An introduction to Acts, the Pauline Epistles, and Later New Testament in the context of contemporary biblical research. This course considers questions of New Testament introduction, the content and message of the New Testament documents, and the application of higher-critical methods to their interpretation.

Course Rational

While the dominant literary type of the Later New Testament is the letter, or epistle, these documents contain a wide range of literary genre, including a history (Acts), letters (Pauline and deutero-Pauline letters, Hebrews, James, 1-2 Peter, 1-3 John and Rev 2-3), an apocalypse (Revelation) and possibly sermons (Hebrews?, James?). To understand these writings, it is important that students understand the following issues:

- What were the conventions of historical writing in the ancient world?
- Is Acts a history, or an apology?
- What are the conventions of letter writing in the 1st century?
- What is the purpose of a letter?
- How do categories of honor/shame affect theology, ethics and ecclesiology in the letters?
- What differentiates Hebrews from the Pauline corpus.
- What are the unique features of the Peterine letters?
- What are the questions of authorship of Colossians, Ephesians, 2 Thesssalonians, 1-2 Peter, Titus, 1-2 Peter, 1-3 John, Jude and Revelation?
- What is an apocalypse?
- In light of its genre, what is the basic message of Revelation, and how are we to read and preach from it in a responsible manner?

In addition to these questions, Pauline research alone has undergone a quantum shift since 1977, when E.P. Sanders published *Paul and Palestinian Judaism*, and initiated what J.D.G. Dunn has described as the “new perspective.” The “new perspective” will be a major focus of this class, where we focus on Paul’s teaching in relation to Second Temple Judaism of the first century.
Course Goals

By the end of this class, students will be able to:

Understand the different literary genres contained in the NT documents from Acts-Revelation.

Articulate the major themes of the primary Pauline Epistles.

Discuss the importance of the “New Perspective on Paul,” and how it influences our understanding of Paul’s letters.

Recognize the differences between Hebrews and James and the Pauline letters.

Articulate the messages of Hebrews and the “Catholic letters” of the New Testament.

Know the definition of an “Apocalypse, and how the Book of Revelation fits into this model.

Texts


wright, n. t. what saint paul really said: was paul of tarsus the real founder of christianity. grand rapids: eerdmans, 1997.

Enabling Activities

Students will be required to attend class and participate in class discussion and group activities. Students will also be required to keep up with reading to be able to participate in class activities and discussions.

In addition, the following will be required:

Class participation and group work (10% of grade). Not more than two absences are allowed, except in special circumstances, such as serious illness.

Book review of N.T. Wright, What Paul Really Said, Due last day of class (20% of grade).
Final exam. Due two weeks after the last day of class. The test will be a take home essay. Students will answer three of five or six questions. The final is due two weeks after the last day of class. (30% of grade)

Exegetical paper. Due three weeks after the last day of class. The student will utilize resources listed in the bibliography to construct the paper. Students are also required to consult and cite at least three (3) critical commentaries and three (3) journal articles for their papers. If students have trouble finding the required number of articles, they must contact the professor, who is also the research librarian, either through email, telephone or in person. The paper (40 % of grade)

The paper will follow Turabian style, and will employ methodologies covered in Hermeneutics. However, the purpose of the paper is not simply to give a commentary, but to argue a point. Student papers are to have the following:

An introduction, concluding with a thesis sentence;

A body discussing where the thesis is proven or disproven;

A demonstrable conclusion arising out of the discussion.

If students are unsure of how to compose a letter, they should look at articles in major journals, such as the Journal of Biblical Literature, New Testament Studies, or Catholic Biblical Quarterly.

While Turabian style is mandatory, for the mechanics of writing, students may also consult Strunk and White’s famous little book Elements of Style.

Ashland Theological Seminary Academic Integrity Policy

Ashland Theological Seminary seeks to model servant leadership derived from biblical standards of honesty and integrity. We desire to encourage, develop, and sustain men and women of character who will exemplify these biblical qualities in their ministry to the church and the world. As members of the seminary community, students are expected to hold themselves to the highest standards of academic, personal, and social integrity. All students, therefore, are expected to abide by the academic integrity standards outlined in the Student Handbook.

Students With Disabilities

For students who have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let the professor know early in the quarter (preferably the first week) so that your learning needs can be appropriately met. In order to receive accommodations, documentation concerning your disability must be on file with Classroom Support Services, 105 Amstutz Hall, Ashland University, 419-289-5953. Please contact them with any questions you may have.
Class Attendance

According to the student handbook, attendance at all class sessions is expected unless the professor has been notified in advance. Any student missing the equivalent of six class hours will be required to do additional work, receive a lower grade or withdraw from the class; this is at the discretion of the professor.

Grading Scale

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
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<td>97-100</td>
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<td>A-</td>
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<td>B+</td>
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Policy on late work, Incompletes and Extensions

Except in extreme circumstances, late work will not be accepted, and incompletes and extensions will not be granted. Students may email their tests and papers to the professor. The reviews will be collected the last day of class. Since students will be discussing the reviews, they will need to bring them with them to class. The reviews will be handed in after class.

Course Schedule

Before the first class, be sure to read to read, at minimum deSilva, pp. 23-144. Because of the abbreviated format, students are encouraged to finish most, if not all the readings before the first class, so they devote themselves to review while the class is being conducted.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>July 23 AM</td>
<td>Opening class.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Acts</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>deSilva pp. 348-90</td>
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<td>Stowers pp. 15-26</td>
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<td>Introduction to Paul</td>
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<td>Introduction to Galatians</td>
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<td>July 24 AM</td>
<td>Galatians, cont’d.</td>
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<td>Thessalonians</td>
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<td>Corinthians pt. 1</td>
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<td>Corinthians pt. 2</td>
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<td>Stowers pp. 91-121</td>
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<td>July 25 PM</td>
<td>Romans</td>
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<td>July 26 AM</td>
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<td>July 27 AM</td>
<td>2 Peter, Jude</td>
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<td>Johannine letters</td>
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<td>July 26 PM</td>
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<td><em>What Paul Really Said</em> Due</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Discussion of Review</td>
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Selected Bibliography

Journals that are acceptable as sources of articles include.

*Biblica*

*Biblical Interpretation*

*Biblical Research*

*Biblical Theology Bulletin*

*Bibliotheca Sacra*

*Biblische Zeitschrift* (Has articles in English as well as French and German)

*Bulletin for Biblical Research*

*Catholic Biblical Quarterly*

*Evangelical Quarterly*

*Expository Times*

*Harvard Theological Review*

*Horizons in Biblical Theology*

*Interpretation*

*Journal for the Study of Judaism*

*Journal for the Study of the New Testament*

*Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha*

*Journal of Bible and Religion*

*Journal of Biblical Research*

*New Testament Studies*

*Novum Testamentum*
Revue Biblique

Semeia

Vox Evangelica

Zeitschrift für die Neutestamentliche Wissenschaft und die Kunde des Urchristentums (articles in French and English as well as German).

Articles may be accessed using either New Testament Abstracts, available in the reference reading room and online, or using Religion Index Databases. The latter is available through OhioLINK via the Ashland University library system. Instructions for use may be found in the “Library Guides” section of my website at www.ashland.edu/~rmorton2 or in paper form at the library.

Dictionaries

Anchor Bible Commentary

Dictionary of New Testament Background

Dictionary of Paul and His Letters

Dictionary of the Later New Testament

Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible

New Interpreter’s Dictionary of the Bible

Acts

Studies


**Paul Studies**


Richardson, Peter and David Granskou, eds. *Anti-Judaism in Early Christianity*. Waterloo, Ont., Canada: Published for the Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion by Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1986-


*Hebrews*

deSilva, David A. *Despising Shame*

______, *Perseverance in Gratitude*

*Peterine Epistles and Jude*

*Johannine Epistles*

Bibliographies


Commentaries


**Studies**


**Revelation**

**Commentary Series**
Students should be selective about commentaries. Some series that can be useful are:

Anchor Bible (with reservations)
Hermeneia
International Critical Commentaries
Interpretation: A biblical commentary for preaching and teaching
New International Greek Testament
New International Commentary on the New Testament
Word Biblical Commentary

**New Testament Theology Series**

Cambridge University Press has published many useful short theological sties under the title: New Testament Theology. This series may be accessed by making a title search in the catalog. Students are highly encouraged to utilize this resource for their papers.