

1-1-2006

## BS 502 Introduction to Biblical Studies

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### Recommended Citation

Dongell, Joseph R., "BS 502 Introduction to Biblical Studies" (2006). *Syllabi*. Book 278.  
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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, 2007

Joseph R. Dongell, Instructor

Office Location: BC 337

Office Hours: Tues., Wed., Th.: 1:30-2:30

### **I. 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.

### **II. Course Objectives**

- A) 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.
- B) The student will understand salient features of the historical and social backgrounds pertinent to effective interpretation of the various portions of the New Testament.
- C) 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.
- D) 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.
- E) 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.
- F) 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.

### **III. Course Texts**

- A) The Bible [in at least three different modern English versions]
- B) Bauer, David R. An Annotated Guide To Biblical Resources for Ministry.
- C) de Silva, David A. An Introduction to the New Testament: Contents, Methods & Ministry Formation. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004.

#### **IV. Reading Assignments** [All in DeSilva]

- A) For **Test I** due to be turned in on **October 3**:  
•pp. 29-35; 37-55; 73-90; 100-107.
- B) For **Test II** due to be turned in on **October 31**:  
•pp. 111-144; 145-148; 174-179; 300-306.
- C) For **Test III** due to be turned in on **December 11**:  
•pp. 527-638; omitting: 531-34; 540-41; 572-85; 607; 612; 629-631.

#### **V. Course Requirements and Grading**

- A) Three Tests: Each will cover all features of class time and collateral reading for the weeks it covers. Each test 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.
- B) Two Projects: Students will complete two 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. [A late project will suffer a full grade letter reduction (e.g. from A- to B-).]
- C) 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 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.
  - Students will be expected to work collegially in their small groups, speaking truthfully and kindly with each other.

#### **Grade Calculations**

- The final grade will be calculated from the average of 6 grades earned.
- The 6 grades will consist of: 3 tests; 2 projects; 1 class-participation grade.
- The class participation grade will be determined by each student filling out a grading rubric for the various dimensions of class participation.
- The letter grades within this course will be averaged with the numerical test scores by converting the letter scores into the numerical values below:  
A 97; A- 92; B+ 88; B 84.5; B- 81; C+ 78; C 74.5; C- 71; D+ 68; D 64.5; D- 61; F 50 (if an assignment is completed, but at a failing quality); F 0 (nothing submitted).
- The final numerical average will be assigned a final letter grade according to these values:  
A 100-95; A- 94-90; B+ 89-87; B 86-83; B- 82-80; C+79-77; C 76-73; C- 72-70; D+69-67; D 66-63; D- 62-60; F 59-0

## **VI. Course Schedule**

Week 1 Feb. 7, 9

Week 2 Feb. 14, 16

Week 3 Feb. 21, 23

Week 4 Feb. 28, March 2

Week 5 March 7, 9

Week 6 March 14, 16

•**Test I distributed on Friday the 16th**

Week 7 March 21, 23 [No class March 23; Professor will be absent.]

•**Test I collected in class on Wed. the 21st**

Week 8 March 28, 30

•**Project A Due on Friday the 30th**

Week 9 April 4, 6 [No classes this week. Spring Break]

Week 10 April 11, 13

Week 11 April 18, 20

•**Test II distributed on Friday the 20th**

Week 12 April 25, 27

•**Test II collected on Wed. the 25th**

Week 13 May 2, 4

Week 14 May 9, 11

•**Project B due on Friday the 11<sup>th</sup>**

•**Test III distributed on Friday the 11th**

Week 15 May 14 through 17: Exam Week

•**Test III due to be turned in to Faculty Secretary Harriet Cook by Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM.**

### **Test Coverages:**

#### **Test I**

•All class lecture material

•DeSilva: pp. 29-110 Historical Backgrounds  
pp. 395-400 Narrative Criticism  
pp. 438-444 Sociological Criticism

#### **Test II**

•All class lecture material

•DeSilva: pp. 298-390 Luke-Acts  
pp. 300-307 Textual Criticism  
pp. 337-340 Interpreting Parables

#### **Test III**

•All class lecture material

•DeSilva: pp. 555-597 I & II Corinthians  
pp. 508-510 Rhetorical Ethos  
pp. 757-770 Feminist Hermeneutics



# Class Participation Grading Rubric

Each student begins with the score of 100, which should reflect (in principle) excellent class participation. Such excellence will involve full involvement in all class sessions (attendance), promptness in attendance, positive small group participation, and compilation of a usable and organized notebook.

From the initial score of 100, subtractions will be made according to the following factors:

**I. Un-excused Absences:** Excused absences are those caused by sickness, serious family emergency, death in the family, or required meeting with ordaining boards. All other absences, including those related to ministry responsibilities or other class assignments, are generally not excusable.

[5 points subtracted for each unexcused absence] \_\_\_\_\_

**II. Tardiness** constitutes not being present and “ready to start” when the class period officially begins. This is not a judgment call based on when one feels the class business really begins but rather is measured by the official (clock) starting time of the class.

[2 points subtracted for the first tardiness; 3 points for each additional tardiness] \_\_\_\_\_

**III. Less-than-ideal Group Participation:**

- weakness in encouraging other group members with a positive and open attitude toward learning
- weakness in entrusting one’s best thoughts, insights, and ideas to others
- weakness in listening to and valuing the contributions and ideas of others
- weakness in expressing disagreement without becoming hostile or demeaning
- weakness in the quality and depth of the content of one’s contribution to the group
- weakness in receiving comments of disagreement without becoming defensive or hostile
- weakness in valuing communal reflection as a necessary component of healthy Christian living
- weakness in making room for the contributions of others in the group

[Up to 20 points subtracted according to the student’s own self-evaluation] \_\_\_\_\_

**IV. Less-than-ideal Notebook Compilation:**

- lack of calendar dates marking each class period
- weakness in neatness or organization
- weakness in completeness

[Up to 20 points subtracted according to the judgment of the student]

(note: two pages of notetaking need to be Xeroxed and attached to this grade sheet to illustrate the student’s notebook when handed in at the exam period.) \_\_\_\_\_

**V. Total Number of Points Subtracted** (add I through IV above) \_\_\_\_\_

**VI. Final Numerical Score for Class Participation** (subtract V from 100) \_\_\_\_\_

Please  
**Staple**  
Here

Student Name \_\_\_\_\_

Project # \_\_\_\_\_

Time Invested \_\_\_\_\_

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

Yes \_\_\_\_\_

No \_\_\_\_\_

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

Date actually turned in: \_\_\_\_\_

Professor's signature \_\_\_\_\_

<b>BS 502 Project Cover Sheet for Dr. Dongell</b>
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