

NT501 Exploring the New Testament | Summer 2020

Dr. Ryan Jackson
trjackson@gordonconwell.edu

Credit Hours: 3

This course occurs completely online with no scheduled classroom time. This course follows a weekly schedule that runs for 14 Weeks from Monday, May 18, through August 24, 2020. A week in this course begins on Tuesday and ends on Monday, with the exception of the first week, which runs from Monday through Monday. You will have required activities due on certain days each week.

Course Information

Office Hours

Your instructor is available for email correspondence. If you have a question about the course, you can contact your instructor via email.

Technical Support

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary offers technical support during regular business hours. If you have a technical issue with your course, please email servicedesk@gordonconwell.edu.

Course Description

Introduction to the field of New Testament studies, highlighting central New Testament themes, issues, events, and persons.

Gordon-Conwell Mission

This course satisfies part of the following institutional learning objective:

- **Article 1: To encourage students to become knowledgeable of God's inerrant Word, competent in its interpretation, proclamation and application in the contemporary world.** Because the teaching of God's Word is indispensable to the well-being and vitality of God's people, the seminary has a fundamental responsibility to encourage in its students a love for Scripture. The seminary is to teach exegetical skills by which they will be able to apply Scripture effectively.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, students will:

1. Know the content of the New Testament—its main figures, events, and themes in the 27 New Testament documents.

2. Appreciate and be able to articulate several key relationships of the New Testament to the Old Testament.
3. Understand the importance of background information and become familiar with resources that illuminate the geographical, historical, and cultural contexts of God's revelation in the New Testament.
4. Recognize literary features of the text when reading and studying Scripture, and be aware of the effect of readers' presuppositions on their understanding of the text.
5. Understand the basic arguments regarding introductory issues (authorship, audience, purpose, date, structure/argument) for the NT documents.
6. Be able to describe the early Church's mission, theological convictions, and moral practices.
7. Reflect on the relevance of the New Testament for certain issues facing the Church today.

Weekly Lessons

Over 14 weeks, you will cover the following topics and lessons:

- Week 1: Introduction to New Testament Study
- Week 2: Introduction to the Synoptic Gospels; Mark
- Week 3: Matthew, Part 1
- Week 4: Matthew, Part 2
- Week 5: Luke
- Week 6: Acts; Thessalonians
- Week 7: Corinthians
- Week 8: Philippians; Galatians
- Week 9: Romans
- Week 10: Colossians; Ephesians; Philemon
- Week 11: Pastoral Epistles; Hebrews
- Week 12: James, Jude, Petrine Epistles
- Week 13: Johannine Epistles; Revelation
- Week 14: John

You can follow this sequence of lessons and their accompanying assignments using the Modules tool.

Required Materials

Before enrolling in this course, you must ensure that you have regular access to the required materials you will use in this course.

Reading

Links to catalog items are provided. E-book editions may be available in GCTS collections, so check the library catalog item to see if electronic resources are available.

- Burge, Gary, Lyn Cohick, and Gene Green. *The New Testament in Antiquity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009. (ISBN# 978-0310244950) 496 pages.
- Fee, Gordon and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2003. (ISBN# 978-0310246046 [select chapters]).
- A Bible. If using an English Bible, either the English Standard Version or the New Revised Standard Version is recommended. Not recommended are the King James or New King James versions. Paraphrases are not allowed (such as The Message or The Living Bible). Either the ESV Study Bible (ISBN# 978-1433530838) or the NIV Archaeological Study Bible: An Illustrated Walk through Biblical History and Culture (ISBN# 978-0310926054) are worth having for the notes.

You may be assigned other articles or selections, which will be available on the course site.

Technology

You will need regular access to the following equipment to complete this course:

- A computer with high-speed internet and capable of downloading files and streaming multimedia presentations
- Microsoft Word or comparable word processor

Required Activities

To demonstrate achievement of course objectives, you will participate in various required activities. You will find detailed descriptions of these activities on your course site, but an overview of these requirements is given below:

Watch Lectures

Unless otherwise noted, you will begin each lesson by watching assigned lectures. These lectures will orient you to lesson content and goals. By the end of the course, you must have watched all the lectures in their entirety. All lectures are listed in the Pages tool.

Read Required Texts

Unless otherwise noted, once you have viewed the lectures, you will read the required texts as assigned. By the end of the course, you must have read all the required texts in their entirety. All readings are listed in the Modules tool.

Contribute to Discussions

Unless otherwise noted, after you have watched the lesson lecture and read the assigned readings, you will contribute to a class discussion. These posts should demonstrate understanding of and critical engagement with lesson material. For each discussion, you will also respond to at least one of your peers. All Discussions are listed in the Discussions tool.

Complete Lesson Activities

Students will complete three assignments in which they interact with the content for a particular Lesson in more depth. Through these activities, students will gain a greater appreciation for and understanding of a careful reading of the text of biblical books in their historical and literary contexts.

Take Lesson Exams

Exploring the New Testament requires students to build an organized knowledge base throughout the term. The knowledge base (content of the New Testament writings themselves: people, places, dates, themes, structure, etc.) will be tested in five objective exams. Each exam will cover portions of the New Testament and particular chapters in your other required texts.

Write a Final Integrative Essay

By the end of the course, you will articulate your own understanding of the larger meaning of the New Testament. The final, integrative essay will give you an opportunity to synthesize the books of the New Testament on the topic of eschatology.

Grading

Your assignments are categorized and weighted for grading as follows

| Course Assignment | % of grade |
|-------------------------|------------|
| Exams | 50% |
| Lesson Activities | 21% |
| Final Integrative Essay | 20% |
| Discussions | 9% |

You must follow the criteria detailed in the Assignment Instructions posted on your course site. Grading will be based on your work's alignment with the performance criteria in the Assignment Instructions.

You must also submit work by the "due by" dates listed in the Course Summary on the Syllabus tool of the course site. Any work submitted after these "due by" dates will be penalized 5 points per day beyond the due date unless you make arrangements with your instructor ahead of time.

Refer to your Student Handbook for point values and grading scale of letter grades.

Course Policies

Instructor Feedback

Your instructor will reply to email within 1-2 business days. He or she will give feedback on assignments within one week of submission and post grades and any additional comments in the course gradebook within two weeks of submission.

Writing Standards and Submitting Written Assignments

Papers must be double-spaced with 1" margins (side margins as well as top and bottom margins of each page), using Times New Roman or Arial 12-point font. Do not exceed page limits. Sources must be properly documented using notes and bibliography. Citations should be professionally formatted, meaning that it should adhere to either Turabian or APA style. Written assignments should be submitted as a Word or PDF file.

ADA accommodations

Gordon-Conwell is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. If you have a special need or disability, please refer to the ADA Accommodations section of your home campus's Student Handbook for information about the accommodation process. Students who have a special need are asked to discuss the provisions of their accommodation with the appropriate office at their home campus as soon as possible.

Violations of Academic Integrity

The seminary considers all breaches of personal and academic integrity to be serious offenses. As such, the seminary has zero tolerance for such behaviors. Cheating involves, but is not limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination. Duplication of course requirements involves the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructor. Plagiarism involves the use of another person's distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one's own instead of giving proper credit to the source (taken from the *Hamilton Student Handbook 2018-2019* - please be sure you understand your campus's most current Academic Integrity Policies).

Discussion Posts

When quoting from or paraphrasing course readings, provide the author's name and page(s) in parentheses. If quoting from other sources, provide appropriate documentation. Similarly, when referring to a specific lecture, identify it using the title of the segment.

Netiquette

Gordon-Conwell does not tolerate disruptive or disrespectful behavior in the online communications in any course. Students should review the netiquette policy in the Student Handbook and this website: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette>.

Seminary Policies

You must be familiar with current seminary policies, which are in place for academic activities. Please refer to the Student Handbook for your home campus to familiarize yourself with policies pertinent to participating in academic activities at the seminary. Policies pertaining to this course would include those on Academic Integrity, Late Work, and Accessibility, among others.