

Course Syllabus
KNB1501HS
Understanding the New Testament
Knox College
Fall 2021

Instructor Information

Instructor: Bradley H. McLean, PhD, Full Professor
Office Location: Knox College
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Office Hours: by appointment

Course Identification

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

This course is offered using a remote delivery method (Zoom). This format will require a computer with a webcam and microphone as well as access to high speed internet. If you have questions about what remote delivery might mean for you, please feel free to contact the course instructor or the Knox College registrar.

Course Description

This course introduces students to the content of the texts of the New Testament, with emphasis on understanding them within their socio-cultural and literary contexts. We will observe how different Christ groups, at different times, facing different kinds of challenges, negotiated their boundaries, norms and differences in relation to other Jewish groups, within the complexity of Graeco-Roman society.

Course Resources

Required Texts

- A modern translation of the Bible. The NET Bible offers extensive textual notes and is available for use online or as a free download from www.bible.org. The NJPS (Tanakh) is a translation of the Hebrew Bible by the best in Jewish Biblical scholarship. As such, it provides a helpful complement to any of the standard Christian translations

- Ehrman, Bart D. *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*. Seventh Edition. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.

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 particular tasks;
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 (35%)
- (2) Class participation (including group discussions) (35%)
- (3) Final Exam (30%)

Two weeks before the final exam, an exam preparation sheet will be made available to all students.

Course Schedule

Unit 1

14 September

What is the New Testament? / The Original New Testament

- Ehrman, chapters 1-2
- *Key Terms*: pp. 17, 31
- Online discussion

Unit 2

21 September

Graeco-Roman and Jewish World of Jesus

- Ehrman, chapters 3-4
- *Key Terms*: pp. 59, 80
- Online discussion
- Quiz 1 (Ehrman chapters 1-4)

Unit 3

28 September

Oral Traditions to Written Gospels / Jesus, Suffering Son of God: Gospel of Mark

- Ehrman, chapters 5-6
- *Key Terms*: pp. 99, 119
- Online discussion
- Quiz 2 (Ehrman chapters 5-6)

Unit 4

5 October

The Synoptic Problem and Its Significance for Interpretation

- Ehrman, chap. 7
- *Key Terms*: p. 127
- Online discussion
- Quiz 3 (Ehrman chapter 7)

Unit 5

12 October

Jesus, Jewish Messiah: Gospel of Matthew

- Ehrman, chap. 8
- *Key Terms*: p. 148
- Online discussion
- Quiz 4 (Ehrman chapter 8)

Unit 6

19 October

Jesus, Saviour of the World: Gospel of Luke

- Ehrman, chap. 9
- *Key Terms*: p. 168
- Online discussion
- Quiz 5 (Ehrman chapter 9)

[26 October – Reading Week]

Unit 7

2 November

Jesus, the Man Sent from Heaven: Gospel of John / Gnostic Christ and Johannine Epistles

- Ehrman, chapters 10-11
- *Key Terms*: pp. 191, 215
- Online discussion
- Quiz 6 (Ehrman chapters 10-11)

Unit 8

9 November

Jesus from Different Perspectives / Book of Acts

- Ehrman, chapters 12, 17
- *Key Terms*: pp. 236-7, 335
- Quiz 7 (Ehrman chapters 12, 17)

Unit 9

16 November

Paul the Apostle / Paul's Apostolic Mission (1 Thessalonians)

- Ehrman, chapters 18-19
- *Key Terms*: pp. 355-6, 371
- Online discussion
- Quiz 8 (Ehrman chapter 18-19)

Unit 10

23 November

Crisis in Paul's Churches: 1-2 Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, and Philemon

- Ehrman, chap. 20
- *Key Terms*: p. 404
- Online discussion
- Quiz 9 (Ehrman chapter 20)

Unit 11

30 November

Romans / James, Thecla, Theudas / Deutero-Pauline and Pastoral Epistles

- Ehrman, chapters 21-23
- *Key Terms*: pp. 418, 436
- Online discussion
- Quiz 10 3 (Ehrman chapter 21-23)

Unit 12

7 December

Women in the Church / Christians, Jews & Pagans / Christians and the Cosmos

- Ehrman, chapters 24-28
- *Key Terms*: pp. 477, 495, 519, 536, 554
- Online discussion
- Quiz 11 3 (Ehrman chapters 24-28)

14 December

Final Exam (2 hours)

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.

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.

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.

Grading System

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

90-100	(A+)	Exceptional
85-89	(A)	Outstanding
80-84	(A-)	Excellent
77-79	(B+)	Very Good
73-76	(B)	Good
70-72	(B-)	Acceptable
0-69	(FZ)	Failure

Please see the appropriate handbook for more details about the grading scale and non-numerical grades (e.g. SDF, INC, etc).