter grade per day (i.e., A paper becomes A-, B paper becomes B-, etc.). Late interpretive assignments will not be accepted.

- 1. Preparation, Attendance, and Participation:** Attendance is expected and will be recorded. It is the student's responsibility to make sure that they record their attendance in class. The professor will not record attendance at a later time. Students should come to class prepared by completing reading and assignments prior to the beginning of the class period. Each student will have the opportunity to participate in group discussions and projects during class time.
- 2. Interpretive Assignments:** These assignments will consist of close readings of the biblical text and practice using particular interpretive tools. This course requires the student to complete two interpretive assignments. You may complete as many of the assignments as you would like, and I will count the two highest grades. See the handout, "Interpretive Assignments." (15% x 2 = 30%)
- 3. Mid Term:** The midterm exam will consist of short essay questions addressing course material and the reading. It will be a take-home exam. (25%).
- 4. Final Exam:** The final exam will consist of two parts: (1) *A short, take-home, essay exam.* Answers to the questions should demonstrate familiarity with the course materials (textbooks, lectures, discussion, etc.), facility with the text of the New Testament, and awareness of one's own interpretive location. In addition, course **reading** will be counted as part of the grade on the final exam. This consists of two questions: 1) how much of the NT have you read for this class, and 2) how much of the course reading have you completed (exam + reading = 30%). (2) *A creative group project* undertaken with other students from your MA program and presented during the class period in the finals week. This creative project will demonstrate integration between the NT class and your MA program (15%).

## Grading

Asbury Seminary defines grades using the following criteria (*Catalog*, p. 24):

- A= Exceptional work: outstanding or surpassing achievement of course objectives
- B= Good work: substantial achievement of course objectives
- C= Acceptable work: essential achievement of course objectives
- D= Marginal work: minimal or inadequate achievement of course objectives
- F= Unacceptable work: failure of course work

A plus (+) or minus (-) indicates positions between categories (for example, B+ = very good; C- = slightly below acceptable, etc.).

### Required Reading

The New Testament (RSV or NRSV or a similar translation).

DeSilva, David A. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Downers Grove: IVP, 2004.

### Recommended Reading

Achtemeier, Paul J. *Inspiration and Authority: Nature and Function of Christian Scripture*. Peabody: Hendrickson, 1999.

Veyne, Paul. *The Roman Empire*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997.

### Schedule:

Jan 6 Introduction to the Course and Reading the Canon of Scripture

Required: deSilva, pp. 29-36

Recommended: Achtemeier, pp. 1-63

Jan 7 The First Century World

Required: deSilva, pp. 37-144

Recommended: Achtemeier, pp. 64-90

Group Discussion: Honor, Patronage, Kinship, and Purity

Jan 8 Issues of Interpretation: The Four Gospels

Mark and the Synoptics

Required: deSilva, pp. 145-179, 194-233

Recommended: Achtemeier, pp. 91-159

In Class Group Work: Synoptic Exercise

Due: Interpretive Assignment: Mark 1:1-15

Jan 9 John's Gospel

Required: John, deSilva, pp. 391-448, 703-713

Mid-Term Exam will be passed out at the end of class

Due: Interpretive Assignment, John 9:1-41 (cf., pp. 395-400)

Jan 12 The Ministry of Paul and the Book of Acts

Epistles: The Corinthian Correspondence

Required: Acts, deSilva, pp. 475-492, 555-597 (cf., pp 531-534 on letters)

Due: Mid-Term

Jan 13 Women in the New Testament – Reading in the Whole Canon

Integration and the MA programs

Required: 1 Timothy, deSilva, pp. 733-775

Due: Interpretive Assignment: 1 Timothy 2:8-15

Jan 14 Revelation

Required: Revelation, deSilva, pp. 885-931, pp. 463-472

Due: Interpretive Assignment: Revelation 18:1-24

Jan 15 The New Testament and the MA Programs – Articulating Integration

Due: Group Integrative Exam

Final Exam: Due, Tuesday January 20 by 5 pm

### Online Section Descriptions and Communication Guidelines

The Virtual Classroom is built upon the open-source Moodle platform. By logging into

<http://one.asburyseminary.edu> and clicking on the Virtual Campus tab (upper right corner) you will have access to this course and be able to collaborate with participant-colleagues and me throughout the course.

The following are functions with which you should familiarize yourself:

1. The **Course Information Center** contains many features to be used throughout the semester:

a) **Course News and Announcements**, where I will post items important for the entire class;

b) **Syllabus**, where a copy of the syllabus is provided;

c) **To Professor**, which is a way for you to post a message directly to me and we can discuss an issue privately;

d) **Course Questions**, which is a public forum where you can publicly post any questions you have regarding the course so others may see your message and respond. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course, the schedule, the assignments, or anything else that may be of interest to other participants and me

you should post it to the Course Questions Forum;

**e) Prayer Forum**, which is a public forum where you can post prayer concerns and praises for all to see. This is a way for us to build community;

**f) Open Forum**, which is a public forum where you can post anything that is not course-related for all to see. Examples include someone getting married, an upcoming birthday, discussions on topics not course-related, etc. This is a way for us to build community.

**2. Modules**, which are located below the Course Information Center, will contain forums where group discussions will take place, documents or other files to download or view online, and assignment links where you will post your assignments to me. Modules will be clearly labeled so you can follow along during the semester.

### Virtual Support Contact Information

For **technical support, library research support, library loans, and Virtual media** contact Information Commons: [Info\\_Commons@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:Info_Commons@asburyseminary.edu) Phone: (859) 858-2233; Toll-free: (866) 454-2733

For **general questions and administrative assistance regarding the Virtual program**, contact Dale Hale: [ExL\\_Office@asburyseminary.edu](mailto:ExL_Office@asburyseminary.edu) Phone: (859) 858-2393

### Accessing Information Commons Materials

1. General Questions:

a. The Information Commons is a "one-stop shop" for all student research, circulation and technical needs. The Information Commons hours are posted here: <http://www.asburyseminary.edu/information/hours.htm>

2. Materials Requests:

a. To search the library catalog for available materials, click here:

<http://www.asburyseminary.edu/information/index.htm>

b. Virtual Students may request books, photocopies or emailed attachments of journal articles/portions of reference books from Asbury Seminary's Library. Please allow 3-10 business days for all requests to be filled. Contact the Information Commons for costs and instructions on how to make requests.

c. Virtual students are encouraged to make use of local library resources. Students who live within a 50 mile radius of either the Florida or the Kentucky campus should come to campus to obtain their materials.

3. Research Questions:

a. Virtual students are encouraged to contact the Information Commons for research assistance including help determining the best sources to use for a paper, finding book reviews, or research questions about using the online databases or any other library materials.

4. Online Databases:

a. To access the online library resources including the library catalog and full-text journal databases, go to <http://www.asburyseminary.edu/information/index.htm> and enter your 10-digit student ID# number in the login box. Your student ID# is provided on the biographical information section of the student registration webpage. Add a 2 and enough 0's to the front to make a 10-digit number (20000XXXXX where XXXXX = your student id).

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