Class Meeting Times
We will meet October 18, 19, and 20 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
Sunday 21 from 9 a.m. to 12.00 p.m.

Course Description
This course is an introduction to the interpretation of the Bible, seeking to provide a historical perspective and reliable principles with which to study, interpret, and apply the Scriptures. The student will become cognizant of the various methodologies and steps necessary in biblical exegesis. The student will also be equipped with the necessary tools for the proper use of Scripture in both personal life and ministry.

Course Objectives
After completing this course the student should be able to:

Cognitive Aspects:
- Understand the Scriptures in their original literary and historical context by the critical use of appropriate reference tools.
- Develop appreciation for the Scriptures as the student learns how to apply these texts to contemporary contexts without losing sight of the original message intended by the inspired writers.
- Be introduced to the discipline of theological studies.

Affective Aspects:
- Be conscious that the need for interpreting the Scriptures is rooted in a proper understanding of God, the cultures of the Scriptures, and the culture in which the student live in.
- Foster the need for depending on the Holy Spirit for guidance in the process of interpretation. This is a human-divine enterprise.

Psychomotor Aspects:
- Enjoy personal Bible Study and do systematic investigations of the Scriptures.
- Widen the landscape of the historical development of hermeneutics.
- Have opportunity to analyze and interpret selected scriptural passages from various genre categories by applying the exegetical principles learned in the course; and to write an exegetical paper.
Course Textbooks and Resources*


Also a non-paraphrased translation of the Bible is required. Acceptable translations include NIV, TNIV, NASB, KJV, NKJV, RSV, NRSV, HCS, and ESV. Translations not allowed are the Living Bible, the Amplified Bible, Good News for Modern Man, the Message, and other paraphrases. I particularly prefer the NIV and I will be lecturing from the NIV.

*See Additional Bibliography at the end of this syllabus.

Teaching Techniques

The learning process will come to the student as follows:

1) Reading of the assigned (not optional) textbooks in their entirety
2) Lectures by the professor with PowerPoint presentations and handouts
3) Personal research and writing of assigned projects
4) Dynamic and active participation in class

Expectations

It is expected that the student will:

- Attend all class meetings; this is a requirement. This course is designed to teach methodology and not simply memorized material. In addition, some of the material covered in class is not in the textbook. Attendance, therefore, is imperative.
- Do all the readings, homework and exercises assigned. Please bring to class your Bible and all assignments due for that session.
- Show respect when others have a different point of view. In this case the professor will decide when to bring the matter to a conclusion.
Requirements and Grading

- Workbook Exercises: 10 x 5% each = 50%
- Critical Book Review = 15%
- A Research Paper = 20%
- Comprehensive Final Exam = 15%

Explanation about requirements and grading:

1) **10 Workbook Exercises (10 x 5% each = 50%)**:
You will find the required assignments per chapter below. It would be to your advantage to a) read the required textbooks before we begin classes, and b) that you do as many of the assignments as possible. The instructions for the assignments and the necessary skills to do them can be found in the textbook. **The due date to submit all the assignments is October 27.**

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2) **Critical Book Review (15%)**:  
The student will select either *Biblical Interpretation: Past and Present* or *Scripture and the Authority of God: How to Read the Bible Today* to perform this assignment. This is a five pages book review, double-spaced with 1” margins, in which the student will do each one of the following:

- Page one: the student should 1) identify the author’s pedigree (credentials), 2) should define the audience to whom the book is intended, and 3) the purpose(s) of the writer.
- Page two, three, and four: the student should list and explain five strengths and five weaknesses found in the book. Remember that there is no perfect book. Mao Tse Tung once said that “every argument bears in itself its own contradiction.”
- Page five: the student must appropriate the book by pointing out his/her learning. Here I need to hear your critical voice in approaching the book. Please state clearly whether or not you disagree or agree with the author and why. **The due date is October 18, the first day we meet in Texas.**
3) **A Research Paper (20%)**: Each student will be assigned a different passage to study throughout the semester. The 10 assignments noted above will require the student to apply certain interpretative principles to their passages. At the end of the course the student will write an exegetical paper that will bring together applications of the principles studied and the actual investigations carried out during the semester. The paper is required to be a minimum of ten, typed, double-spaced pages with 1” margins. The final paper will be based on a passage from Ephesians. Please see page 180 from the workbook to select the passage. Since there are 21 passages from where to make a selection, it is not allowed that two students work on the same passage. No late papers are accepted. **The due date is November 28.** Please refer to *appendix 2: Writing an Exegetical paper*, see page 455 of the Textbook. Also, see the Workbook pages 177-201

4) **Comprehensive Final Exam (15%)**: The final exam will be a comprehensive exam that covers the lectures and the readings from the main textbook: *Grasping God’s Word*. This exam will be taken the last day of classes; otherwise a proctor will be assigned to be taken in a later day in agreement with the professor.

5) **Extra Credit**: Class presentations will count as extra credit. For example if you scored an 85% as your final grade, but scored 5% on class presentation, then your final grade will be raised to 90%.

The grades for all work have the following numerical guidelines:

- **A+** 98-100
- **A** 97-94
- **A-** 93-90
- **B+** 87-89
- **B** 84-86
- **B-** 80-83
- **C+** 77-79
- **C** 74-76
- **C-** 70-73
- **D+** 68-69
- **D** 66-67
- **D-** 65
- **F** Below 65

All incompletes (I) and Withdrawals (W) must meet the deadlines and guidelines of the Registrar’s office.
COURSE SCHEDULE

BEFORE MEETING IN OCTOBER

August 5 through October 15:
Read entirely: Biblical Interpretation: Past and Present
Scripture and the Authority of God: How to Read the Bible
Grasping God’s Word

Please note that we might not cover all the material in the textbooks in the class presentations; however, the student is responsible for all the material in these books.

WHEN WE MEET IN OCTOBER

October 18, Thursday
9 am – 12 pm Part 1: How to Read the Bible-Basic Tools
1. Bible Translations
2. The Interpretive Journey
3. How to Read the Book: Sentences
4. How to Read the Book: Paragraphs
5. How to Read the Book: Discourses

1:30 pm – 4 pm Part 2: Contexts- Now and Then
6. The Historical-Cultural Context
7. What do we bring to the Text?

4 pm – 5 pm Class Presentation:
Group 1: Scripture and the Authority of God: How to Read the Bible Today

October 19, Friday
9 am – 12 pm
8. The Literary Context
9. Word Studies
Part 3: Meaning and Application
10. Who Controls the Meaning?
11. Levels of Meaning
12. The Role of the Holy Spirit
13. Application

1:30 pm – 4 pm Part 4: The Interpretive Journey- New Testament
14. NT-Letters
15. NT-Gospels

4 pm – 5 pm: Class Presentation: Group 2: Biblical Interpretation: Past and Present (Part 1, pp. 1-220)
October 20, Saturday

9 am – 12 pm
16. NT-Acts
17. NT-Revelation

Part 5: The Interpretive Journey- Old Testament
18. OT-Narrative

1:30 pm – 4 pm
19. OT-Law
20. OT-Poetry
21. OT-Prophets
22. OT-Wisdom

4 pm – 5 pm Class Presentation:
Group 3: Biblical Interpretation: Past and Present
(Part 2, pp. 221-460)

October 21, Sunday:
9 am – 12 pm Group 4: Biblical Interpretation: Past and Present
(Part 3, pp. 461-588)

Conclusions, miscellaneous, where to go from here and final exam

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AFTER MEETING IN OCTOBER

October 21 through November 28
Write the Research paper, which is due November 28.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


