

Course Syllabus
KNB1501HS – Understanding the New Testament
Knox College
Winter 2020

Instructor Information

Instructor: Bradley McLean, PhD, Full Professor
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Course Identification

Course Number: KNB1501HS
Course Name: Understanding the New Testament
Times: Tuesdays, 9:10 – 11:00 pm

Course Description

This course introduces students to the content of the texts of the New Testament, with emphasis on understanding them in their original socio-cultural and literary contexts.

Course Resources

Required Course Text

- Ehrman, Bart D. *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*. Sixth Edition. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Course Learning Outcomes

Students successfully completing this course will be able to demonstrate the following learning outcomes.

OUTCOMES IN RESPECT OF GENERAL ACADEMIC SKILLS

1. Discuss the various theologies reflected in individual texts of early Christian writings;
2. Describe various research and interpretive methods used in biblical studies to interpret NT texts;
3. Discuss interactions between the historical contexts and the literature and diverse theology of early Christian writings;

4. Describe the ancient cultural contexts in which early Christian texts emerged and the interactions between the ancient cultural contexts and the literature and theology of individual texts.

COMPETENCIES IN RESPECT OF THE UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONTENT OF THEOLOGICAL DISCIPLINES

1. Demonstrate the ability to read, gather and select information from the assigned readings appropriate to task;
2. Demonstrate the ability and willingness to learn and understand one's culture, and culture of people different from oneself.
3. Demonstrate ethical behaviour by taking responsibility for the expectations of the course and being willing to participate in class discussions.
4. Demonstrate the willingness to assess one's own learning.

Evaluation

Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in three areas.

(1) Weekly quizzes (40%)

Each week (beginning on January 15) you will write an quiz in class. Each quiz will test your knowledge of the *basic facts and key terms* explained in the *assigned readings* for that week. Students who do not write the quiz during this time interval will not be permitted to write the test at another time or day. Students who miss a quiz be given a grade of *zero (0)*, unless *prior* arrangements have been made with the instructor. Failed quizzes *cannot* be written a second time.

(2) Class participation (20%)

You should read the assigned material carefully before coming to class. Be ready to explain your ideas, and listen and respond to the ideas of others. Active participation requires that each student be ready to articulate and support his or her own ideas and to respectfully engage the ideas of others. Your participation grade for will reflect the extent to which you make relevant, informed, thoughtful and clear contributions to the discussions.

(3) Final Exam (40%)

The final exam will cover material in chapters 1-30 of the textbook. Two weeks before the final exam, an exam preparation sheet will be made available to all students.

Course Schedule

Unit 1

7 January

Context of the New Testament

- Ehrman, chaps. 1-2 (pp. 4-40)
- *Key Terms*: pp. 18, 32

Unit 2

14 January

Graeco-Roman World and the Jewish World of Jesus

- Ehrman, chaps. 3-4 (pp. 41-81)
- *Key Terms*: pp. 59-80
- Quiz 1

Unit 3

21 January

Oral Traditions, Christian Gospels, Gospel of Mark

- Ehrman, chaps. 5-7 (pp. 82-119)
- *Key Terms*: pp. 94, 102, 119
- Quiz 2

Unit 4

28 January

Source Problem, Gospel of Matthew

- Ehrman, chaps. 8-9 (pp. 120-148)
- *Key Terms*: pp. 127, 148
- Quiz 3

Unit 5

4 February

Gospel of Luke and Gospel of John

- Ehrman, chaps. 10-11 (pp. 149-194)
- *Key Terms*: pp. 168, 191
- Quiz 4

Unit 6

11 February

Johannine epistles, Historical Jesus

Ehrman, chaps. 12-15 (pp. 195-256)

- *Key Terms*: pp. 212, 233, 250, 256
- Quiz 5

[18 Feb. – Reading Week]

Unit 7

25 Feb.

Jesus in Context / Jesus the Apocalyptic Teacher / From Jesus to the Gospels

- Ehrman, chaps. 16-18 (pp. 257-311)
- *Key Terms*: pp. 271, 299, 310
- Quiz 6

Unit 8

3 March

Acts of the Apostles / Paul the Apostle

- Ehrman, chaps. 19-20 (pp. 312, 333)
- *Key Terms*: pp. 333, 351
- Quiz 7

Unit 9

10 March

Paul's Apostolic Mission and Letters

- Ehrman, chaps. 21-23 (pp. 353-400)
- *Key Terms*: pp. 367, 400, 414
- Quiz 8

Unit 10

17 March

James, Thecla, Theudas, Deutero-Pauline letters, Pastoral Epistles, Women

- Ehrman, chaps. 24-26 (pp. 423-473)
- *Key Terms*: pp. 432, 458, 472
- Quiz 9

Unit 11

24 March

Epistle to the Hebrews, Epistle of Barnabas, 1 Peter, Martyrdom of Polycarp, Letters of Ignatius

- Ehrman, chaps. 27-28 (pp. 474-512)
- *Key Terms*: pp. 491, 512

- Quiz 10

Unit 12

31 March

James, Didache, Revelation, 2 Peter, Hermas, Apocalypse of Peter

- Ehrman, chaps. 29-30 (pp. 513-546)
- *Key Terms*: pp. 528, 546
- Quiz 11

Final Exam

April 7

2 hours

Late work (BD). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. [The instructor should stipulate the penalty for late work.] This penalty is not applied to students with medical or compassionate difficulties; students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor. The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course. Students who for exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness) are unable to complete work by this date may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An SDF must be requested from the registrar’s office in the student’s college of registration no later than the last day of classes in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm>) or college grading policy.

Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism,

which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871>). A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document “Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing” published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. *Students should check utoronto email regularly* for messages about the course. Forwarding your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students should be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses.