Course Description

Course Description: Introduction to contemporary Biblical studies including: (1) the fundamentals of the Catholic approach to Sacred Scripture in light of Dei Verbum (including: inspiration, revelation, canon, hermeneutical principles and methods of critical analysis, relationship of the Old and New Testament); (2) a survey of the Old Testament with emphasis on major Old Testament themes (including: covenant, exile, Davidic dynasty, messianic prophecies, and wisdom materials); (3) a survey of the New Testament in its historical setting (including: the development of the Christian community and religion in relation to its Jewish and Hellenistic roots, oral tradition, gospel formation, Gospels, Acts, letters and Apocalypse).

As this course is part of the core curriculum, it is assumed that students come from a wide variety of backgrounds and possess different religious beliefs (or have none at all). No previous knowledge of Christianity is expected, and all points of view will be welcome and respected.

Required Texts:

New Jerusalem Bible-ISBN0-385-14264-1  This must be brought to every class period beginning the second week of class.


Additional readings

If you are interested in a specific area ask me and I will provide you with a reading list on the area.
Tests
There will be two tests during the semester. The first test is worth 30%, the comprehensive final worth 40%. The dates for the tests are:

Test #1-7/13
Final Exam-8/6

Examination copies are considered to be the property of the professor. After being graded, exams will be returned to the student for a period of class discussion. They will then be collected and kept by the professor. The exams will not be returned for future study or review.

Reading & Written Assignment
There is one written assignment. The student is to read the book of Job and the God’s Favorite: A New Comedy by Neil Simon (this can be found in Blackboard or the library). The student is to take both of these texts and write a paper 6-7 pages for 1301, 8-10 pages for 3301 in length, comparing and contrasting the content of both. Are they similar? How? How are the themes different or the same? Do they tell the same story? How do the authors approach the primary theme differently? Due 8/5

Turning in of papers:
A. The term paper must be both emailed and a hard copy must turned in on or before its due date
B. The papers must be emailed to dirk@steffens.com
C. Subject line of the email should be: intoScriptureSummer2015
D. They must be saved in the following format before emailing. Lastname-firstname-summer2015.doc
E. The papers should be in Microsoft Word or PDF format.

Paper Style:
a. Font should be Times New Roman12 point.
b. Margins are to be 1 inch on all sides.
c. Double Spaced
d. stapled on the top left of the paper
e. Page numbers on the bottom right
f. No excessive or block quotes from the reading material. This is to be in your own words.
   a. The Term paper can be quoted, but minimally. No large block quotes.
g. All papers should adhere to Chicago Style for citation and reference.
**Presentations:**
Each student will do 2 in class presentations.
Presentation #1-Each student will choose a Psalm to present to the class. The presentation should focus on the interpretation of the Psalm, its meaning to both Jews and more importantly Christians, does the Psalm have any prophetic qualities? Etc…
Presentation #2-Each student will choose a book from the New Testament, except Matthew, Mark, Luke, John and Revelation. The student is to present the book to the class discussing the meaning of the text. What is the central theme of the book?
The presentations will be graded in 4 categories (worth 25% each)
1. Length-Minimum of 10 minutes
2. Was the presentation clear?
3. Was the presentation well organized
4. Did the presentation describe the text clearly?
**A form will be posted on Blackboard that each student needs to complete and handed into me at the time of the presentation.**

**Students with Disabilities**
Any student who feels that he/she may need academic accommodations in order to meet the requirements of this course—as outlined in the syllabus—due to presence of a disability, should contact the Office of Counseling and Disability Services (C&DS). The following statement was prepared by the C&DS:

Any student with a documented disability needing academic accommodations is requested to speak with Deborah Jones as early as possible. All discussions will remain confidential. Students with disabilities will also need to contact Counseling and Disability Services in Crooker Center. This office can be reached at (713) 525-2169 or 6953.

**Academic Integrity**
Students should be acquainted with the University's "Policy on Academic Dishonesty" found in the Undergraduate Catalog. According to that catalog:

Every offense against academic honesty seriously undermines the teaching-learning process for which the University exists, and such offenses will be dealt with expeditiously according to the following criteria. Academic dishonesty includes but is not limited to:
1. Cheating on an examination or test; for example, by copying from another’s paper or using unauthorized materials before or during the test;
2. Plagiarism, which represents one’s own the work of another, whether published or not, without acknowledging the precise source;
3. Knowing participation in the academic dishonesty of another student, even though one’s own work is not directly affected;
4. Any conduct which reasonable persons in similar circumstances would recognize as dishonest in an academic setting.

The penalty for an incident of academic dishonesty is, at the discretion of the faculty member, either a mark of zero for the work in question or the grade of “F” for the course.

Class Attendance and Extensions

Regular class attendance is necessary for success in the course. Class roll will be checked at each meeting. Attendance and participation is worth 10% of class grade with the following exception: Students who miss more than three lectures, without the consent of the instructor, cannot participate fully, and their grades will be adjusted accordingly. With this being a 1 night a week course, missing one or more classes is missing a significant portion of the semester.

Make-up tests (which are always longer and more difficult) will be given only in the very rare case when doing them on the designated date is absolutely impossible. (A doctor's note or something comparable is in order when a test is missed.) Prior arrangements must be made with the professor.

Grading Summary

Test 1=20%
Final =30%
Presentation #1-10%
Presentation #2-10%
Term Paper = 20%
Attendance and Participation=10%

The following grading scale is used:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scores/Letters</th>
<th>GPA</th>
<th>Scores/Letters</th>
<th>GPA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>100-95</td>
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<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89-87</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>C-</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86-84</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>83-80</td>
<td>2.70</td>
<td>F</td>
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Class Schedule (subject to change).

Week of 7/6-7/9 -
Class Introduction
Inspiration, Canon, revelation, Catholic approach to Sacred Scripture

Week of 7/13-7/16 -
Test 1-7/13
Begin Old Testament survey

Week of 7/20-7/24
Presentation #1
Begin New Testament Survey

Week of 7/27-7/30
Continue New Testament Survey
Movie-Passion of the Christ

Week of 8/3-8/6
8/3-8/4-Presentation #2
8/5-No class, paper due
8/6-Final exam


**Bibliography**

Aquinas, St Thomas. *Summa Theologica.*

Augustine. "On Forgiveness of Sins, and Baptism."


Tavard, George. *The Thousand Faces of the Virgin Mary.*


