BS 502 Introduction to Biblical Studies

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Recommended Citation
BS 502 Introduction to Biblical Studies  3 hours credit  Joseph R. Dongell, Instructor
Prerequisite: BS 501; Enrollment Limit: 32  Office Location: BC 337
Spring, 2005  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;
• 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
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..............................................................Project A Due

Week 3 Tuesday Feb 22
   Thursday Feb 24.......... Test I 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]

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 it. 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 it. 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