NT 611: Exegesis of Matthew
Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Rollin G. Grams
Fall Semester, 2012
Sept. 28-29; Oct. 26-27; Nov. 30-Dec. 1

Friday Chapel: 6:30 – 6:55 pm
Friday Class: 7:00 – 8:10; break; 8:20 – 9:30
Saturday Morning: 8:30 – 9:30; break; 9:40 – 10:40; break; 10:50 – 11:50; lunch
Saturday Afternoon: 1:00 – 2:00; break; 2:10 – 3:10 (dismissal)

Course Description:

This study of Matthew’s Gospel is based on the Greek text. It hones exegetical skills acquired in Interpreting the New Testament, introduces students to study of Jesus and the Synoptic Gospels, and explores the message of Matthew’s Gospel in particular. The course is set up in such a way that students bring to class the knowledge and perspectives that they have already acquired through their own efforts at translation, their reading of textbooks, and their listening to pre-recorded lectures. Classes are then spent in group translation and exegesis of set texts, discussions, and some further lectures. The focus of the course is on exegesis and Matthean theology, although attention is also given to the significance of these for our Christian convictions and practice.

Prerequisites and Relation to the Curriculum:

One year of Greek language study plus the course Interpreting the New Testament (or its equivalent, if transferred by the Registrar from another seminary) are prerequisites for this course. NT611 satisfies the requirement for degrees that stipulate successful completion of an exegesis course in the Gospels. It is particularly designed to engage two of the tasks of theological enquiry: exegesis and Biblical theology. The content of this course will contribute in the following ways to a student’s overall curriculum for his or her degree at Gordon-Conwell:

- Language competency: the course extends a student’s knowledge of Greek and use of it for ministry
- Exegetical competency: the course exercises a student’s exegetical skills
- Biblical literacy: the course offers an in-depth study of Matthew’s Gospel and engages Mark and Luke as well. As Matthew is a Gospel that interprets the events of Jesus’ life with respect to the Old Testament, this course also offers a Christian perspective on Israel and the Old Testament.
Theological competency: the course addresses the heart of any truly Christian theology—the person, message, and work of Jesus Christ—through Matthew’s Gospel. Additional theological issues are also engaged through this course, including: the continuity of the Law, the nature of Christian ethics, the mission of the Church, the Kingdom of heaven, the miraculous ministry of Jesus and his disciples, the critique of religion (1st century Judaism), the politics of Jesus, the nature of discipleship (including Jewish/Christian piety), Jesus'/Matthew’s criticism of ministry understood as leadership, the relation between Israel and the Church, and early Christian eschatology.

Ministerial competency: the course’s main contribution to ministry is in expanding—even challenging!—students’ understanding of Jesus, his message, and his work. The course sets a high standard for a student’s personal devotion to Bible study as essential for the practice of ministry. The theological topics (mentioned above) are significant for the Church today, and students will be able to explore this significance in discussions in class. The exegetical focus of this course also contributes to ministry preparation for those students engaged in expository preaching.

Students not using their Greek in the Spring, 2011, need to sit a Greek Competency Quiz before the end of August, 2012 prior to being admitted to the course. Contact the Registrar’s Office if this qualification is needed.

Work prior to the first class session will be discussed below. NOTE: There is considerable work to complete before the first class session: reading all of Matthew, other reading, translation of set passages (and preparedness for translation in class and a quiz), and consideration of some questions for discussion (see details, below).

Course Objectives and How We Reach Them:

*To become familiar with the scholarly range of views on exegetical and theological issues pertaining to contemporary Matthean studies. This will be acquired through lectures, reading, and a student’s breadth of research for the exegesis paper.  
*To hone skills in the use of exegetical tools and methodologies introduced in Interpreting the New Testament (NT 502). These skills will be in use throughout the course. They will be needed and developed by reading the required texts (particularly Evans’ commentary), translating (and using Wallace), researching primary sources, and applying exegetical methods for the exegesis paper.  
*To use and develop facility in Koine Greek. This will be accomplished through preparation for class and further in-class translation. Reading and using Wallace, particularly for Genitives and Participles, will set the student on a path of gaining more use out of Greek. Facility will also be demonstrated within the exegesis paper.  
*To relate the scholarly interpretation of Matthew to Christian convictions, ministry, the Church, and the Christian life. This will be accomplished mostly through in-class discussion.  
*To experience Biblically centered learning in community and consider its implications for life beyond the Seminary.
Course Textbooks:


Other Useful Resources for this Course:

An exegetical handbook, such as:

A guide to research and writing for New Testament studies, such as:

Other good commentaries on Matthew’s Gospel (there are a number), such as:

Articles in a good Bible dictionary, such as:

A detailed introduction to the Gospels, such as:

A good introduction to the New Testament, such as:

Specialized Resources for New Testament Studies (there are many!), such as:
*A synopsis of the Gospels—best available on BibleWorks, Logos, or Accordance but also in print versions.*

A good New Testament theology, such as:

Over the past twenty or so years, scholarship on Matthew’s Gospel has developed greatly. Attention to works on Matthew since the late 1980’s will be particularly helpful for assignments. (There are exceptions, such as the commentary by W. D. Davies and Dale Allison—don’t rule out all work before the late 1980’s!)

Course Requirements:

1. Attendance:

   The weekend model of instruction assumes full attendance in classes, and exegesis courses assume full participation in class. All weekend sessions should be attended. If 3 or less hours of class have to be missed for a legitimate reason, the student needs to discuss with the instructor ways to make up missed work (usually by extra reading) so as not to receive a reduced letter grade. If a student misses a weekend, the course should be dropped. If a student needs to miss more than 3 hours of class and less than a weekend for a legitimate reason, he or she will likely be assigned an additional research essay and/or book review and need to submit work on the assigned passages for translation. The instructor will determine what exactly is necessary based on the number of hours missed and the type of material missed in class.

2. Greek:

   Passages to prepare for class are listed below (‘Preparation for Each Weekend’). *Note: more Greek translation is required for the second weekend of classes.*

   Every exegesis course at Gordon-Conwell has a ‘language component’ that must be passed in order to pass the entire course.

   Preparing your translations for class:

   *Translate each required passage using the BDAG lexicon, a Greek grammar, and Wallace. You
may use electronic software, but not in class (only your prepared notes and the Greek text).

*Take notes on the Greek vocabulary, grammar, and syntax and any issues in translation.

**Testing your Greek preparation:**

In this course, testing of Greek language skills and preparation will take place through: (1) facility in translation in class and (2) use of Greek in the exegetical paper.

(1) To demonstrate facility in Greek translation in class, students should have worked on their own translation of the passage, written down any meanings of words they do not know, parsed any words that were not obvious to them, and made grammatical/translation notes based on their reading of the textbooks (including the use of Wallace for all (a) Genitives and (b) participles in the passages—you need to learn the syntax of these two areas of Greek grammar from Wallace but are not expected to do more).

Translation in class must be done from the Greek Bible. A grade (pass plus, pass, or fail) will be assigned for this work. That is, no electronic aids such as *BibleWorks* or *Logos* may be used. Students may rely on their notes on the meaning of Greek words, but they are not to read their prepared English translations in class. In this way, facility in translation can be practiced and assessed in class. Students will be asked to comment on their translation (meaning of a word, parsing, grammar, and syntax). The Scripture index for the text by Wallace should be used for this work (look for the verses that you are translating and see what Wallace says)—along with what he says about Genitives and participles) to extend the student’s understanding of syntax.

(2) Use of Greek in the exegetical paper. The standard issues need to be covered in detail but in balance. The following language-related topics may be relevant (depending on the passage): textual criticism, word studies, Greek grammar and syntax, sentence diagramming, and translation issues.

**Grading your in-class translation and use of Greek in this course:**

In-class translation will be pass/fail, but a pass plus could improve a student’s overall grade by a partial grade (e.g., from B to B+ or from B+ to A-), and a fail may similarly reduce a student’s overall grade. *If a student fails the in-class Greek grade, he or she must produce passing work in the exegesis paper in order to pass the course.* The use of Greek in the exegesis paper will be part of the grade for the paper.

3. Exegesis Paper
Students are to write a 3,500 word (+ or – 10%, excluding reference footnotes) exegetical essay worth 60% of the final grade that is due on January 2nd. Passages of roughly 10 verses should be the focus of the paper. Students may choose a particular passage of interest within Matthew 24 – 27 but must not reproduce work in the paper that has been used elsewhere in their seminary studies. A passage translated for class may be used for the exegesis paper.

The paper should be submitted electronically as an e-mail attachment (please, no hard copies) on the 2nd January in Microsoft Word or as a .pdf file, using Greek (and Hebrew) fonts by BibleWorks, Logos, or Accordance for any Greek (or Hebrew) words (go to http://www.bibleworks.com/fonts.html to install these if necessary; also available on computers in the library).

Follow the SBL Student Handbook of Style for the paper: see online at http://library.concordia.ab.ca/services/The%20SBL%20Handbook%20of%20Style.pdf.

Papers should be e-mailed on the date they are due or before. The instructor may grade the paper down if it is late. Any request for an extension in this course should be submitted to the Registrar’s Office before the final weekend of classes, as per the Registrar’s regulations.

The exegesis paper should include a discussion of all the exegetical issues. The following structure is meant as a guide for the paper rather than a requirement:

Introduction
Establishing the Text (your textual criticism; translation; discussion of English [and other] translations, lexical issues, grammar, and syntax; structure of the passage)
Discussion of Major Issues (in any sensible order, some major issues may be addressed in the verse by verse section)
  * In-the-Text Issues (such as place of the passage in Matthew’s structure; Synoptic comparisons and redaction; literary, narrative, or rhetorical observations; discourse analysis)
  * Behind-the-Text Issues (any introductory issues relevant for your passage (only if relevant)—author, audience, date, place, genre, purpose of writing), historical-cultural issues, including citation of primary texts)
  * In-Front-of-the-Text Issues (history of interpretation, current scholarship on the passage and any relevant scholarship on Matthew

Verse by verse or section by section commentary (possibly coming before the previous section)—this ensures that all exegetical issues are addressed in the paper.

Conclusion

Further information for research and writing may be found on Sakai in the document: Rollin Grams, Research and Writing for New Testament Studies (2012).
4. Book Review
Students are to write a 2,000 word (plus or minus 10%) book review of either Bauckham or Wright (not both) for 25% of the final grade. The review is due on the weekend that the book will be discussed in class: Bauckham on the second weekend, Wright on the third. (No extensions will be given.) For guidelines on how to write a good book review, see Rollin G. Grams, Research and Writing for New Testament Studies (2012)—on Sakai.

5. Quiz
On the last day of class, an objective quiz on the content of Matthew’s Gospel will be given. The quiz will count for the final 15% of the final grade. An explanation of this quiz will be given in class.

Research, Writing, Marking Standards:
Students should find helpful guidance on research and writing and on marking criteria in the following:

Rollin G. Grams, Research and Writing for New Testament Studies (available on Sakai)

Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, will mean an ‘F’ for the course. A description of plagiarism may be found in Research and Writing for New Testament Studies, and regulations are stated in the GCTS Student Handbook. (Do not assume that you know what plagiarism is in this course.)

4. Reading:
Students are to read:
*All of Matthew’s Gospel in the ESV, NIV, or NRSV translation (before class; ask if you intend to use another translation)
*Evans’ introduction (before class) and comments on the set passages for each weekend
*Wallace on Genitives and Participles (using these sections during translation—and anything else in Wallace pertaining to the translation passages set for each weekend)
*All of Bauckham and Wright

This reading will be accounted for through a reading report, turned in on the last day of class. It should indicate whether the assignment has been fulfilled and when. The reading report will be used in evaluating final grades, possibly pushing the final grade up or down a partial grade (as with the Greek grade for the course). The report should be in the following format and signed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Date Completed</th>
<th>Percentage of Total Pages Read*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Matthew’s Gospel (all)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Evans’ Introduction (all)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Evans (set passages)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wallace (Gen.; Ptc.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bauckham</td>
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<tr>
<td>N. T. Wright</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional Reading (optional)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Explain which pages were not read and why not, if this is the case. A passing grade for the course requires that 80% of the reading is completed.*

Signed  
Name

**Course Structure:**

The course is structured around three weekends together in class, with considerable work to do in-between these meeting times. Each class weekend will be run like a mini-conference—see the details, below.

We will cover the material in Matthew by alternating between an overview of the passages and a detailed study of select pericopae. This includes translation of the focus texts. Lectures will be given to orient and guide students in the study of this Gospel as well as to present the instructor’s perspective. Matthew will be divided into three parts for these weekends, and students will contribute significantly to the class on the basis of their preparation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>First Weekend:</th>
<th>Mt. 1.1-7.29</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second Weekend:</td>
<td>Mt. 8.1-20.28</td>
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<tr>
<td>Third Weekend:</td>
<td>Mt. 20.29-28.20</td>
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Students are to prepare for each weekend by:

*Reading and taking notes on the commentary for use in discussion*
*Listening to the lectures that are available on Sakai*
*Using any material placed on Sakai for that weekend*
*Translating the set passages and taking notes (as discussed above)*
*Considering the questions listed below for each weekend’s discussions as they prepare for class (jotting down some notes will help)*
*Reading Bauckham for the second weekend and Wright for the third weekend*
*Being prepared to take an objective test on the content of Matthew on the third weekend*
First Weekend:

Focus: Matthew 1.1-7.29

Pre-Class Lectures (to be heard prior to the first weekend of classes):

- Introduction to Matthew’s Gospel
- Second Temple Judaism (42 minutes)
- Study in the Synoptic Gospels (28 minutes)
- John the Baptist and Jesus (28 minutes)
- The Quest for the Historical Jesus
- Jesus and the Kingdom of God (43 minutes)
- Jesus and the Restoration of Israel From Exile (1 hour 8 minutes)

Friday Evening: In-class translation and exegesis of set passages: Mt. 2.1-12; 5.21-48 and 9.1-8 (see below)

Saturday Morning: Lecture and Discussion

In-Class Discussion:

1. How does Isaiah form a background for Matthew 1 – 7? Specifically, what do we learn from Isaiah about the disciples as the people of God, Jesus’ teaching on the Kingdom (reign) of heaven, and Jesus’ ethics? Do not limit your comments to quotations from Isaiah in Matthew.

In-Class Project:

In your group, create a chart on Matthew’s use of the Old Testament in Mt. 1.1-4.16. The chart is intended to collect the ‘data’ on this issue for the discussion of it in your group. The chart should look something like this and will be something for you to keep beyond this course:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passage in Matthew</th>
<th>Passage in Old Testament</th>
<th>Comments:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.21 [copied here in Greek]</td>
<td>Psalm 130:8 It is he who will redeem [copy LXX Greek and, if you know the language, Hebrew for this word here]) Israel from all its iniquities.</td>
<td>1. Type of Reference (quote, allusion, paraphrase; composite quote; etc.): 2. Is Hebrew, Greek, or Aramaic in use by Matthew? 3. Meaning of text in the OT: 4. How does Matthew use the text? 5. Other uses of this text in Matthew? NT? 6. Discuss significance:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group Discussion: The in-class discussion will focus on your completing this chart.
In-Class Discussion:

2. Discuss Matthew’s Christology in Mt. 1.1-7.29. What other (i.e., other than the use of the Old Testament—e.g., stories, Christological titles) observations can you make about Matthew’s Christology in Mt. 1.1 –7.29: the Virgin Conception of Mary; Jesus’ authority, Divinity; Jesus as Israel; ‘Son of God’; ‘Son of Man’; ‘Christ/Messiah’; Jesus as a new Moses; Jesus as descended from Abraham; Jesus as Son of David; Jesus’ use of ‘Father’ for God; etc.

Saturday Afternoon:

In-Class Lecture: Ethics in Matthew’s Gospel

In-Class Discussion:

3. Answer the following questions on ethics in Matthew’s Gospel.
   a. Discuss your views on different ways that Christians have understood the Sermon on the Mount and its applicability to the Church and society. Specifically, what do you think of Glen Stassen’s (presented in the lecture) interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount (particularly Mt. 5.21-48)?
   b. Would Matthew have us believe that Jesus saw a continuing validity of the Law for Christians?
   c. Is Matthew’s ethics ‘pure law,’ without either grace or a connection to Christology? If not, where is grace in Matthew’s presentation of Jesus’ ethics, and where is Jesus significant?

Second Weekend:

Focus: Matthew 8.1-20.28

Pre-Class Lectures (to be heard prior to the second weekend of classes):

❖ *The Mighty Deeds of Jesus (Mt. 8-9)
❖ *The Structure of Matthew 10 – 20
❖ *The Parables of Jesus
❖ *Peter’s Confession
❖ *Kingdom Mission & Discipleship in Matthew’s Gospel

**Friday Evening:** In-class translation and exegesis of set passages: Mt. 12.1-8; 13.1-23; 15.21-28; 16.13-20; 18.15-20; 19.1-12 (see below)
**Saturday Morning:** Lecture and Discussion [as this course is being redesigned this semester, some changes to discussion questions might be introduced during the course for the second and third weekends]:

After concluding translation and exegesis of set passages from Friday evening (as these are longer than the other two weekends, this work may spill over into Saturday morning), discuss the following.

1. Discuss the structure of this section of Matthew.
2. What is the significance of Jesus’ miracles in light of (1) the OT, (2) the place of miracles in antiquity, (3) Matthew’s Gospel, and (4) the Church’s life today?
3. In light of what you have learned in this (and other?) class/es, how would you go about studying a parable for preaching?
4. Peter’s confession of Jesus poses significant exegetical challenges. In light of your reading in this course and listening to the lecture, what is your understanding of this passage?
5. Is the use of ‘leadership’ appropriate as a term for ministry in Matthew’s understanding of discipleship and ministry? What are the dangers? How does Matthew’s view of ministry challenge contemporary understandings of ministry?
6. Does Mt. 18.15-20 give us guidance for how to approach conflict at work, or is this a misuse of the passage? What is the passage teaching? How does one account for differences between Matthew and Luke on the parable of the lost sheep?
7. Jesus’ ‘hiddenness’ is sometimes commented on in terms of the development of His character and mission in the plot of the story, in terms of His teaching in parables, and in terms of the responses people give to who He is. Address some aspect of Jesus’ hiddenness/revelation in the Gospel for one or more of these points.
8. What is the place of Gentiles in Jesus’ ministry up to this point?
9. Discuss Matthew’s character development of Peter from a literary perspective in Matthew’s Gospel.
10. What observations can you make about Matthew’s Christology in Mt. 8.1-20.28?.

**Saturday Afternoon:**


In-Class Discussion:

11. What do you think can be said about Jesus’ teaching on divorce and remarriage, based on the Synoptic Gospels? What guidance do you think the Biblical text gives on this subject? What can be said about Jesus’ use of the Old Testament for ethics in regard to this topic? Does this open the door for other ‘alterations’ to the Old Testament in Christian ethics?—keep your focus mainly on guidance from Matthew’s Gospel in answering this question.
Third Weekend:

Focus: Matthew 20.29-28.20

Pre-Class Lectures (to be heard prior to the third weekend of classes):
- *The Cleansing of the Temple & the Apocalyptic Discourse
- *The Public Trial of Jesus: Mt. 20.29-23.39
- *The Passion of Jesus (36 minutes)
- *The Resurrection and Exaltation of Jesus (17 minutes)
- *Matthew’s Mission Theology

Friday Evening: In-class translation and exegesis of set passages: Mt. 26.26-30, 59-66; 27.32-53; 28.1-8 (see below)

Saturday Morning:

In-Class Project: Using the chart available on Sakai on the use of the Old Testament in the Gospel passion narratives, discuss Matthew’s use of the Old Testament in the Passion narratives.

Focus on Matthew’s use of the Old Testament by comparing this to Mark’s use, noting which parts of the Old Testament are used by Matthew, whether the source of Matthew’s use of the Old Testament makes any difference (Hebrew, Greek, or Aramaic—see commentary), and how Matthew’s use of the Old Testament might shape his theology of the cross. Overall, what do you learn from attending to Matthew’s use of the Old Testament in the passion narratives?

In-Class Discussion:

1. Discuss Matthew’s redaction of Mark in the Passion narratives (beyond the above focus on their use of the Old Testament).
2. Discuss Christology in this section of Matthew’s Gospel.
3. Discuss the historicity of the trial of Jesus (especially in Matthew’s Gospel).
4. Has your study in this course contributed to your understanding of eschatology, such as how to read Mt. 24-25?
   Discuss the historicity of the death and resurrection of Jesus (especially in Matthew’s Gospel).
5. Discuss Matthew’s theology of the cross (not only in his Passion narrative). Why does Jesus die, and what does his death mean for his disciples, Israel, and the Church?

Saturday Afternoon:

In-Class Discussion:

6. Discussion of Matthew’s mission theology: the object of mission—Jews? Gentiles?; the development of Jesus’ mission through the Gospel; the content of the message; the time of the message.

Contact Information:

Email: rgrams@gordonconwell.edu (e-mail is the best way to ask questions)
Office hours: By appointment. (Most issues are typically quickly handled by e-mail.)
Forum: A discussion forum will be set up on Sakai for interested students, so that discussion among students may take place outside of class.

Taping, Copying, Exchanging Computer Files:

Students are permitted to tape lectures for their own purposes or if one must miss part of a class. But these should not be used for any other purpose or person/s. Any materials placed on Sakai are for use only in this course and not for distributing to others (or for re-use in other contexts). In such ways, the professor’s rights of ownership are protected and the course is recognized as a ‘work in progress’ rather than as a definitive work for wide distribution; students are requested to respect this.

Syllabus Addendum

Academic Standards

Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. 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. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.
ADA Policy

The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations, should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook.

Cancellation of Class

In the event the seminary has to cancel a class meeting (impending storm, professor illness, etc.), the Registration Office will send out an email (via the GCTS email account) notification to all students registered in the respective course. If the cancelation occurs the day of the scheduled meeting, the Registration Office will also attempt to contact students via their primary phone contact on record. The professor will contact the students (via GCTS account) regarding make-up. If a weekend class is cancelled, the class will be made up during the scheduled Make-Up weekend (see the academic calendar for the designated dates). For more info, consult your Student Handbook.

Extension Policy

Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the “last day to submit written work,” as noted on the seminary’s Academic Calendar, are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required at this time. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams.

However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized calendar due date, must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the “last day to submit written work.” Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Student Handbook.

Grades

Faculty have six weeks from the course work due date to submit a final grade. Grades are posted on-line within twenty-four hours of receipt from the professor. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted grades (unless instructed otherwise). Those individuals who need an official grade report issued to a third party should put their request in writing to the Registration Office.

Returned Work

Submitted hard-copy course work will be returned to the students if they provide a self addressed and postage-paid envelope with their final work. Work submitted without the appropriate envelope will be destroyed after the grade has been assessed and issued.