NT 632 Exegesis of General Epistles

Ruth Anne Reese

Follow this and additional works at: http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi

Recommended Citation
http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi/562
Description: A close reading of James, 1 and 2 Peter, and Jude with special attention given to literary, socio-historical, and theological understandings of the epistles.

Prerequisites: NT 500 or 501 and NT 525 or 530.

Objectives: By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Discuss knowledgeably the content of James, 1 and 2 Peter, and Jude;
- Identify particular exegetical issues in the epistles;
- Evaluate literary and socio-historical approaches to the text;
- Utilize literary and socio-historical approaches to the text;
- Identify and discuss key theological themes in the epistles.

Course Requirements and Reading:

- Class preparation, attendance, and participation (15%): Each student should prepare for each class by (1) carefully reading the assigned texts, (2) making their own notes on the text, and (3) comparing their observations with those made in one of the required commentaries below. The attendance policy is that any more than 6 absences will result in a failing grade.
- Critical book review (15%) of either Hartin’s *A Spirituality of Perfection* or Chester and Martin’s *The Theology of the Letters of James, Peter, and Jude*.
- Annotated chapter outlines of James (3% x 5 = 15%): For each chapter of James, you will make an outline of the chapter.
- Group chapter presentation (25%): Each student will be a member of a group working on one of the chapters from I Peter. As a group, they will be responsible for leading the class discussion on that passage.
- Research Paper or Project (30%): This may be based on a particular aspect of the group presentation done earlier in the semester, or it may be on a topic of your choosing related to the General Epistles.

Required Reading:


Articles on Reserve in the Library
Required to read but not to purchase (pick one for each epistle):

**James**

**I Peter**

**2 Peter & Jude**

**Instructions for Assignments, Due Dates, and Grading Criteria**

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.).

The critical book review should be between 3 and 4 pages (750-1,000 words). Detailed explanations and examples of critical book reviews can be found on the T drive in my folder along with grading criteria for this assignment. The document is called BookReviews.doc.

Annotated chapter outlines:

Chapter outlines should note major points, significant linkages, sub-points, and other items of note. For each notation that you make, you will provide a one or two sentence explanation of how the point you are making relates to the rest of the chapter or section. Does it highlight a significant link or break? Does it lead from one point of discussion to another? Is there a thematic connection or a grammatical connection. In other words, what has led you to note this as a point of interest or significance in your outline? The end of each outline should conclude with several (approximately 2-4) exploratory questions raised by your
observations. You might think of these as questions for further study. Absolute maximum length 2 single spaced typed pages in outline format.

Grading criteria: Two elements will be looked for in these outlines: (1) careful thought and interaction with the text; (2) clarity of presentation and flow of logic. Meeting these two criteria will result in a grade of B or B+. Exceptional clarity, thought, or interaction will result in a higher grade.

Group chapter presentation: the grade will consist of two parts

Part 1 (40%): The portfolio will include the following
1. An outline of the presentation
2. An annotated bibliography (cf. Slade or Chicago), initialized by reader
3. A 100-150 word statement of how the grouped worked together: what happened in your first meeting, how did you organize, how did you decide who did what, etc.
4. A 150-250 word statement describing how you decided what to research, the progress of the research, what studies you made, reading you undertook, and how you revised your research in light of those studies, reading, etc.
5. A 100-150 word statement of how much time was spent by each group member and what was done during that time

Part 2 (60%): The class discussion/presentation
1. Distribute a copy of your outline to the class
2. Distribute your bibliography to the class
3. Distribute any other materials that may assist the discussion/presentation
4. Lead the class in discussing the chapter at hand (plan for approx. 1 hour)
   • This should include a clear presentation of the most important issues in this chapter (as appropriate this may include: key words, themes, structures, literary features, historical information and setting)
   • A demonstration of your familiarity with the questions raised by and the solutions proposed in the scholarly literature
   • An attempt to address questions posed by the class
   • An attempt to engage the class in a careful discussion of the passage

The portfolio grade will take into account the following factors:
1. Reading: have you read important, critical works that address the issues raised by your chapter? The bibliography should have a minimum of 15 sources, of which no more than 3 should be web pages. Web pages must be properly cited using accepted style guides. (35%)
2. Style: have you used correct bibliographic style? (cf. Slade or Chicago) (15%)
3. Annotations: are your annotations clear, informative, and brief (75 words or less)? (25%)
4. Group: did the group take into consideration the strengths of its various members and think about how to use these to the advantage of the whole? Did the group work together well? (10%)
5. Research: how did the research progress? Were revisions made in light of the research undertaken? (10%)
6. Time: each member of the group should not spend in excess of 15 hours on this assignment (5%)

The class discussion/presentation grade will take into account the following:
1. Was the outline presented to the class clear, easy to follow, and demonstrative of the main points of enquiry? (20%)
2. Were you able to demonstrate and explain the most critical points about this passage? Were you able to help the class understand the scholarly opinion on points of interest in this chapter? (35%)
3. Were you able to engage other members of the class in discussion of the text? (25%)
4. Did you try to address, to the best of your ability, questions that the class brought with them from their own reading of the text and commentaries? (20%)

The achievement of these criteria shall be a “B.” A grade higher than “B” will be evidence of an impressive engagement of the material, an independence of thought, and/or the creativity of the reflection/presentation/discussion. This will be particularly true in how the material is presented in class and in the manner in which the discussion is directed.

The Research Paper or Project: If you would like to turn in a project in some other form besides that of a paper, please talk to me about what you would like to do and how we can go about doing that. For details about what is expected for a research paper, please see the document in my folder on the T drive.

Course Schedule

Sept 5     Introduction to Exegesis
Sept 7     Further Introduction to Exegesis
           Required: Hartin, pp. 1-56
Sept 12    Socio-Historical and Literary Approaches to the General Epistles & Jude
           Required: Hartin, pp. 57-127
           Recommended: Neyrey’s Introduction pp. 1-20
Sept 14    A Theological Exploration of Jude
           Required: Chester & Martin, pp. 65-86
Sept 19    Introduction to James
           Required: Hartin, pp. 129-169
Sept 21    James 1
           Required: Commentary
           Due: Outline 1
Sept 26     James 2
    Required: Commentary
    Due: Outline 2

Sept 28     James 3
    Required: Commentary
    Due: Outline 3

Oct 3       James 4
    Required: Commentary
    Due: Outline 4

Oct 5       James 5
    Required: Commentary
    Due: Outline 5

Oct 10      The Theology of James
    Required: Chester & Martin, pp. 3-60

Oct 12      The Theology of James

Oct 17      1 Peter 1
    Required: Commentary

Oct 19      1 Peter 2
    Required: Commentary

Oct 24      1 Peter 3
    Required: Commentary

Oct 26      1 Peter 4
    Required: Commentary

Oct 31      1 Peter 5
    Required: Commentary

Nov 2       Further Explorations of 1 Peter

Nov 7       The Theology of 1 Peter
    Required: Chester & Martin, pp. 87-133

Nov 9       The Theology of 1 Peter

Nov 14      2 Peter 1
    Required: Commentary

Nov 16      2 Peter 2
    Required: Commentary
    Due: Critical Book Review

Nov 20-24   — Reading Week
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Material</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nov 28</td>
<td>2 Peter 3</td>
<td>Required: Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nov 30</td>
<td>The Theology of 2 Peter</td>
<td>Required: Chester &amp; Martin, pp. 134-163</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 5</td>
<td>The Theology of 2 Peter</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dec 7</td>
<td>Directions for Further Study of the General Epistles</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research Paper or Project is due in my office by Wednesday, December 13th at 5pm