New Testament Survey
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary Charlotte
Spring 2015
Residency (Mandatory): March 26-28
March 26 (9:30-5:30), 27 (9:30-8:30), 28 (9-12)

Instructor: Dr. Rollin Grams
Teaching Assistant: to be arranged
Course Format: Online plus Residency
Additional Course Support: Online Programs Staff
Course Support: Online Programs Staff (onlineprograms@gordonconwell.edu)
Contact Information:
Dr. Grams can be reached at rgrams@gordonconwell.edu. He is also available by phone by appointment.
Gordon-Conwell offers technical support during regular business hours. If you have a technical issue, please email helpdesk@gordonconwell.edu and copy Dr. Grams, Shawn and onlineprograms@gordonconwell.edu. All requests related to the course should be sent to the professor, T.A., and/or the online programs staff.

Course Description
NT 501 surveys 1) the history and culture of the first century that provide the backdrop to biblical events, 2) the Old Testament foundations for the New Testament; 3) some methods for interpreting the biblical text (genre criticism, source and redaction criticisms); 4) the content, persons, and themes of each of the books of the New Testament; 5) some of the theology of the New Testament; and 6) some debated issues of New Testament interpretation among scholars and in the Church today. Both the primary textbook and the lectures use images to take students on a virtual journey of Bible places. The students’ primary focus in the course is mastery of the content of the New Testament.

Gordon-Conwell Mission
This course satisfies part of the following institutional learning objective: to

“demonstrate a strong understanding of both the content of the Bible and the overarching redemptive story from Genesis to Revelation.”

Relation to Curriculum
NT501 is a foundational Bible course in all degree programs, including the online MAR program.
**Pre-Course Reading Requirement**
Students are expected to have read the entire New Testament before beginning this course. In the first Lesson, students will be asked to state the following for continuance in the course:

- I have read the entire syllabus
- I have reviewed the final assignment description
- I have read the entire New Testament within the past six months or am committed to careful and regular reading of the New Testament during this course in order to pass the course

**Course Learning Objectives**
Upon completion of this course, students will:

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. Learn to pay attention to 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. Gain insight into 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.

**Lesson Topics**
The following are a listing of the Lesson topics in this course.

1. Introduction to the New Testament, Second Temple Judaism, the Gospel of Mark, and Study in the Synoptic Gospels
3. The Mission of the People of God to the Nations: Acts
4. The Mission of the People of God to the Nations: 1 and 2 Thessalonians, 1 and 2 Corinthians, and Philippians
5. The Mission of the People of God to the Nations: Galatians, Romans, Colossians, Ephesians, Philemon, 1 and 2 Timothy, and Titus
6. The Sojourn of God’s People among the Nations: Hebrews, James, 1 & 2 Peter, and Jude
7. The Sojourn of God’s People among the Nations: 1, 2, 3 John and Revelation
8. The Revelation of God to His People: the Gospel of John

Required Materials

Fee, Gordon and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*. ISBN# 978-0310246046


Course Requirements
Achievement of the course objectives will be measured through a variety of assignments and activities as described below. The successful completion of these activities will require each student to spend approximately 135 hours devoted to coursework, both in class and out of class. The time spent in the course varies greatly, depending on how well one is already prepared with a knowledge of the New Testament.

I. Content Mastery
To meet the objectives of knowing and understanding the NT, students need to spend a great deal of time reading (particularly reading the New Testament), viewing presentations, and interacting with the content. Content Mastery will be encouraged and measured through the following activities.

Readings
The core content and primary text for this course is the New Testament itself. Five exams will specifically cover the content of much of the New Testament. These are objective exams that mainly test the student’s knowledge of the NT books’ contents.

The Lessons will include other reading and viewing requirements. Reading *The New Testament in Antiquity* will help students understand each book of the Bible by attending to introductory issues (authorship, audience, place, and situation being addressed), purpose, structure, major themes, and some historical background information. Fee and Stuart’s *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* pays particular attention to reading and interpreting different genres. Students are required to read:

- All the New Testament prior to the course (and continue to review during the course) or carefully along with the course schedule as the books are covered
- All of *The New Testament in Antiquity*
- The New Testament chapters in *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* (chs. 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, and 13).

Students will submit a signed log indicating that they have completed the reading
requirements for this course. This is a requirement to pass the course.

**Multimedia Presentations**
The required lectures will be presented through narrated PowerPoint presentations. These presentations will provide visual images combined with commentary that will reinforce the student's reading and support his or her comprehension of the NT. In this course, lectures slightly exceed normal course load while the reading amount has been slightly reduced.

Students will submit a signed log indicating that they have viewed all of the lectures. This is a requirement to pass the course.

**Lesson Activities**
Students will complete three assignments in which they interact with the content for that Lesson. 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.

**Lesson Exams**
New Testament Survey requires students to build a base of knowledge that is progressively organized throughout the term. The base knowledge (content of the New Testament writings, people, places, dates, themes, structure, key verses, etc.) will be tested in five objective exams. Further description of the type of questions in these tests is provided in the test description documents located in the rubrics folder under the resources tab. These exams will be proctored in the student's local community. Students must identify a qualified proctor and location in advance of the exam (see Proctored Exam policy in the Course Policies). **Be sure to complete the registration of a proctor several days before an exam and not at the last moment.**

**II. Content**
Students will not only master the content of the New Testament, but will also build their own understanding of the larger meaning of the NT. The final, integrative essay will provide one way for students to synthesize the books of the New Testament.

**Final Integrative Essay**
Students will be required to submit a final essay that integrates the teaching in the New Testament on the topic of eschatology. The essay is to be between 3,500 and 4,000 words (not under and not over). The introduction should be about 100 words, and the conclusion should be about 150 words. Divide the paper into sections using sub-headings that relate to the topics identified in the description of this essay. No additional references beyond the course lectures, assigned reading and the New Testament are required.

*From the very beginning of this course, begin to take notes for this essay from your reading of the textbooks and the New Testament and from the lectures.* You do not want to repeat this work at the end of the course! Avoid long quotes from Scripture in the paper, since this detracts from the space you need to make your own contribution. For a full
III. Participation

Class participation is an important component in this course. Students will find that articulating what they are learning to others in the course is itself a learning exercise. They will also hear what others are finding interesting or struggling over, and they will be able to interact with each other about these matters. Class participation occurs through forum postings and dialogue (and can also take place in the chat room).

Forums

Students are *required* (1) to respond to the questions posted for each Lesson on the forums and (2) to respond to posts from two other students. When answering the question/s posed for a Lesson, they should:

- Begin the post with bullet points listing their own reflections on the reading, lectures, and New Testament documents for that Lesson
- Demonstrate careful thought and reflection and provide substantive contributions for class discussion
- Engage with and identify Scripture passages and points made in the lectures or reading that are significant for the discussion

Students will receive points for the quality of their answers in the forum.

When responding to forum posts from two other students, students should attend to the following:

- Engage what other students have actually written (staying on the topic and evidence in the post)
- Bring in Scripturally based reflection that also shows learning in the course
- Use polite dialogue (e.g., affirming others, challenging points in a kind way and with evidence)

See the Course Participation Rubric document for more details.

Chat Room (= Office Hours)

Students may interact with the instructor and other students in the chat room.

Please *post* your questions in the appropriate chat room and *send an e-mail* to the professor and course support staff—this will be the quickest way to alert them that there is a question in the chat room. Other students can also see the questions and answers and see what issues
are arising in the course at a given time. The interaction may or may not be live, depending on who is in the chat room at the time.

**Residency**

The course will feature a mandatory three-day residency in Charlotte, North Carolina March 26-28, 2015. It begins at 9:30 am on March 26th. Thoughtful residency participation is worth 5% of the student’s final grade. More information on the content and logistics of the residency will be announced closer to the residency.

**Grading Policy**
The final course grade reflects the following components:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Maximum Points Possible Per Assignment</th>
<th>Total Points Possible</th>
<th>% of Total Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exams (5)</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson Activities (3)</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Integrative Essay</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Forum Postings (9)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading/Lecture Viewing Log</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Pass/Fail for entire course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residency Participation</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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**Course Policies**

**Proctored Exams**
All exams in this course will be proctored. The student will need to identify a suitable proctor and location and submit this information by the second week of the course. Students may refer to the Student Handbook for details about the criteria for a suitable proctor and location, and the process to follow proctored exams.

**Instructor Feedback**
I will attempt to answer questions or messages within 24-48 hours, excluding Sundays. I will attempt to provide feedback on assignments and post grades in the gradebook within two weeks of submission.
Document Formatting and Submission

Formatting preferences and citation style:

Please use the latest version of Turabian as the style guide for the integrative paper. Format the paper with 1” margins, 12 pt Times New Roman font, and use footnotes (rather than endnotes).

File naming convention for assignments:

Papers should be submitted electronically and labeled with first initial and last name followed by assignment name – or – lesson number, module number, the course and semester. Example: jsmithL1M1NT501SU14.

Late Work
Writing assignments will be penalized 5% per day after the due date. Forum posts will be penalized 2 points per day after the due date.

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.

Additional Seminary Policies
For additional seminary policies that may pertain to this course, please refer to the Syllabus Addendum.