

# Introduction to Biblical Studies

## Nazarene Theological Seminary

### Syllabus, BIB 520, January 24 - February 3, 2006

Dennis R. Bratcher, Professor

e-mail: [bratcher@crivoice.org](mailto:bratcher@crivoice.org) - phone: H- 801 497-0946; M- 801 628-0220

web site: <http://www.crivoice.org/NTS/bibintro/bibintro.html>

mirror site: <http://www.cresoucei.org/NTS/bibintro/bibintro.html>

(Students should check the web site for easy access to the online reading and for any changes to the course schedule.)

#### **I. Position in the Curriculum**

“Introduction to Biblical Studies” is a foundational course that assumes completion of BIB 510, “Introduction to the Bible,” or its equivalent. This course is the prerequisite course for BIB 550, “Biblical Hermeneutics.” Together, these three courses along with studies in biblical languages provide the foundation for continuing work in biblical exegesis, biblical theology, and biblical preaching in the NTS curriculum.

#### **II. Purpose of the Course**

This course is an introduction to studies on text, canon, and methods of modern critical study of the Bible. The specific purpose of the course is to provide students with a foundation for careful and informed analysis of the Bible as Scripture of the Church. On a larger scale, the course will also help students identify and evaluate their own presuppositions and assumptions about the Bible while developing tools and methods for biblical interpretation within the context of the church as a diverse and international community of Faith.

#### **III. Rationale for the Course**

The faculty of NTS views the Bible as foundational, informing the whole life of the church. We believe this position to be that of historic Christianity and that which God reveals in the Bible itself. The academic disciplines of biblical studies have been so highly specialized that no one person can master them all. However, the pastor or minister is not only an interpreter and teacher of Scripture in sermons, classes, and pastoral activities; s/he is also the resident theologian of any local church or ministry center. As a result, a pastor or other ministry leader in a church needs to be aware of the existence, strength, and weaknesses of the various methods that are now in common use in biblical studies. Naïve biblicism will serve neither the church nor the Lord of the church in the third millennium, especially as the church becomes an increasingly global community of Faith.

Proper and effective use of the Bible involves both understanding the Scriptures themselves in their own contexts as well as understanding the message of Scripture well enough to bring it to bear in the life of the church, even to translate it into different cultural contexts. That requires knowledge about the Bible as well as knowledge and understanding of its contents. That, in turn, requires learning the tools of biblical study. The pilot must know flying; the physician, medicines and surgery; the attorney, codes and cases, the mechanic, tools and machinery. Likewise the minister must know Scripture, as well as the variety of tools available to aid in the task of interpretation and understanding. Without knowledge of the Bible, the minister is at best a well-meaning quack. Informed by both content and methods of study of Scripture, and enabled by the leadership of the Holy Spirit, the minister can be an ambassador for God, proclaiming the hope of reconciliation with God for the entire fallen human race.

#### **IV. Vision for the Course**

If this course serves its purpose, students will feel comfortable and be equipped to address critical questions that arise in their ministry regarding the study of the Bible and the issues surrounding it. They will be aware of the features of the biblical text that often create tension in the church and sometimes raise troubling questions among those who value Scripture. Yet they will also be aware of the responses posed by the various methods of biblical study, the strengths and weakness of each, and how those methods can address the issues while still maintaining the authority of the biblical text as Scripture for the church. This knowledge of the biblical text and of the methods and objectives of critical biblical study will provide confidence to deal pastorally with people in the church whose views of Scripture range from total skepticism to naïve devotion, as well as provide a foundation for sound biblical exegesis.

## V. Objectives of the Course

This course aims to equip students to be able to:

### General Objectives:

- Acquire expertise in the proper use of critical tools and critical thinking in the interpretation of both Old and New Testaments as the Scripture of the Church.
- Become aware of the vitality of Israel's religious literature and the literature of the early church, especially in relation to their history of development and the process of canonization.
- Become aware of the conflicts and inter-relationships between the perspectives of the biblical material as a historical record to be studied by historical-critical tools and as religious literature to be studied by literary and theological tools.
- Begin to develop a personal theology of the inspiration of Scripture that takes the critical issues seriously but which also allows the entire Bible to be revelatory and authoritative for the Christian community.
- Begin to develop an awareness of the perspectives of a "post-modern" culture and its influence on the reading, interpretation, and role of Scripture in the Church.

### Specific Objectives:

- Articulate the development of the canons of the Old and New Testament, the essential criteria in that development, and the significance of the canon for the Christian Faith.
- Explain the processes of textual criticism, the primary resources for textual analysis of both Old and New Testaments, and the degree of and reasons for confidence in the biblical texts.
- State the principles of source criticism, illustrate how it has functioned in Pentateuchal and Gospel studies, and the strengths and weaknesses of the most common theories.
- Articulate the primary problems in special introduction of the Old Testament prophets and Writings and the epistolary literature of the New Testament; summarize the major arguments for the typical solutions.
- Summarize the issues of biblical historiography, the role of archaeology, and the relation between historical and literary methods.
- Describe the development, strengths, and weaknesses of form criticism, redaction criticism, and tradition history as practiced in both Old and New Testaments.
- Summarize the thrust of canonical criticism and the contributions of the major practitioners
- Describe the primary elements in contemporary literary criticisms such as narrative, rhetorical, and reader response criticisms and structuralism.
- Identify the emphasis and trends in sociological, ideological, and culture-specific approaches to biblical issues.

## VI. Cautions

This course will expose students to perspectives on Scripture that they may not have encountered before. That is quite simply because the critical study of Scripture calls for an engagement with the biblical text and its contents that goes beyond merely reading the text, as valuable as that might be in some contexts. This course will ask students to learn the assumptions of methodological tools that may seem contrary to dearly held views about Scripture. However, neither the purpose of this course nor the teaching methods used in it will ever intend to undermine, much less attack, personal faith. The commitment of the professor is to the Bible as the living word of God for the Church. That premise will never in any way be challenged.

Still, declaring that to be true is not the same thing as understanding the *content* of Scripture beyond what can be said *about* it. Faithful ministry requires understanding the methods, the tools, of biblical study that faithful Christians have developed over centuries of study to gain insight into the text, to allow it to become that living and active word of God as we comprehend its great truths. It is no less than pride and self-righteousness that leads one to believe that such a wealth of accumulated resources of the community of Faith can be discarded for personal opinions alone. So, we will ask that students learn and understand those methods of biblical study, even if some may at first seem incompatible with faith that some students have experienced to this point. You will not be asked to abandon your faith; you will be asked to approach these studies with the humility of the student's prayer, one that we all pray as students of Scripture: "Lord, as I study, help me understand."

Students need to consider a special caution in this accelerated modular format. Since some of the issues and methods to be considered involve our personal perspectives on Scripture that may have been long held and dearly cherished, there is no expectation that they will all be embraced unquestioningly in the span of two weeks. *And they should not be!* Some of these issues require serious reflection and integration with other perspectives. Some will require the

actual practice of the methods and examinations of the assumptions that lie behind them in the context of ongoing biblical study. Some will need to be verified in the crucible of experience in the actual practice of exegesis, hermeneutics, and eventually in ministry in the church. That cannot possibly happen within the span of this course. There will need to be time to process all the information and reflect on its implications.

So, we do not ask that students “believe in” any of these methods. However, we do ask that students strive to understand the issues raised and the methods presented. Then give yourself permission to reflect on the issues within the context of other courses in the program and in the practice of biblical study in the coming months, all within the framework of the prayer above. Some methods may prove helpful to you. Some may not. But all should be considered as valid tools in the work of the Kingdom whether you happen to make use of any particular one or not.

## VII. Required Texts

Steven McKenzie and Stephen, eds., *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and Their Application*, 2nd ed., Westminster/John Knox, 1999.

Raymond Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*, Anchor Bible Reference Library, Doubleday, 1997.

Steven McKenzie and M. Patrick Graham, eds., *The Hebrew Bible Today: An Introduction to Critical Issues*, Westminster/John Knox, 1998.

**A note on the texts:** Since students will be reading these books before the beginning of the course, you should be aware of the differences between the three texts. These texts were selected because they present different approaches to the issues dealt with in this course. McKenzie/Haynes focuses almost exclusively on the critical methods of Old Testament study, and how each might be used in addressing the issues of the text and biblical interpretation in either Testament. McKenzie/Graham contains a collection of essays from a range of Old Testament scholars that deal with the critical interpretative issues raised by larger blocks of Old Testament material, and how those issues affect interpretation. Brown focuses on the New Testament text in smaller units, complete with a summary of specific content, and then deals with the critical issues as they arise out of the text from his own perspective and methods. Each approach is valuable and useful, and does not exclude the others. They are just different ways of talking about Biblical Introduction. For an Old Testament perspective similar to Brown, see Brevard Childs, *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*, Fortress, 1979; for a New Testament approach more similar to McKenzie/Graham, see Joel B. Green, ed., *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*, Eerdmans, 1995.

The lectures of this course will tend to examine the Old Testament more from the perspective of the content that gives rise to critical and interpretation issues (Brown), while the New Testament will be examined more in terms of the critical methods of interpretation (McKenzie/Graham), although finally, the approaches are not as different as they might first appear.

## VIII. Plan of the Course and Reading Schedule

It should be noted that this is a working schedule. Some topics may take longer than others, depending on the questions raised and class discussions. The goal is not to cover every aspect of biblical studies in class. Rather, the lectures are intended to raise significant issues involved in the critical study of Scripture and demonstrate how various methodologies can be used to address those issues. That is why reading is an indispensable element of this course. Class discussions are intended to provide the context in which students can process their prior reading and reflection, and are an integral part of the course. *However, because of the time constraints of an accelerated format, students are strongly urged to spend some time outside of class in small groups discussing and reflecting on the issues in order to bring thoughtful and already formulated questions to the class.*

The following reading schedule covers the texts and some supplemental reading. The Required Reading is just that, **required** for the course. The supplemental reading is *strongly* encouraged to help flesh out the ideas and methods discussed in class. The Additional Reading may be done in areas of interest to students. Students should have the required material read *before* the day listed since the reading will be assumed in class lectures and discussions. **However, in most cases, the great majority of the required reading for the entire course should be done before the class begins.** A brief bibliography of helpful sources is attached. It is not intended to be exhaustive or comprehensive. Much more extensive bibliographies can be found in most OT and NT Introduction books. If you do not have Internet access, the articles on the web site can be provided in hard copy or via e-mail by request. The following books may prove helpful in defining terms with which you may not be familiar:

Roland and R. Kendall Soulen, *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, 3rd ed., John Knox, 2001.

Nicholas Turner, *Handbook for Biblical Studies*, Westminster, 1982.

- **January 24: Critical Methods and the Bible; The Idea of Canon**

The necessity of critical thinking in the interpretation of the Bible; the rise of modern critical investigation of the Bible noting important persons and the assumptions they used, as well as how various methods are applied to the interpretation of biblical materials; the development of the Christian canon and its implications for biblical study.

**Required:** McKenzie/Haynes, 5-12; Brown, 3-47, 754-755, 759, 769-770; Bratcher, “Devotional and Exegetical Reading of Scripture” (<http://www.crivoice.org/reading.html>); Bratcher, “The Problem with ‘Plain Sense’ Reading of Scripture” (<http://www.crivoice.org/plainsense.html>); Bratcher, “Biblical Evidence Beyond Doctrine” (<http://www.crivoice.org/beyonddoctrine.html>); Bratcher, “The Development of the Bible” (<http://www.crivoice.org/bibledate.html>)

**Recommended:** Bratcher, “Ten Tips for Writing Student Academic Papers” (<http://www.crivoice.org/NTS/10tips.html>).

**Supplemental:** Brueggemann, *et al.*, *Struggling with Scripture*, 1-69; Childs, *OT*, 30-45, 62-68;

**Additional NT:** Johnson, *Writings*, 530-548; Willi Marxsen, *The New Testament as the Church’s Book*, Fortress, 1972, 1-154; David C. Meade, *Pseudonymity and Canon*, Eerdmans, 1986, 1-16, 103-218; Eldon Epp, *New Testament*, 201-230

**Web:** Bratcher, “The Canons of the Hebrew Bible” (<http://www.crivoice.org/canonot.html>)

**The Nature of Scripture:** Paul Achtemeier, *The Inspiration of Scripture*, 9-165, Dewey Beegle, *Scripture, Tradition and Infallibility*, Pryor Pettengill, 1963; Claude Geffré, *The Risk of Interpretation*, Paulist, 1987, 11-51; Stanley Hauerwas, *Unleashing the Scripture: Freeing the Bible from Captivity to America*, Abingdon, 1993; Donald Bloesch, *Holy Scripture: Revelation, Inspiration, and Interpretation*, Intervarsity, 1994; Robert B. Coote and Mary P. Coote, *Power, Politics, and the Making of the Bible: An Introduction*, Augsburg Fortress, 1990.

**Web:** Bratcher, “Notes on Second Timothy 3:16” (<http://www.crivoice.org/2tim3-16.html>); Bratcher, “Revelation and Inspiration of Scripture” (<http://www.crivoice.org/revins.html>)

- **January 25: Text Criticism and Translation: The Search for the Best Words**

The process of the transmission of the text of the OT and New Testament, the problems of variant readings and corruptions, the mechanics of copying and translation, and the various versions of the OT and NT; the grammatical-historical method; the various theories of inerrancy and how they impact biblical studies will be briefly considered.

**Required:** McKenzie/Haynes, 17-32; Brown, 48-54; Bratcher, “Sacred Words or Words about the Sacred? A Basic Introduction to the Issues of Text Criticism” (<http://www.crivoice.org/textcriticism.html>)

**Supplemental:** Childs, *OT*, 88-106

**Additional OT:** Sellin-Fohrer, 489-515; D. Barthélemy, “Text, Hebrew, History of,” *The Interpreters Dictionary of the Bible Supplement*, 886-891; J.A. Thompson, “Textual Criticism, OT,” *IDBS*, 878-884.

**Additional NT:** Epp, 75-106; Conzelmann, 17-26.

**Web:** Bratcher, “‘Lucifer’ in Isaiah 14:12-17: Translation and Ideology” (<http://www.crivoice.org/lucifer.html>); Bratcher, “Psalm 139:16 and Predestination: Text Criticism and Interpretation” (<http://www.crivoice.org/psa139.html>); The “Appearance” of Evil: Mistranslation in 1 Thessalonians 5:22 (<http://www.crivoice.org/appearance.html>); Isaiah 7:14: Translation Issues (<http://www.crivoice.org/isa7-14.html>); Bratcher, “The Modern Inerrancy Debate” (<http://www.crivoice.org/inerrant.html>)

- **January 26: Source Criticism: Documents and Tradition**

The various documentary and source theories used to address the diversity of biblical material, especially in the Pentateuch and the Gospels, including the features of the biblical text that gave rise to the method and the role of oral tradition; the concept of dynamic tradition in the Pentateuch, the Synoptic problem, and the arguments for a Q-source behind the Gospels.

**Required:** McKenzie/Haynes, 35-53; McKenzie/Graham, 3-49; Brown, 99-122, 203-208, 262-267, 496-498, 511-515, 541-544, 548-551; Bratcher, “JEDP: Sources in the Pentateuch;”

(<http://www.crivoice.org/jedp.html>); Bratcher, “The Synoptic Problem.” (<http://www.crivoice.org/synoptic.html>)

**Supplemental:** Childs, *OT*, 112-124, 145-150, 316-336

**Additional NT:** Bo Reicke, *The Roots of the Synoptic Gospels*, Fortress, 1986, 1-67, 150-189; Luke Johnson, *The Writings of the New Testament*, Fortress, 1986, 144-238; Guthrie, 121-187; Epp, 245-262; Conzelmann, 214-244.

**Web:** Bratcher, “The Authorship and Unity of Isaiah: A Needless Battle” (<http://www.crivoice.org/isaiahunity.html>); Bratcher, “The Gospel of Thomas;” (<http://www.crivoice.org/thomas.html>); Jirair Tashjian, “A Proposed Reconstruction of ‘Q’” (<http://www.crivoice.org/Q.html>)

### January 27: Historical Criticism: Historical and Cultural Context

The general issues and assumptions of historical research affecting issues extrinsic to the biblical text, including the assumptions of modern historiography, the value and limits of archaeology, the impact of recent historical research on biblical interpretation, and the history of religions approach; the use of cultural and religious context in biblical studies, especially in the Old Testament struggle with Ba‘al worship as well as the cultural world of the New Testament.

**Required:** Brown, 55-93; 691-693, 831-840; Bratcher, “Speaking the Language of Canaan” (<http://www.crivoice.org/langcaan.html>); Charles Isbell, “‘History’ and ‘Writing’” ([http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/Isbell\\_history.htm](http://www.bibleinterp.com/articles/Isbell_history.htm))

**Additional OT:** J. Maxwell Miller, “Israelite History,” in Knight, 1-23; William Dever, “Syro-Palestinian and Biblical Archaeology,” in Knight, 31-67; James A. Sanders, *God Has A Story Too*, Fortress Press, 1979, 1-26, 132-140; J. J. M. Roberts, “The Ancient Near Eastern Environment,” in Knight, 75-96

**Web:** Bratcher, “Sons of God and Giants: Cultural and Historical Context in Genesis 6:1-4” (<http://www.crivoice.org/giants.html>); Bratcher, “Baal Worship in the Old Testament” (<http://www.crivoice.org/baal.html>); Bratcher, “The Time of the Crucifixion: Chronological Problems in the Gospels” (<http://www.crivoice.org/crucifixiontime.htm>); Douglas Ward, “The Third Heaven” (<http://www.crivoice.org/thirdheaven.html>)

<http://www.crivoice.org/crucifixiontime.html>

### • January 30: Historical Criticism: Intrinsic Issues

Historical methods applied to specific issues intrinsic to the biblical text, such as authorship, date, and audience of books; historical problems in the biblical text, exemplified by issues such as the date of the exodus, historical discrepancies in the Pentateuch, Former Prophets, and Gospels, and the quest for the historical Jesus; a discussion of the problems introduced by conflicting assumptions about the nature of Scripture.

**Required:** Brown, 262-275, 316-327, 362-376, 389-392, 395-405, 422-437, 467-481, 693-701, 725-727, 741-745, 817-829; Bratcher, “Ezekiel and the Oracles Against Tyre” (<http://www.crivoice.org/ezekiel.html>); Bratcher, “Joshua and Judges: History and Theology” (<http://www.crivoice.org/conquest.html>)

**Additional:** Best, “The Literal Meaning of Scripture, The Historical Critical Method and the Interpretation of Scripture,” in *Proceedings of the Irish Biblical Association*, no. 5. Edited by A.D.H. Mayes. Dublin: Irish Biblical Association, 1981, 14-35.

**Web:** Bratcher, “The Date of the Exodus” (<http://www.crivoice.org/exodusdate.html>)

### • January 31: Form Criticism: The Interface Between History and Literature

The rise of form criticism, the literary assumptions on which it is based, and its relation to the other historical disciplines; the differences between Old Testament and New Testament form criticism; the idea of “literary competence” and the evolution of form criticism into both historical (cult-historical) and literary (genre recognition) methods; the use of form criticism in the Psalter and Wisdom traditions, as well as the Gospels and Epistles; as time allows, the genre of apocalyptic will be surveyed.

**Required:** McKenzie/Haynes, 58-85; McKenzie/Graham, 69-169; Brown, 409-419, 489-493, 773-780, Bratcher, “Patterns for Life: Structure, Genre, and Theology in Psalms” (<http://www.crivoice.org/psalmgenre.html>)

**Supplemental:** McKenzie/Graham, 173-198; Childs, *OT*, 207-210, 508-511

**Additional OT:** Rolf Knierim, “Criticism of Literary Features, Form, and Redaction,” in Knight, 123-158; W. Eugene March, “Prophecy,” in *Old Testament Form Criticism*, ed. John Hayes, Trinity University Press, 1977, 141-177; Erhard Gerstenberger, “Psalms,” in *Old Testament Form Criticism*, 179-227; J.L. Crenshaw, “Method in Determining Wisdom Influence upon ‘Historical’ Literature,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 88 (1969), 129-142.

**Additional NT:** Stanley Stowers, *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, Westminster, 1986, 15-57; Kümmel, 247-387; Johnson, 242-406; Epp, 321-338; Conzelmann, 158-213; Bruce Vawter, “Apocalyptic: Its Relation to Prophecy,” *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 22 (1960):33-46.

**Web:** Bratcher, “The Prophetic ‘Call’ Narrative: Commissioning into Service.” (<http://www.crivoice.org/prophetcall.html>)

- **February 1: Redaction and Tradition History: Community Dynamic**

Literary methods that focus on the actual compilation and composition of the biblical text from diverse sources and traditions, including assumptions concerning the dynamic of the community that preserved and compiled the biblical traditions, the features of the biblical text especially in the Former Prophets/Chronicles and the Gospels that provide the basis for redaction studies, and the relationship of redaction studies to source analysis as well as questions of authorship; the tension of the redactor as editor or as author; structural analysis and the idea of macrostructure in the Deuteronomistic History and the Gospels; the concepts of theological trajectory and historical vector as an interpretative tool.

**Required:** McKenzie/Graham, 53-68; McKenzie/Haynes, 90-118; Brown 452-455, 585-588, 592-596, 599-617, 626-630, 662-675

**Supplemental:** Childs, *OT*, 230-238, 306-310, 342-353.

**Additional OT:** Walter Brueggemann, "The Kerygma of the Deuteronomistic Historian," *Interpretation* 22 (1968), 387-402

**Additional NT:** Guthrie, *Introduction*, 336-385.

**Web:** Bratcher, "Abraham's Faith Journey: The Macrostructure of the Abraham Story"

(<http://www.crivoice.org/abraham.html>); Terence Fretheim, "The Deuteronomistic History and Historiography" (<http://www.crivoice.org/pdf/dhistfretheim.pdf>)

- **February 2: Literary and Rhetorical Criticism: Return to the Text Itself**

Methods that move to a concern with the inner workings of the biblical text in terms of literary features and specific techniques of writing or speaking, such as the use of irony, sarcasm, thematic or repeated words or ideas, symbolism and metaphors, literary imagery, structure, and narrative flow; the rhetorical dynamic of the text seen in terms of the persuasive dimension of the literary features of the text, and the responses that those features evoke; the relation of the rhetoric of the text to social and historical contexts; the influence of canonical perspectives and its relation to theological interests.

**Required:** McKenzie/Haynes, 142-178, 201-228; Brown, 796-809, Bratcher, "The 'Fall' - A Second Look: A Literary Analysis of Genesis 2:4-3:24." (<http://www.crivoice.org/gen3.html>)

**Supplemental:** Wenham, Gordon J. *Story as Torah: Reading Old Testament Narrative Ethically*. Baker, 2000, 5-15; Jerome T. Walsh, *I Kings*, Berit Olam, Liturgical Press, 1996, xi-xxi; Childs, *OT*, 72-83.

**Additional OT:** Paul House, "The Rise and Current Status of Literary Criticism of the Old Testament," in House, 3-20; J. Cheryl Exum, "Of Broken Pots, Fluttering Birds, and Visions in the Night: Extended Simile and Poetic Technique in Isaiah," in House, 349-372.

**Additional NT:** Kenneth Gros Louis, "The Jesus Birth Stories," in Gros Louis, 273-284.

**Web:** Bratcher, "The Poured-Out Life: The Kenosis Hymn in Context."

(<http://www.crivoice.org/kenosis.html>)

- **February 3: Structuralism, Semiotics, and Reader Response; Sociological and Advocacy Methods; Final Exam**

Examination of the biblical text in terms of socially constructed systems or structures that define how words convey ideas and meanings, the polar contrasts that provide ranges of meaning, and the cultural conventions that shape how literature is read; the role of the reader as an active participant in the construction of meaning from a text; a brief survey of specific perspectives in biblical analysis, such as the sociological categories of liberation theology, feminist readings, and culture specific interpretation such as reading Scripture from the categories of Confucian philosophy.

**Required:** McKenzie/Haynes, 125-138, 183-196, 230-303

**Additional:** Khiok-khng, Yeo, "Li and Jen (Torah and Spirit) in Romans," in *What Has Jerusalem to do with Beijing? Biblical Interpretation from a Chinese Perspective*, Trinity Press International, 1998, 129-161; Richard Jacobson, "The Structuralists and the Bible," in House, 100-117; Jean Calloud, "A Few Comments on Structural Semiotics: Brief Review of a Method and Some Explanations," in House, 118-142; Gottwald, 3-22.

## IX. Requirements of the Course

1) Because of the accelerated format of the course and the nature of its content, attendance in 100% of every session is imperative. *Lack of participation and/or absence will affect borderline grades.* The professor reserves the right to deduct up to 10% of the course grade for unnecessary (not emergency) absence. **Do not plan other activities of any kind that conflict with attendance in class.**

2) This class will be conducted as a combination lecture and seminar in which the student is expected to participate in and actively contribute to class dialog and discussions. Such participation should reflect knowledge of the issues

under discussion acquired through a *thorough* reading of the texts as well as additional reading from other sources. Familiarity with the assigned reading should also be evident in written assignments and on the final exam. Reading will count for 10% of the course grade. You will be asked how much of the reading you have done. (**A word to the wise:** Given the nature of this course, you will not be able to do well on exams or in the course without doing the required reading).

3) Each class session, *including the first*, students should prepare a reflection paper over the reading done for that day and (after the first day) any issues that might have arisen from the previous day's class. This is not a research project nor a reading report, but a reflective evaluation from the student's own perspective and experience, both academically and spiritually, of the issues being encountered in the course. While in some ways these may reflect personal struggles, care should be taken that the paper itself focuses on the content of the reading and class discussion and does not simply express personal opinion. This may include questions that have arisen that need further study or reflection, questions to be raised in class for discussion, areas of new insight, an *informed* critique of the reading and lectures, or a brief summary of material that you consider especially helpful. There should be some attempt to balance OT and NT material as well as to balance perspectives considered. These papers should be 2-4 pages (**at least 2 pages minimum**), typed, and will be due at the beginning of each class session. (**Hint:** Given the accelerated nature of the course, do not spend a lot of time composing these papers. Take notes as you read before the beginning of class. Then in the context of the course, spend some time reflecting on the readings and class discussions, and write the paper from that reflection. As noted above, a good way to do this is to participate with other students in small group discussions.) These papers will count for 36% of the course grade (4% each x 9 papers). Note that full credit will not be given papers that are less than two pages.

4) **Two** short papers (4-5 pages each, typed, double-spaced, with bibliography) each dealing with a **type of critical problem** encountered in a **specific biblical book**. One paper should be from an Old Testament book and one from a New Testament book. The two papers must be from different categories given below. After choosing a category, then pick one biblical book associated with that category. The paper should include 1) a brief overview of the specific critical problem(s) in the book in terms of the topic listed, 2) ways in which the problem(s) affects the book, 3) a summary of the various proposed "solutions" to the problem(s) and the methods used to address it, and 4) a concluding (one to three paragraph) essay on the implications of the problem(s) and the "solutions" for the Bible as Scripture. These papers will count for 30% of the course grade, 15% each; one paper (either one) is **DUE Friday, January 27** and the other paper is **DUE Thursday, February 2**.

Topics	Books
A. Text/Translation	Habakkuk, Mark
B. History:	Genesis, Ruth, Job
C. Authorship/Tradition:	Jeremiah, Song of Songs, 1-2 Peter
D. Sources:	Psalms, Amos, Philippians
E. Redaction:	1-2 Samuel, Isaiah, Matthew
F. Genre:	Proverbs, Jonah, The Revelation

5) There will be a final exam during the last hour of class on February 3. This will include data, short answer, and essay questions and will include material from the entire course. The basic content of the exam will cover the "Course Objectives" in Section V of the course syllabus. The exam will count for 24% of the course grade. **Note that this in the largest single percentage of the course grade.** The exam will be graded both for specific knowledge of biblical studies issues and the ability to relate that knowledge to interpretative issues in the church.

6) Submitting assignments electronically. For this class, students should hand in hard copies of the assignments. Should it be necessary to submit assignments electronically, please follow the "Guidelines for Submitting Assignments Electronically" (<http://www.crivoice.org/NTS/electronic.html>). This article can also be consulted for formatting guidelines for hardcopy papers.

## X. Evaluation Methods

1) Reading	10%
2) Reflection papers (9 @ 4%)	36%
3) Critical Problems (2 @ 15%)	30%
4) Final Exam	24%

A word about grading: Since this is a graduate course, average work is considered a B. The process of grading will assume that as a rule graduate students will be working at a "B" level. Course work will normally be graded beginning with an 85, a mid-B, as a base score. If the work shows particular insight, discernment, or wider

integrative thinking, points will be added to this base. If issues are not dealt with adequately, the topic is not well understood, or there are other problems in grasping or articulating the material, points will be deducted from this base. Students should ask the professor if there are any questions about the grading.

## XI. Select Bibliography

### General

- Adam, A. K. M., ed. *Postmodern Interpretations of the Bible - A Reader*. Chalice Press, 2001.
- Amit, Yairah. *Reading Biblical Narratives: Literary Criticism and the Bible*, Fortress, 2001.
- Beegle, Dewey, *Scripture, Tradition and Infallibility*, Pryor Pettengill, 1963
- Bloesch, Donald. *Holy Scripture: Revelation, Inspiration, and Interpretation*, Intervarsity, 1994
- Brown, Michael J. *What They Don't Tell You: A Survivor's Guide to Biblical Studies*. Westminster/JK, 2000.
- Brueggemann, Walter, et al. *Struggling with Scripture*, Westminster John Knox, 2002.
- Gros Louis, Kenneth, ed., *Literary Interpretations of Biblical Narratives*, Vol. II, Abingdon, 1982.
- Hauerwas, Stanley, *Unleashing the Scripture: Freeing the Bible from Captivity to America*, Abingdon, 1993
- Khio-khng, Yeo, *What Has Jerusalem to do with Beijing? Biblical Interpretation from a Chinese Perspective*, Trinity Press International, 1998.
- Kille, D. Andrew. *Psychological Biblical Criticism*. Guides to Biblical Scholarship. Fortress, 2001.
- Marshall, I. Howard. *Beyond the Bible: Moving from Scripture to Theology*. Baker, 2004.
- Ryken, Leland, *Words of Delight: A Literary Introduction to the Bible*, Baker, 1987.
- Sheeley, Steven and Robert Nash, *The Bible in English Translation: An Essential Guide*, Abingdon.

### Old Testament

- Beckwith, Roger. *The Old Testament Canon of the New Testament Church*. Eerdmans, 1986.
- Brotzman, Ellis R. *Old Testament Textual Criticism: A Practical Introduction*. Baker, 1994.
- Childs, Brevard S. *Introduction to the Old Testament as Scripture*. Fortress Press, 1979.
- Davies, Philip R. *Scribes and Schools: The Canonization of the Hebrew Scriptures*. Library of Ancient Israel. Westminster/John Knox, 1998.
- Fohrer, Georg. *Introduction to the Old Testament*. Trans. David E. Green. Abingdon, 1968.
- Gottwald, Norman K. *The Hebrew Bible: A Socio-Literary Introduction*. Fortress, 1985.
- Harrison, Roland Kenneth. *Introduction to the Old Testament*. Eerdmans, 1969.
- House, Paul R., ed. *Beyond Form Criticism: Essays in Old Testament Literary Criticism*, Eisenbrauns, 1992.
- Klein, R. W., *Textual Criticism of the Old Testament*, Fortress, 1974.
- Knight, Douglas A. and Tucker, Gene M. eds. *The Hebrew Bible and Its Modern Interpreters*. Fortress, 1985.
- Patrick, Dale. *The Rhetoric of Revelation in the Hebrew Bible*. Overtures to Biblical Theology. Fortress, 1999.
- Rendtorff, Rolf *The Old Testament: An Introduction*. Trans. John Bowden. SCM Press, 1985.
- Sanders, James A. *Torah and Canon*. Fortress Press, 1976.
- Schmidt, Wemer H. *Old Testament Introduction*. Trans. Matthew J. O'Connell. Crossroad, 1984.
- Sellin, Ernest and Georg Fohrer. *Introduction to the Old Testament*, rev. ed., Abingdon, 1978.
- Soggin, J. Alberto. *Introduction to the Old Testament: From Its Origins to the Closing of the Alexandrian Canon*. 3rd ed. Trans. John Bowden. Old Testament Library. Westminster/John Knox Press, 1989.
- Tov, Emmanuel. *Textual Criticism of the Hebrew Bible*, 2nd ed. Fortress, 2001.
- Wenham, Gordon J. *Story as Torah: Reading Old Testament Narrative Ethically*. Baker, 2000.
- Wurthwein, Ernst. *The Text of the Old Testament: An Introduction to the Biblia Hebraica*. Eerdmans, 1979.
- Yee, Gale A. *Judges and Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*, Fortress, 1995.

### New Testament

- Aland, Kurt and Barbara. *The Text of the New Testament: An Introduction to the Critical Editions and to the Theory and Practice of Modern Textual Criticism*. Trans. E. F. Rhodes. 2nd ed., Eerdmans, 1989.
- Beck, Brian E. *Reading the New Testament Today: An Introduction to the New Testament Study*. Lutterworth Press, 2000.
- Black, David Alan and David S. Dockery, eds. *New Testament Criticism and Interpretation*. Zondervan, 1991.
- Brown, Raymond E. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Anchor Bible Reference Library. Doubleday, 1997.
- Burkett, Delbert Royce. *An Introduction to the New Testament and the Origins of Christianity*. New York : Cambridge University Press, 2002
- Carson, D.A., D. J. Moo, and Leon Morris. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. Zondervan, 1992.
- Childs, Brevard S. *The New Testament as Canon: An Introduction*. Fortress, 1985.
- Collins, R.F. *Introduction to the New Testament*. Doubleday, 1983.
- Conzelmann, Hans and Andreas Lindemann, *Interpreting the New Testament*, Hendrickson, 1988.
- Duling, Dennis C. *The New Testament: History, Literature, and Social Context*. Fourth ed. Wadsworth, 2003



- Epp, Eldon, *et al.*, eds. *The New Testament and Its Modern Interpreters*. Fortress, 1989.
- Fuller, Reginald H. *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament*, 2nd ed. Studies in Theology. Duckworth, 1971.
- Green, Joel B. ed. *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*. Eerdmans, 1995.
- Green, Joel B. and Michael Pasquarello III, eds. *Narrative Reading and Narrative Preaching: Reuniting New Testament Interpretation and Proclamation*. Baker, 2003.
- Guthrie, Donald. *New Testament Introduction*. 4th ed. InterVarsity Press, 1990.
- Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Writings of the New Testament*. Revised Edition. Fortress, 2002.
- Koester, Helmut. *Introduction to the New Testament*. 2 vols. rev. ed., Fortress Press, 1994, 1995.
- Metzger, Bruce, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption and Restoration*. 4th ed. Oxford University Press, 2005.
- Patzia, Arthur G. *The Making of the New Testament: Origin, Collection, Text and Canon*, InterVarsity Press, 1995.
- Schweizer, Eduard, *A Theological Introduction to the New Testament*. Trans O. C. Dean. Abingdon, 1991.
- Theissen, Gerd and John Bowden (Trans). *Introduction to the New Testament*. Augsburg Fortress, July 2003.