

Summer Term 2008 (Th, 5:30-9:30pm)

Oxford Center—Germantown, Tennessee

Web interface, <https://elearn.uu.edu/webct/entryPageIns.dowebct>

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I. Course Description

A survey of the Pauline epistles, the general epistles and Revelation, with more intensive study of selected texts and issues. Included are a survey of basic issues in Pauline theology, issues in interpreting New Testament letters and the hermeneutics of the book of Revelation.

II. Course Educational Objectives

After this course, the student will be able:

- A. To see how the NT letters are connected to the book of Acts
- B. To understand why Acts is the only "intentional sequel" in the NT (while Acts was covered in NT I, a brief review is in order because of its pivotal nature)
- C. To be able logically to think through the New Testament Letters
- D. To learn more about the critical nature of the task of responsible biblical interpretation, including grammatical, historical, contextual, theological, and practical aspects
- E. To determine the provenance of the letters, i.e., delineate factors which were directly responsible for the occasion of each letter
- F. To present legitimate practical applications based on the biblical text for contemporary Christian life and practice

- G. To be able to think through the NT letters and therefore be able to find important passages more quickly
- H. To take the next step in developing a responsible and practical theology of the NT
- I. To understand more clearly that the goal of Bible study, Bible lessons, and sermons is application

To accomplish these goals the student will read all assignments, complete all projects on time, develop a workable philosophical vocabulary, and attend all classes with alacrity.

A Disclaimer: Our course of study this semester will be informed from a decidedly Christian perspective, and your professor will not apologize for his philosophical or theological commitments. However, we will take each subject area of our consideration and engage it critically. Actually, if you want to know the truth, this is the overarching goal of this class: to get **you** to think critically about the issues that we cover. To "think critically" refers to the ability to look at an issue from several angles, to analyze the relative merits or shortcomings of an argument, and to make up your own mind about where you stand on an issue. Remember, as Socrates once said, "The life not tested by criticism is not worth living." (*Apology* 38A)

III. Textbooks for the Course

Required Reading:

Craig Blomberg, *From Pentecost to Patmos* (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2006).

Modern version of the Bible, preferably the Holman Christian Standard Bible, so we can all read the same version.

Additional Reading:

The professor will provide additional resources for further study of the NT material covered during the semester.

IV. Requirements of the Course

A. Attendance Requirement. Class attendance and participation is essential in order to successfully complete this course. Students will be assessed a two (2) point penalty off their final average for each absence over one. Unless extenuating circumstances exist, in no case shall a student who misses three (3) class sessions receive credit for the course.

Further:

- Class absences will be considered in two categories: excused and unexcused.

B. Participation Requirement. The student is expected to participate actively in all classroom activities. Class participation includes active listening during lectures, discussion during question and answer periods, and participation in group activities.

Textbook Reading Assignments. The student is required to complete **all** textbook readings as indicated in the class schedule. Periodic "pop quizzes" will be given to determine whether the student has completed the assigned readings. Each student is expected to read all the biblical text involved in the lesson of the week. It is advisable to read each letter in one sitting in order to gain the proper feel for the correspondence.

New Testament Terms, People, and Places Project. Each student will design 7 objective type quizzes involving the key terms, people, places, and themes found in each chapter. These quizzes are to be designed with the biblical education of the church in mind. One of these is due each week throughout the semester, beginning the second week.

Research Paper. Each student will choose a topic for a research paper from a pertinent passage in Acts or the letters of the New Testament. This paper will be 5-8 pages and is due July 17th. The professor will elaborate more on this during our first meeting.

Late Paper Policy:

Since you know the due dates for your writing assignments very early in the term, there should be no problem turning in your paper on time on the due date.

I will penalize violations of this policy severely. You will be penalized one letter grade for every day past the due date in class.

I am also wise to various excuses for paper delay. I will not accept excuses based upon the travails of family life, strains of church life, relationships, undiagnosed illnesses, disgruntled church members (deacons or pastors), spur-of-the-moment revivals or other unnecessary church-related distractions, or technological failures. In other words, "the computer won't print my file" or "my disk got corrupted" or "Windows ruined my work" or "the WMU is running amok in the church" will not be accepted as legitimate excuses, along with any other ecclesiological diversions.

A word to the wise: print out drafts of your work. In the event that you do have a real computer crisis, your professor will only give exceptions if you can show a recent and substantive draft of your work.

Exceptions will be granted for legitimate cases of family emergency and, of course, bereavement, but no more than two classes will be accepted for such excuses.

A WORD ABOUT PLAGIARISM: PLAGIARISM AND ALL OTHER FORMS OF CHEATING ARE EXPRESSLY FORBIDDEN BY THE UNIVERSITY AND WILL RESULT IN AUTOMATIC FAILURE. (SEE UNION CATALOG)

Examination Requirement:

The final exam may include a combination of matching, multiple choice, fill in the blank, and essay questions. The content of the exams will be taken directly from classroom lectures and your assigned readings.

A make-up exam or quiz will be given only in unusual or extreme circumstances. If you miss an exam, and have not contacted your professor in advance with a valid doctor's excuse, you cannot make up the exam or quiz.

V. Grading the Course

Quizzes	20%
NT Quiz Design Project	20%
Research Paper	20%
Final exam	20%
Attendance, participation, and attitude	20%

Grading for the course will follow the one outlined university catalog.

A	95-100	Excellent
B	85-94	Good
C	75-84	Satisfactory
D	65-74	Poor
F	below 65	Failing

Course Schedule:

- 6.5 Intro to course and review of Acts; Blomberg, 9-82
- 6.12 Chapters 2-4; Paul's life and early correspondence
- 6.19 Chapters 5-6; Corinthians and Romans
- 6.26 Chapters 7-8; Prison and Pastoral Epistles
- 7.3 Chapters 9-10; James and Hebrews
- 7.10 Chapters 11-13; Peter's letters and Jude
- 7.17 Chapters 14-15; Johannine epistles and Revelation
- 7.24 Final exam