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BS 502 Introduction to Biblical Studies

Joseph R. Dongell

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Asbury Theological Seminary

Area of Biblical Studies

BS 502 Introduction to Biblical Studies 3 hours credit
Prerequisite: BS 501; Enrollment Limit: 32
Spring, 2005

Joseph R. Dongell, Instructor
Office Location: BC 337
Office Hours: Tues, Thurs, Fri: 9:30-10:45

Course Description

- The BS501-502 course sequence aims to address three interrelated matters:
 - 1) An introduction to the idea of the canon of Christian Scripture, the discipline of hermeneutics, and a text-centered approach to biblical interpretation;
 - 2) An introduction to the Old Testament in its historical, literary and canonical contexts;
 - 3) An introduction to the New Testament in its historical, literary, and canonical contexts.
- Course participation, reading and projects will be configured to reflect the character of the degree specializations represented among the course participants. In order to achieve credit for either course, the full, two-course sequence must be completed successfully. These courses are required of all students in M.A. (professional), M.A. in Theological Studies, and M.A. in counseling degrees.
- BS502 in particular will address #1 above as a continued topic, and #3 above in its entirety.

Course Objectives

- 1) The student will be able to trace the history and significance of the Christian canon of Scripture, and articulate the major issues involved in the relationship between the testaments.
- 2) The student will understand salient features of the historical and social backgrounds pertinent to effective interpretation of the various portions of the New Testament.
- 3) The student will be conversant with the major issues in hermeneutics, and will be able to articulate how these matters bear upon the actual interpretation/appropriation of the Bible.
- 4) The student will understand, be able to articulate, and demonstrate ability to practice the interpreting and appropriating of Holy Scripture. This will involve abilities to:
 - a) identify the macro-structures of Biblical books,
 - b) engage in “close reading” for registering insightful observations and questions,
 - c) employ various appropriate exegetical determinants,
 - d) move from particularized interpretation to contemporary appropriation for Christian life and ministry.
- 5) The student will demonstrate ability to show how the teachings of individual passages within the NT contribute to the flow of biblical revelation as a whole, and will begin the journey of developing a vision of the Christian canon as a cohesive story and vision.
- 6) The student will begin to develop a vision for how the Scripture can inform in profound ways his or her vocational direction, practice, and convictions.

Course Texts

The Bible (NRSV)
Bauer, David R. An Annotated Guide To Biblical Resources for Ministry.
de Silva, David A. An Introduction to the New Testament: Contents, Methods & Ministry Formation. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004.

Course Requirements and Grading

- 1) Four Tests: Each will cover all features of class time and collateral reading for the weeks it covers. Each test (except the last) will be “take-home,” to be completed without use of any resources or notes. The only realistic and effective way to prepare for these tests is to be fully engaged day-by-day in the class sessions and preparation for them.
- 2) Four Projects: Students will complete four projects intended to develop skills in encountering Scripture meaningfully. Instructions for these projects will be supplied throughout the semester, with adequate explanation unfolded during class sessions.
- 3) Class Participation:
 - Regular and prompt attendance, careful preparation, and active participation in class are necessary for the individual student and for the class as a whole as well. Students missing more than four (4) class sessions will not be eligible to receive a passing grade. [Absences due to emergencies and illnesses will be excused in consultation with the professor, and according to seminary policy.]
 - Students must be fully prepared to discuss *with insight and particularity* the readings in deSilva. The small group discussions will process [under the direction of the professor] the reading material. Students will grade themselves based upon the quality of their preparation and participation.
 - Students will be expected to keep readable, meaningful, and relatively complete notes on all classroom materials, lectures, discussions, and events. Students will grade themselves upon the quality of these notes.

Grade Calculations

- The final grade will be calculated from the average of 9 grades earned.
- The nine grades will consist of: 4 tests; 4 projects; 1 class-participation grade.
- The Participation grade will be determined by each student filling out a grading rubric [to be supplied within the class session] for the various dimensions of “class participation.”
- The relationship between test scores and letter grades is as follows: **A**: 100-96; **A-**:95-91; **B+**:90-87; **B**:86-84; **B-**:83-81; **C+**:80-77; **C**:76-74; **C-**:73-71; **D+**:70-67; **D**:66-64; **D-**:63-60; **F**:59-0

Course Schedule

Week 1	Tuesday	Feb 8	
	Thursday	Feb 10	
Week 2	Tuesday	Feb 15	
	Thursday	Feb 17.....	<u>Project A</u> Due
Week 3	Tuesday	Feb 22	
	Thursday	Feb 24.....	<u>Test I</u> Distributed [deSilva pp. 29-193] Historical Background
Week 4	Tuesday	March 1	
	Thursday	March 3	

Week 5 Tuesday March 8
 Thursday March 10.....Project B Due
 Week 6 Tuesday March 15
 Thursday March 17.....Test II Distributed [deSilva pp. 194-448]
 Matthew, Mark, Luke-Acts, John
 Week 7 Tuesday March 22 [.....Spring Break.....]
 Thursday March 24 [.....Spring Break.....]
 Week 8 Tuesday March 29
 Thursday March 31
 Week 9 Tuesday April 5
 Thursday April 7
 Week 10 Tuesday April 12.....Project C Due
 Thursday April 14
 Week 11 Tuesday April 19.....Test III Distributed [deSilva pp. 449-684]
 Most Pauline Epistles
 Thursday April 21
 Week 12 Tuesday April 26
 Thursday April 28
 Week 13 Tuesday May 3
 Thursday May 5.....Project D Due
 Week 14 Tuesday May 10
 Thursday May 12
 Week 15 Exam Day.....Test IV Administered [deSilva pp. 685-932]
 Remainder of NT
Class Participation Rubric to be turned in

BS 502 Introduction to Biblical Studies: Class Participation Report

Asbury Theological Seminary
Spring 2005

Joseph R. Dongell, Instructor

Student Name _____

- 1. I was present and “ready to go” right at the time the class was scheduled to start, as well as at the time the class was ready to start after breaks. [tardiness, timeliness]**
 - Yep, I aced this! No need to think about it. This was me!
 - Well, I almost aced this. There were one or two (at the most) slip ups here.
 - Well, in the main, I was present and ready to start. But there were enough exceptions here to prevent me from claiming this as a strength.
 - Lots of problems here.
 - OK, major disaster.

- 2. I was prepared for class and for small groups by having read all of the required reading before class (and was therefore in a position to grasp lecture material better, enter into group discussion better, and ask more meaningful and insightful questions.)**
 - Yep, I aced this! No need to think about is. This was me!
 - Well, I almost aced this. I nearly read all required materials, but missed the goal in a few minor cases.
 - Well, in the main, I had all my material read. My record here is “good” but not “great.”
 - Lots of problems here. I have to admit that I didn’t do a very good job here.
 - OK, major disaster.

- 3. I participated well in my small group, by contributing useful, appropriate, positive comments which assisted the other group members and encouraged them in their learning.**
 - Yep, I aced this! I think I was a great group member as described above.
 - Well, almost always I contributed well. On a very few occasions I didn’t function well.
 - Well, there were several lapses in my helpfulness as a learning partner in my group.
 - Lots of problems here!
 - OK, major disaster.

- 4. My notes of the class lectures, group discussions (etc) were very legible, well-organized, and complete. My notes will be an exceptionally useful tool for me ahead.**
 - Yep, I aced this! No need to think about is. This was me!
 - Well, almost so! I have great notes, with just a few gaps.
 - Well, I got most of the material down in notes, but they are rough, incomplete, or a bit hard to make out in several place.
 - Lots of problems here. .
 - OK, major disaster.

Please
Staple
Here

Student Name _____

Lesson # _____

Time Invested _____

Course _____

Time of Class _____

******* Lesson handed in on time?*******

Yes _____

No _____

******If Late, have these items below filled in:**

Date actually turned in: _____

Professor's signature _____

BS 502 Project Cover Sheet for Dr. Dongell