 NT504: Paul and His Letters
Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary

Instructor
Dr. Mark A. Jennings
Instructor of New Testament

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Gordon-Conwell offers technical support during regular business hours. If you have a technical issue, please email helpdesk@gordonconwell.edu also copy Dr. Jennings. All requests related to the course should be sent to the professor, and/or the Semlink program staff (semlink@gordonconwell.edu).

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Course Description
Paul’s pastoral and missionary understanding of the Christian faith is examined by assessing the distinctive settings and themes of his letters in the context of the missionary journeys in Acts.

Gordon-Conwell Mission
This course satisfies the following institutional learning objectives:

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.

Article 2: To maintain academic excellence in the highest tradition of Christian scholarship in the teaching of the biblical, historical and theological disciplines. Theological education, which is properly done within and for the Church, ought to function with rigor and academic integrity. The seminary, therefore, must provide an environment within which teaching and learning can best occur and encourage high levels of scholarly competence and research in its faculty.

Course Learning Objectives
Upon successful completion of this course, students will:
   1. Reproduce a basic chronology of Paul’s life and travels.
   2. Reproduce on a map the major cities of Paul’s ministry.
   3. Identify the major contours of the first-century Greco-Roman world (including Second Temple Judaism) as they pertain to the study of Paul and his letters.
   4. Identify and explain the basic theological message and main subjects of each of Paul’s letters.
   5. Explain and assess the arguments regarding dating and authorship of the “disputed Pauline” letters.
   6. Summarize the major themes of Pauline theology, especially his views on justification and the Law.
   7. Synthesize and Explain Paul’s thought as it pertains to a single area of study in Pauline thought.
Differentiate between the different schools of interpretation regarding Paul's theology, including the arguments for and against the "New Perspective."

**Lesson Topics**

Lectures entail the following topics:

**Lesson 1: Introduction**
- Week 1: Who was Paul? Why Study Paul?

**Lesson 2: Paul, His Time**
- Week 2: The "Recent Past" of Paul’s World
- Week 3: Jewish and Greco-Roman Influences

**Lesson 3: Paul, His Travels**
- Week 4: On the Road to Damascus, "Missionary Journeys"

**Lesson 4: Paul, His Letters**
- Week 5: Introduction to Paul the Letter writer; 1-2 Thessalonians, Galatians
- Week 6: 1-2 Corinthians
- Week 7: Romans
- Week 8: Philippians, Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians
- Week 9: The Pastorals
- Week 10: Exam Week

**Lesson 5: Paul, His Theology**
- Weeks 11-14: Pauline Theology

**Required Materials**


*If using an English Bible, either the English Standard Version or the New Revised Standard Versions are 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.*


Other Readings under "Resources"

Recommended


**Course Requirements - Learning Activities**

Achievement of the course objectives will be measured through a variety of assignments and activities as described below. The time spent in the course may vary considerably, depending on how well one is already prepared with a knowledge of the New Testament.

I. Gathering Information

**Readings**

You are expected to complete the relevant reading in preparation for each lecture, online forum, and conference. The "Weekly Reading Schedule" details the reading that is due each week. The "Weekly Reading Schedule" Readings will come either from "Required Texts" or from "Assignments" in Sakai.

At the end of Lesson 3 (Week 4), Lesson 4 (Week 10), and Lesson 5 (Week 14) you will submit a "Reading / Lecture Report" via Sakai. The "Reading / Lecture Report" is under "Assignments." This report will include one question stemming from your reading. Do not email your report – they are to be submitted via Sakai.

The first Reading / Lecture Report reflects the reading and lectures you did for Lessons 1–3 only. The second Reading / Lecture reflects the reading and lectures you did for Lesson 4 only. The third Reading / Lecture reflects the reading and lectures you did for Lesson 5 only.

**Late Reading / Lecture reports will be accepted. But each late Reading / Lecture report will reduce your Reading / Lecture grade by 1 point. For example, a 4.0 Reading / Lecture grade that has two late reports will receive a 2.0 grade.**
Regarding Bible Readings: All readings are to be done this term. Previous readings do not apply. For example, if last term you read all of 2 Corinthians, you would still need to read all of 2 Corinthians on the assigned week.

Lectures
Each week you will listen to the appropriate “Lecture(s)” for that week. The “Lectures” assume the reading, and will frequently introduce something not discussed in the reading, as well as spotlight, or give prominence to, a topic addressed in the reading.

For Weeks 11-14, there are four lectures. These can be listened to at any time during this period.

As stated earlier, each week’s “Reading / Lecture” report is unique to that week. The report is available through Sakai. Students are to use these reports. Please do not send an “email” with your answers to the questions asked. You are to submit the relevant report.

Conferences
At two points during the course, you will participate in a “real-time” conference with Professor Jennings. These will last one hour. Professor Jennings will respond to pre-submitted questions from students. Priority will be given to the following topics / questions: difficult statements, puzzling passages, interpretational challenges, discipleship challenges, preaching and teaching, and so on.

The purpose of these conferences is to explore “Paul,” especially as it pertains to ministry and faith. Professor Jennings will not answer questions he considers to be “exam” related questions.

Students who did not get to ask a question in the first conference will have priority in the second.

These conferences will occur during weeks 10 (exam study week) and 14.

II. Testing Your Knowledge
There will be one exam, covering the readings and lectures for “Lessons 2–4” (Weeks 2–9). The exam must be taken in the presence of a proctor, and you will be allowed 90 minutes to complete it. The exam will be comprised of a variety of question types (multiple choice, true-false, short-answer, long-answer, map identification, etc.) There will also be several “short-essay” questions, which ask you to discuss the unique themes, features, of contribution of specific Pauline epistles.

Please scroll down for more information on proctored exams.

III. Demonstrating Further Understanding
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.

Blogs
For Weeks 1–4 you will give a weekly blog entry. This entry is “public.” After completing the reading and watching the lectures, you are to respond to the weekly blog prompt.

1. Your response is expected to be at least 200 words and shows considered reflection of the material for that week.
2. When you quote Scripture, be sure to identify what translation you are using.
3. Scripture quotes, quotes of scholars, etc. do not count towards your Word Count.
4. This is not an “all-or-nothing” assignment. Meaning just because you post something does not mean you have met the expectations of the assignment.
5. Your post should be well-written and appropriate to public evaluation and consideration.

Chat Rooms
Beginning with Week 5, each student will be assigned to a specific chatroom. The chatrooms will consist of no more than five students. You will be in the same chatroom for the entire class.

From Weeks 5–9 you are to participate regularly in your chatroom. Participation includes responding to the weekly prompts that Professor Jennings posts as well as the comments of your fellow “chat-mates.”

Professor Jennings may, at times, offer his own comment.

1. In each chatroom, a question or topic will be posted by Professor Jennings on the Monday of each week.
2. This is not an “all-or-nothing” assignment. Meaning, just because you post something does not mean you have met the expectations of the assignment. Your postings will be evaluated on the basis of their scholarship, courtesy, relevance to topic, and style. To heavily criticize another’s view without finding its strengths, as well as to offer your own view as if its beyond contest is bad form, and hardly in keeping with one who has faith in Christ. Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. (Phil 4:5).
3. Your comments are to be “on topic” and not diverge from the course.
4. Your groups Chat Room discussion will end at 11:55PM ET on the Friday of each week.
5. Part of the evaluation will include the overall effectiveness of the entire group’s discussion.
Each student will receive two for each week’s chat: an individual grade and a group grade.

6. As with all matters of this course, Professor Jennings reserves the right to stop the chatroom or redirect it as needed.

**Long Essay: Paul and the Modern World**

Imagine the following: you are asked to present a paper at a conference being hosted by local non-Christian college. The theme of the conference is the following: The Apostle Paul and the Modern World. You have been given a great deal of leeway regarding the topic of your paper, but it must be directly (as opposed tangentially) related to the conference theme. Papers such as “Paul and the OT” or “Paul and Sin” or “Paul and the Law” are not considered “directly related.” “Sin” may factor significantly in your paper’s discussion, but “Paul and Sin” itself would not be an acceptable paper for this “conference topic.”

- Your paper is to be 8–10 pages in length, double-spaced, 1 inch margins, 12 pt font (New Times Roman or equivalent).
- Your paper is not “an opinion paper,” but should be consistent with the type of academic rigor one expects at a university-hosted conference.
- Your paper is “expected” to be published, and so must follow accepted, recognized formatting rules (Chicago Manual of Style is preferred).
- Your paper should demonstrate a knowledge of the broader Pauline corpus. This should not be a study of just a single passage (or two).
- By 11:55pm ET Friday of Week 11, Submit your Long Essay topic in Assignments.
- By 11:55pm ET Friday of Week 12, Submit your initial bibliography of resources for your Long Essay in Assignments.
- By 11:55pm ET Friday of Week 13, Submit a detailed outline for your Long Essay in Assignments.
- By 11:55pm ET Monday following Week 14, Submit your Long Essay in Assignments.

**Grading Policy**

Your final grade for the course will be computed as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>% of Total Grade</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Reading and Video Lectures</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blogs (4)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chat Room (5)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conference (2)</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exam: Lessons 2-4</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Essay: “Paul and the Modern World”</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Score</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
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<td>B</td>
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“A” means “conspicuous excellence in both content and style; “B” means “exceeding the minimum in both content and style; “C” means “satisfactory” work; “D” means “passing, but unsatisfactory,” and “F” means “course has been failed.”

Late work will not be accepted, but partial work will be.

“Conferences” will be graded on an “all or nothing” basis. All other Grading Rubrics can be found in the “Grading Rubrics” folder in “Resources” in Sakai.
Note: For each assignment (unless otherwise indicated), only a grade of A, B, C, D, or F will be given (e.g., no B-, C+, etc.). The "+" and "-" evaluations are only given when they occur as a result of calculations. For example, if there are two assignments, and each is worth 50% of the grade – and a student receives a "B" on the first and a "C" on the second, then the calculated grade would be a 2.5 (C+).

Final Note: Your work is expected to reflect graduate level quality. You are highly encouraged to "proof read" all postings and essays.

Other Course Policies

Proctored Exams
All exams in this course will be proctored. Your proctor must be someone who works for a church or volunteers for a church in an officially recognized capacity (pastor, elder, ministry leader, office administrator, etc.), a library or a school. Your proctor cannot be a member of your family or a current Gordon-Conwell student. Your proctor should be present throughout the time you are taking the exam.

The student will need to identify a suitable proctor and submit his/her name and email address to the Semlink office via the proctor registration form before every exam. The Semlink office will then email your proctor login information for your exam so he/she can help you login at the time when you take the exam. Please submit your proctor information to the Semlink office at least 2 business days before you plan to take the exam. Check with libraries in advance for special summer and holiday hours.

Instructor Feedback
The instructor 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
Papers are to follow the appropriate format for their discipline (APA for Psych; SBL for Biblical Studies; Chicago for all others):

“[Papers] should be submitted as attached files in PDF format. Assignments should be double-spaced with 1” margins on all sides of each page, and should be printed in Times New Roman 12 point type or another font of similar size and appearance. Assignments must be submitted electronically by posting on the Sakai site. Hard-copies will not be accepted. Emailed-copies will not be accepted.”

VeriCite
A tool called VeriCite has been added to Sakai to check for plagiarism. If you find that a part of your assignment has scored highly in VeriCite's review (these sections will be highlighted in red), that means your content is very similar to content in another source and is probably a quote or paraphrase that should be cited. Please use this as a tool to make sure you have cited everything you need in your assignment. Not everything this service highlights will be a violation, so use your best judgment.

Late Work
This course is designed in such a manner so as to encourage the student to spend time each and every week considering the apostle Paul and his letters. As such, it is also designed to prohibit "catching up," as well as "working ahead."

Late Work will not be accepted, but partially completed work always will be. In the event that illness (or similar matter) prevents you from doing any work at all during the entire week, i.e., you couldn’t do any other work in any of your classes, work a job, attend meetings, serve in ministries, etc., you can request an extension from Professor Jennings. (Note: a request does not mean an automatic extension.)

Requests for extension because of travelling (for work, weddings, ministry, or any other reason [other than medical emergency]) will not be considered. Please do not ask.

Requests for extension because of a “heavy week” (at work, school, personal) will not be considered. Please do not ask.

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.