

**BOWIE STATE UNIVERSITY  
SYLLABUS**

**Semester: SPRING 2008**

**Department of History & Government**

**Philosophy 208      Introduction to New Testament**

**INSTRUCTOR:**

**OFFICE LOCATION: MLK 0218**

**OFFICE HOURS:**

**E-MAIL:**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This course provides an introduction to the New Testament. Students will examine the historical context in which Christianity arose, the Gospels, the teachings of Jesus, the major letters of Paul, and the book of Revelation. Students will gain an appreciation for the impact that social context, the theological agenda of the editors, and the intended audience of a particular document had on the development of New Testament writings.

**REQUIRED TEXT:**

Harris, Stephen, L. The New Testament: A Student's Introduction. 3<sup>rd</sup>. ed. Mayfield Publishing, Mountain view, CA: 1999.(Book Store)

**SUGGESTED SUPPLEMENTAL READING**

The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version.

Burton H. Throckmorton. Gospel Parallels: A Synopsis of The First Three Gospels, New Fourth Edition.  
Burton H. Throckmorton, Jr. Thomas Nelson Publishers, Nashville, 1979.

**STUDENT OUTCOMES:**

Students will:

1. develop critical writing and essay skills
2. acquire a general understanding of the New Testament as a historical document;
3. develop effective public speaking skills through class participation in group discussion/debate
4. attain an understanding of how Biblical Scholars interpret scriptures using redaction criticism
5. develop the analytical ability to distinguish between statements of fact and faith statements contained in the New Testament writings.
6. attain and understanding of the role of theology in the formulation and interpretation of the New Testament. Competency in the above areas will be demonstrated by attaining a "C" or above according to the grading system outlined in this syllabus.

**SPECIFIC LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Students are expected to demonstrate competency in Introduction to New Testament by:**

1. **identifying the primary themes of the first 3 gospels Mark, Matthew, and Luke in short answer essay;**
2. distinguishing between statements of fact and faith statements in the synoptic gospels by applying redaction criticism to sample biblical texts from gospels parallels in short essay question.

3. **Understanding the contemporary implications for certain social groups when certain Biblical text are interpreted as normative for all people, in all places and all times without reference to redactor's original social context or intent for writing what he/she wrote through participation in group discussion/ debates.**
4. **identifying the various genres of the New Testament on quizzes and exams consisting of multiple choice questions and true or false statements.**
5. Understanding the importance of theology Paul in the New Testament in short essay;
6. attaining an understanding of the teachings of Jesus in short essay on final exam.

**CURRICULUM THEMES:**

**Academic Scholar**

Multicultural and Global Perspectives  
 Personal and Interpersonal Perspective  
 Technological Applications

**Corresponding outcome or Objective**

**outcome 1,2,3 all objectives**  
 outcome 2,3, objectives 3,4  
 outcome 2, objectives 3  
 outcome 3

**TEACHING MODES**

The major teaching mode will be a combination of lecture and in class debates and discussions. This major teaching strategy will be supplemented by

**COURSE REQUIRMENTS**

1. Homework Essay Assignments are graded and therefore mandatory. These are intended to demonstrate that the student has comprehended and retained the information from the required text and class lectures.
2. Term Paper and Oral Report. Students must review one book of the New Testament providing the five elements of good journalism. Students must provide at least the following: who wrote it, why, when, where, and what is the significance for an understanding Christianity? Students must make use of at least (2) authoritative sources (commentaries devoted specifically to the book chosen) other than the Bible. This paper should consist of at least 5 typed pages doubled space with a bibliography. The professor must approve topics. The oral report is the presentation of the written paper.
3. Final Exam. The Final Exam is a comprehensive from the mid-semester period to the time of the final exam it is an assessment of the student's achievement of the learning objectives. This exam must be taken on the date and time indicated in the class schedule.
4. No make up or late work will be accepted without prior permission from the instructor.
5. Instructor reserves the right to modify the organization and grading of this course to adjust for any unforeseen circumstances.

**The Grading System**

Essay/Homework Assignment	20%
Quizzes (2)	25%
Term Paper and oral Report	25%
Final Exam	30%
Total	100%

A=90-100, B=80-89, C=70-79, D=60-69, F=below 60

**ATTENDANCE POLICY:** Attendance is taken only during the first 5 minutes of class. Students who miss class roll are absent. See student handbook for further elaboration on attendance policy.

**FINAL EXAM PLOICY:** This exam must be taken on the date and times listed for class in the published semester schedule.

**PLEGIARISM POLICY:** Plagiarism will result in a zero(F) grade for essay or term paper assignments. Please give appropriate credit to your sources by using references with author, date of publication, and page numbers for direct quotations.

### **English Proficiency Requirements**

After completing ENGL 101 and 102, Composition and Literature I and II, students must take and successfully pass Bowie State University English Proficiency Examination. Transfer students who complete their English composition requirements at another university should take the English Proficiency Examination during their first semester of enrollment at the University.

### **Readings and Study Questions**

Following is a list of readings from the required text: A students Introduction to the New Testament. Study guides will be provided for each reading assignment.

#### **Week One:**

An Introduction to the Course

A Critical Analysis of New Testament

Tools of the Trade: A scholarly Approach to the New Testament

The “Word of God” and the “Human Hand” as it regards the New Testament.

Theology as, Logos about Theos “reasoning or words about God”

**Assignment:** Read Handout by Richard Grigg: Theology as a Way of Thinking and be prepared to discuss in next class.

Read Chapters 1-2

#### **Week Two:**

Theology in the New Testament

The “Old Covenant” and the “New Testament” according to Christians

Read Chapters 5-6

#### **Week Three:**

The Gospels as Portraits of Jesus

The Gospel of Mark and the Messianic Secret

The Gospel of Matthew

Read Chapters 7-8

#### **Week Four:**

The Gospel of Luke

The Gospel of John

Read Chapters 9-10

Mid-Term Exam

#### **Week Five:**

The Continuing Quest for the Historical Jesus

The Acts of the Apostles

Paul the Apostle

Read Chapters 11-13

#### **Week Six:**

Romans

Revelation and The Apocalyptic Tradition

Read Chapters 15 & 19

#### **Week Seven:**

Outside the Canon: Other Early Christian Writings

New Directions in Theology

Read Chapters 20-21  
Oral Report Due  
Draft of Term paper Due

**Week Eight:**

Presentation of Final Paper  
Final Exam

**Selected Bibliography**

Charlesworth, James, H. Jesus within Judaism: New Light from Exciting Archaeological Discoveries. New York: Doubleday, 1988. Conzelmann H. and Lindemann. Interpreting the New Testament: An Introduction to the principles and Methods of N.T. Exegesis. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1988. Crossan, John Dominic. In Parables: The Challenge of the Historical Jesus. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1973. Grigg, Richard. Theology as a Way of Thinking. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1990. Felder, Cain H. Troubling Biblical Waters Race, Class, and Family. New York: Orbis Books, 1989. Harris, Stephen L. The New Testament: A student Introduction. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. California: Mayfield Publishing Company, 1999. Hays, Richard B. The Moral Vision of the New Testament: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics. San Francisco: Harper Collin, 1996. Jensen, Irving L. Jensen's Survey of the New Testament. Chicago: Moody Press, 1977. Jeremias, Joachim. Jerusalem in The Time of Jesus: An Investigation into Economic and Social Conditions during the New Testament Period. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1981. Jeremias, Joachim. The Parables of Jesus. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1972. Koester, Helmut. Introduction to the New Testament, history, Culture & Religion of the Hellenistic Age. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co. 1987. Throckmorton, Burton H. Gospel Parallels: AA Synopsis. Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1979.