Syllabus

Course Description

This course is designed to enable the student to construct an expository sermon based upon the skills of exegesis. In addition, students will gain experience explaining, proving, and applying a biblical passage and delivering a biblical sermon without notes. A year of a biblical language and NT502: Interpreting the New Testament are prerequisites for the course.

Course Relationship to the Curriculum:

This course is an introduction to the principles of preparing relevant biblical sermons. Lectures and exercises cover a stage-by-stage explanation of how preachers think as they prepare to preach. The aim of the course is to help students understand what is required to preach effectively and to practice what they understand. Recitation sessions provide opportunity for students to preach and have their efforts recorded on video for playback and critique by the professor.

Course Objective:

As a result of this course students should be able to deliver a sermon derived from the biblical text, without the use of notes. In order to accomplish this, the student will:

• Have a basic procedure that moves one from the biblical text to a sermon based on that text.

• Develop skill in constructing a clear outline consisting of full, declarative sentences that relate to a basic idea. The outline should also show transitions in parentheses between the major points and if necessary the supporting points. This will be measured by handing in an outline of the first and the final sermon for grading.

• Have a working definition of expository preaching.

• Understand the basic elements in sermon construction and what they should accomplish—introduction, central idea (based on an exegetical idea), transitions, illustrations, development of the sermon, and conclusion.

• Begin to develop a skill in writing a sermon manuscript geared to the way listeners listen.

• Develop an effective filing system for supporting materials used in sermons. This will be measured by a report on the system at the end of the course. Students will collect at least 75 new illustrations.

• Watch and listen to 5 assigned video-recorded sermons and determine what makes an effective sermon.
• Read two books on the theology of preaching and the importance of prayer in preaching.
• Read one book on preaching and plagiarism.
• Measure his/her ability to interact with the course reading and lectures by sitting a final examination.
• Listen to *Pulpit Talk* audio journal for review and reinforcement of class lectures and practice.
• Preach two sermons (lab format, see Course Requirements).
• Memorize a verse of Scripture.

**Textbooks**

**Required Texts:**
• Haddon Robinson, *Biblical Preaching*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001)
• Scott M. Gibson, *Should we Use Someone Else’s Sermon? Preaching in a Cut and Paste World* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2008)
• Keith Willhite and Scott M. Gibson, eds., *The Big Idea of Biblical Preaching: Connecting the Bible to People* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998)
• Donald R. Sunukjian, *Invitation to Biblical Preaching: Proclaiming Truth with Clarity and Relevance* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2007): Relevant selections are included in this course's Appendix.
• E.M. Bounds, *Power through Prayer* (various publishers)
• *Pulpit Talk*, the audio journal of the Center for Preaching

**Recommended Reading:**
• Grady Davis, *Design for Preaching* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1958)
Course Requirements

All papers should be single-spaced in 12-pt. font and should use 1” margins. Unless otherwise noted, assignments are due on your course due date.

I. Illustrations  Develop a filing system for collecting supporting material for sermons. The system can be on 3” x 5” cards, 4” x 6” cards, or in a computer. During the course of the semester, collect and file at least 75 illustrations. You will report whether you have completed this assignment on the Completion Report (see p. ii). Students will post their ten best illustrations to the Preaching discussion forum for the benefit of the entire class.

II. Reading  Read all required texts in their entirety.

- Read Robinson’s text, Biblical Preaching. You will profit most from this book if you read it section by section as it is discussed in the lectures.

- Read Willhite and Gibson’s text, The Big Idea of Biblical Preaching. Write a 3-page (maximum) single-spaced review using the questions below. This assignment is due 3 months after your course start date.

  a. Do you think the book has a central idea? What do you think it is?
  b. Summarize the thrust of the editors’ argument. In light of this, why did Willhite and Gibson select the chapters from other authors to be included in the book?
  c. Discuss at least three things you learned from reading the book.

- Read Gibson’s text, Should We Use Someone Else’s Sermon? Write a 3-page (maximum) single-spaced paper using the following questions:

  a. What is the central idea of the book?
  b. Discuss at least three things you learned from reading the book and how you will apply them to your preaching.

- Read Stott’s text, Between Two Worlds. Write a 5-paged single-spaced paper considering the following:

  a. What is the central idea of the book?
  b. What did you find in the book that was new to you?
  c. With what do you disagree? Why?

- Complete reading for Piper, Sunukjian, and Bounds.
III. Sermons (Lab Format, see below)

a. Eight (8) Minute Sermon

• Outline: Prepare an outline for the first sermon. Follow the Format for Sermons on page A-7 of the appendix. The professor will correct the outline and return it to the student via e-mail. The student will be able to rework the outline as many times as he or she would like before the first sermon is preached. This assignment is due 3 months after your course due date. Please e-mail the outline to Dr. Gibson (sgibson@gcts.edu) and the Semlink office (semlink@gcts.edu) to submit.

• Manuscript: Prepare a manuscript for the first sermon following Haddon Robinson’s Ten Stages (see pages A-5 and A-6). This assignment is due with your 8-minute sermon.

• Sermon: Preach a 8-minute sermon without the use of notes in front a camera for the allotted time period only. This is done in a lab format, meaning you are to preach in from of a camera and not before an audience. Your audience is your professor and fellow classmates, who will watch and review your sermon.

• Watch your time! This is an 8 minute sermon and must be delivered in this time frame only!

• Submit your video of your sermon to the drop box in Sakai. To do this effectively, ensure your file size is suitable for upload.

• This assignment is due 4 months after your course start date.

b. Fifteen (15) Minute Sermon

• Outline: Prepare an outline for the second sermon. Follow the Format for Sermons on page A-7 of the appendix. The professor will correct it and return it to the student. This assignment is due 5 months after your course due date. Please e-mail the outline to Dr. Gibson (sgibson@gcts.edu) and the Semlink office (semlink@gcts.edu) to submit.

• Manuscript: Prepare a manuscript for a complete sermon that both explains and applies the passage. Follow Haddon Robinson’s Ten Stages (see pages A-5 and A-6). This assignment is due with your 15-minute sermon.

• Sermon: Preach a 15-minute sermon without the use of notes in front of a camera. Submit video in Sakai, as before.

IV. Listening

• Listen to the PulpitTalk issues as indicated in the course outline to reinforce understanding of course concepts.
Questions for the Sample Sermon Exercise:

1. What do you think is the main idea or concept the preacher was trying to get across? Please state it and analyze and comment on it.

2. Did the introduction capture interest so that you wanted the preacher to continue? How did he/she do this? Analyze and comment.

3. Did the preacher illustrate? If so, what did he/she do to explain, prove, or apply (provide specific examples)? Did he/she succeed? Why or why not? Analyze and comment.

4. Do you think the conclusion drove home the main idea of the sermon in a way that caused you to want to respond? Analyze and comment.

5. What do you think that you as a listener might do, think, or change as a result of hearing the sermon?

6. Do you think the delivery helped or hindered the presentation? What were its strengths? What about weaknesses? Analyze and comment.

7. Do you think that the sermon grew out of the biblical text? Or was it imposed on the text? Analyze and comment.

• Watch and listen to the five (5) sample sermons posted in Sakai. Thoroughly complete the questions on the next page for each sermon, giving examples in each case. Use these responses to guide your e-mail conversations with your teaching fellow (semlink.ministry@gcts.edu).

V. Exam  Sit for a 1-hour final exam. This exam will be closed-book and is best taken at the end of the course. Exam will be offered online in Sakai, and is to be taken with a proctor present.

VI. Scripture Memory  Memorize Romans 1:16 in any standard Bible version or translation.

VII. Interactivity  Complete the interactivity requirements:

Purpose

• To enhance distance learning by encouraging and providing a context for students to meet and interact with other students taking similar courses and with their course instructors as they work through their Semlink materials. Only Semlink students taking a course for credit are required to complete the interactive component of the course. Non-credit students who are taking Semlink classes for personal enrichment are
encouraged to contact the Semlink office (see the contact information section below) if they want to participate in these discussions.

- As a member of the Association of Theological Schools, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary recognizes the value of interactivity in distance learning and complies with the standards for accreditation set by ATS which include interactivity as a compulsory component of any distance learning program that wishes to continue granting credit for its courses.

- It is highly recommended that you spread out your completion of the interactivity requirements outlined below over the six months you have to complete the course, rather than attempting to complete them all at once or very near your due date. By spreading out your completion of the requirements, you will be able to benefit fully from your interaction with other students and receive feedback from the course teaching fellow.

Requirements

The interaction requirement for Semlink courses is to be fulfilled in two ways:

1) An online discussion forum: converse with other students and with instructors.
   - Integration questions will be posted by the team of Semlink teaching fellows. These questions are designed to encourage you to analyze, synthesize, and apply what you are learning in your course in a cross-curricular environment. You will be interacting with other students who are taking this course and related courses.
   - Discussions may be based on current events, culture, literature, case studies, and scripture.
   - You are required to participate four (4) times in the discussions relating to your area of study. For example, if you were taking “The Church to the Reformation,” you would be required to participate in the Church History integration discussions four times during the six months you have to complete the course.
   - You may also submit an integration question for your course to your Semlink teaching fellow (see contact information section below). If your question is selected for use, it may fulfill one of your four required interactions in the discussion forums.
   - For this course you will also be posting 10 of the sermon illustrations that you collect. Together these 10 illustrations will fulfill one of your four required interactions in the discussion forums.
   - To ensure successful completion of this requirement, please complete your participation in the discussion forums at least one week prior to your course due date. This will allow sufficient time for you to resubmit any responses if necessary.
   - Please note that there are many ongoing discussions on the Semlink website.
While you are welcome to participate in any of these discussions, only participation in the discussions listed for your course will be given course credit.

2) **Email-based conversation** with a Semlink teaching fellow.

- Together with the lecturing professor and/or mentoring professor, the Semlink teaching fellows have written a conversation starter, designed to tie together some of the overarching themes raised in the course.
- The conversation starter will be posted on the Semlink website. You will go to the Semlink website, navigate to your course homepage (see below), and submit your first response to the question via email. The submission will be read and responded to by your Semlink teaching fellow, who will take the conversation further based on your original thoughts and comments.
- You are required to email a total of three (3) times, including your original response to the conversation starter.
- Note that the conversation starter for this course is related to the sample sermon listening assignment, so you will need to complete that work before you begin your email-based conversation.
- Please allow a minimum of one month to complete this conversation to allow time for the teaching fellow to respond. Allow five business days for a response to each of your submissions.

To find the website and specific interactivity details for your course:

1. Log on to the Semlink website (www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/semlink) and enter the section for current students.
2. Select your course from the menu, and go to the homepage for your course. This page contains links to the specific interactivity requirements for your course and to

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**If this requirement is not completed by the date on which your final assignment for the course is submitted to our office, the final assignment will be held and will not be submitted to the professor for grading until the interactivity requirement is complete. Therefore, there will be no final grade given for the course until the interactivity requirement is fulfilled. Once this requirement is completed, the professor will receive and grade the final assignment and you will be given a final grade for the course. If you have not completed all interactivity requirements within ONE MONTH after the end date of the course, you will automatically fail the course with no exceptions.**
other Semlink resources.

3. If you are unable to access the internet, please contact the Semlink office (see the contact information section below) and alternative arrangements will be made.

**Please Note**: In the case of any differences between the specific interactivity requirements given for this course on the website and the information given in this workbook, the website takes precedence.

**Evaluation of Submissions**
- You will not be assigned a letter grade for your participation in Semlink interactivity, but completion of your interactivity requirements is required to receive credit for your course. **If you fail to complete the interactivity requirements, you will fail your course.**
- Your submissions will be evaluated as complete or incomplete based on quality of thought and clarity of expression (see the general guidelines described below and the specific guidelines found on your course homepage on the Semlink website).
- In the event of an unacceptable response, you will be informed and given the opportunity to expand or re-submit your thoughts, provided that your final submissions are made before the course due date. Submissions made after the course due date will be subject to penalty.

**General Guidelines for Submissions**
- Proper grammar and punctuation are required (no web-speak).
- Your response should demonstrate original thought and interaction with the issues being addressed, including a coherent flow of thought or argument. Please answer the questions fully and specifically.

**Grading**

The course assignments carry weight as follows:

- 3-Page Review of Willhite and Gibson ........................................ 5%
- 5-Page Review of Stott ........................................................... 5%
- 3-Page Review of Gibson (*Someone Else's Sermon?*) .................. 5%
- Outline for first sermon ......................................................... 5%
- 8-minute sermon and manuscript .......................................... 20%
Sample sermon exercise ........................................................10%
15-minute sermon with outline and manuscript ....................... 40%
Final Exam ........................................................................10%

However, since this is a skills course, I take into consideration improvement in the student’s performance in oral assignments. Conversely, a digression in a student’s performance is also a factor that goes into grading.

If one does not collect all the illustrations required for the course, then the student will receive zero points for that assignment. Likewise, not reading the textbooks has point-deducting consequences (10 points). This will especially come into play if a student is border-line between grades.

The Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary Student Handbook states:

- Grade A is given for meeting with conspicuous excellence the demands which can fairly be made in relation to the requirements of the course. These demands would normally include unusual accuracy in fact, completeness in detail, perfection in form of work, independence of method, grasp of the subject as a whole and constructive imagination.
- Grade B is given for exceeding the minimum satisfactory attainment and for meeting certain aspects of the course with excellence.
- Grade C is given for attaining satisfactory familiarity with the course and for demonstrating at least some ability to use this knowledge in a satisfactory manner.
- Grade D is a passing mark but indicates unsatisfactory control over the material.
- Grade F declares that the course has been failed.

For all written assignments, I am looking for good use of grammar, interaction with the material, spelling, etc. The Student Handbook spells out the rigorous call for excellence in all grading assignments, which will be followed in the course.
Tips on Sermon Preparation

Preachers discover that their calendar or weekly planner is different from the calendars of other people. Preachers are surprised to find that there are only three or four days between Sundays! What we preachers learn is that sermons, like the poor, are always with us. Yet, the responsibility of preaching is an enjoyable weight. Preaching is enjoyable in that we drink deeply from God’s Word and we have the delightful privilege of sharing our study with others for their benefit as they endeavor to grow in their faith and honor God.

But preaching is also a weight. Preaching encompasses a responsibility that teachers like us are called to handle with great care—carefulness in handling God’s Word and carefulness in dealing with God’s people. The weight is worth it and through our privileged position we want nothing else than to glorify God.

As you think about the task of sermon preparation, keep the following in mind (see also pages A-5 through A-8 in the Appendix):

1. Engage intentionally in prayer.

You’re learning a process of sermon preparation, but it is not like a sausage machine where all you have to do is put the meat in at one end and at the other end you’re guaranteed perfect sausage links every time!

Preaching is a biblical, theological, spiritual, and practical task. We want to commit ourselves to God’s guidance from text selection to the actual delivery of the message. Give yourself to prayer.

2. Do your homework.

Study the passage—the text in its context—and be aware of the wider historical context in which the text is found. Make sure you consider the genre, purpose, argument, structure, and mood of the text.

Try not to make your study of the text too complicated. Too many students—and even pastors—over-prepare to the point that they have a lot of information but have no idea how it all fits together. Remember, you’re not giving an exegesis paper with legs, you’re communicating the idea of the text to people in the 21st century who are in desperate need of hearing it. Be clear about the idea of the text before you even think about the preaching idea or putting together an outline for preaching.

Begin your study of the text a little ahead of time. If you’re preaching weekly, take a
few minutes to read the text for the following week. Try to sketch out the subject, complement and idea of the text. You might even get to a possible homiletical idea. What this short exercise will do is help you to place next week’s text into a simmer mode in your mind. You’ll be pleasantly surprised how much further ahead you’ll be as you work on that text the next week—and pray!

3. Map out your strategy.

When you’re finished with your exegetical study, move to mapping out your sermon. First, your homiletical idea is shaped—it faithfully reflects the intention of the exegetical idea. Second, be sure your outline is crisp and clear, supporting the homiletical idea. The key here is to be clear! Third, be sure you understand the purpose of the passage as you shape the purpose of the sermon.

Word your main moves (points) in the present tense as you now move to application of the text. Application begins with the introduction and ends with the conclusion. So, keep your listeners in mind as you prepare the outline. You’re not delivering a historical lecture but a sermon that’s geared to present-day listeners.

For the introduction your task is to get attention, raise need, and orient the listeners to the text or homiletical idea, or the sermon structure. And when you consider the conclusion, land the plane. End the sermon well as you laser beam your homiletical idea into the minds and hearts of your listeners.

Write out a manuscript that reflects oral expression—the way you talk. Practice your sermon out loud at least three times, allowing it to become a part of you. Do not memorize your manuscript but be familiar with it. If there’s anything that you’ll want to memorize, it’s the outline.

4. Stand up and deliver.

Continuing in a prayerful attitude, preach! You’ve prayed, done your homework, mapped out the sermon and practiced it. Now it’s time to communicate the text to your listeners, helping them to see how the biblical truth intersects with their lives.

When you’re done, give thanks to God—and then, start on the next sermon! Remember, you’ll be preaching again in a few short days!
Sermon Evaluation Form

To classmates who are listening to a student sermon: Thank you for taking the time to assist in evaluating the student preacher. We want you to help the preacher and us by completing this evaluation. Please listen carefully to the sermon and then complete the form after you have heard the preacher preach.

1. If you can put it into one sentence, what is the main idea of the sermon preached?

2. What was clear to you?

3. What was not clear to you?

4. What did the preacher do well?

5. What should the preacher to work on in his/her preaching for future improvement?

Directions: The student preacher will complete the date, occasion (worship service, evening service, prayer meeting, etc.), church name, and address lines on the form. The evaluator and student will sign the form following the preaching of the sermon.

Date: ___________________________  Occasion: __________________________
Evaluator’s Name: ___________________  Signature: ________________________
Student Preacher’s Name: _______________  Signature: ______________________
Church Name: __________________________________________
Address:  __________________________________________

Student: Please send Church Setting Sermon Evaluation forms to the course professor with the sermon for his evaluation.
## Course Outline

This course outline contains both required due dates (under bold headings in the right column) and suggested progress through the course. Please feel free to organize your work in the way that works best for your schedule and study habits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
<th>Reading</th>
<th>Listening</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1: The Worlds of the Expositor</td>
<td>Stott Intro. &amp; ch. 1</td>
<td></td>
<td>Begin collecting Sermon Illustrations and memorize Romans 1:16.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td>Stott ch. 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2: Defining Expository Preaching</td>
<td>Robinson 9-32* Stott ch. 3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Begin work on the Sample Sermon Exercise, which will guide your e-mail conversations with your teaching fellow. Begin interactivity when you have completed this exercise.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3: What’s the Big Idea? &amp; 4: The Essentials of an Effective Sermon</td>
<td>Robinson 33-50 Stott ch. 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>5: Choose the Passage to be Preached &amp; 6: Study the Passage and Gather Your Notes</td>
<td>Robinson 51-66 Stott ch. 5</td>
<td>PulpitTalk 6.3</td>
<td>Select two biblical passages for your two sermons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>7: Discover the Exegetical Idea &amp; 8: Analyze the Exegetical Idea</td>
<td>Robinson 66-100 Stott ch. 6</td>
<td>PulpitTalk 4.2</td>
<td>Begin work on your 8-minute sermon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>9: Formulate the Homiletical Idea</td>
<td>Robinson 101-107 Stott ch. 7</td>
<td>PulpitTalk 4.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>10: Determine the Purpose for the Sermon &amp; 11: Decide How to Accomplish the Sermon's Purpose</td>
<td>Robinson 107-131 Stott ch. 8 &amp; epilogue</td>
<td>PulpitTalk 7.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>12: Outline the Sermon</td>
<td>Robinson 131-137 Sunukjian 27-41 &amp; 305-310 (see Appendix) Willhite and Gibson Intro. &amp; chs. 1-2</td>
<td>PulpitTalk 4.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>13: Fill in the Sermon Outline</td>
<td>Robinson 139-164 Willhite and Gibson chs. 3-4</td>
<td>PulpitTalk 3.3</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Remember to complete the exercises at the end of each chapter of Robinson’s book.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>14: Preparing the Introduction and Conclusion</td>
<td>Robinson 165-182 Willhite and Gibson chs. 5-6</td>
<td>PulpitTalk 1.2 &amp; 3.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 12   | 15: Write the Manuscript | Robinson 183-199 Willhite and Gibson chs. 7-9 |  | **Due 3 months after start date:**  
  - Stott Review  
  - 8-Minute Sermon Outline |
| 13   |   | Willhite and Gibson chs. 10-11 |  |  |
| 14   | 16: Deliver the Sermon | Robinson 201-224 Piper Intro. & Part 1 | PulpitTalk 5.1 | **Review corrections to your 8-Minute Sermon Outline and continue work on that sermon.** |
| 15   |   | Piper Part 2 |  |  |
| 16   |   | Piper Part 3 |  |  |
| 17   |   | Gibson (*Someone Else's Sermon?*) Intro. & ch. 1 |  | **Begin work on your 15-minute sermon.** |
| 18   |   | Gibson (*Someone Else's Sermon?*) ch. 2-3 |  |  |
| 19   |   | Gibson (*Someone Else's Sermon?*) ch. 4 |  | **Due 5 months after start date:**  
  - Gibson (*Someone Else's Sermon?*) Review  
  - 15-Minute Sermon Outline |
| 20   |   | Gibson (*Someone Else's Sermon?*) ch. 5, Afterword, & Appendix |  |  |
| 21   |   | Bounds chs. 1-4 |  | **Review corrections to your 15-minute Sermon Outline and continue work on that sermon.** |
| 22   |   | Bounds chs. 5-8 |  |  |
| 23   |   | Bounds chs. 9-12 |  |  |
| 24   |   | Bounds chs. 13-16 |  |  |
| 25   |   | Bounds chs. 17-20 |  |  |
| 26   |   |   |  | **Due 6 months after start date:**  
  - Completion Report (see p ii)  
  - Final Exam  
  - 15-Minute Sermon Recording, Manuscript, and Audience Evaluation Sheets |
Frequently Asked Questions

How do I arrange to take my exam?
1. Contact the Semlink office via email (semlink.office@gcts.edu) or phone (978-646-4144 or 1-877-736-5465, toll free). Please allow at least 48 hours to process your exam request as well as additional time for mailing to destination.
2. If you are a student at the Hamilton campus, your exam will be sent to Goddard Library.
3. If you are a student at CUME, Charlotte, or off-campus, you will need to find a proctor and provide proctor contact information when requesting your exam.
   a. Your proctor should be a church official, an education official, or a librarian. Your proctor cannot be a GCTS student or a family member.
   b. Your exam will be sent directly to your proctor, so you must provide a mailing address for him or her.
   c. Your proctor will be responsible for mailing your exam to the Semlink address provided in the contact information section. **Please provide your proctor with an envelope with pre-paid postage for this purpose.** The proctor must mail the exam so that it is postmarked by the course due date in order to avoid late penalty. Any work postmarked after the due date will be considered late.
4. You may use an English Bible (and/or Hebrew Bible) during your exams. It may have cross-references and a concordance, but it may **not** have any study notes in the Pentateuch, whether written by you or the publisher. You will **not** be permitted to use a computer.

How do I send in written work?
1. All course work is due by the course due date.
2. Course materials should be sent to the Semlink office address provided in the contact information section.
3. Any course work that is mailed to the Semlink office must be postmarked by your due date to avoid penalty.
4. Please include the address to which you would like your work sent. For Hamilton students, please use your campus box number.
How do I request an extension?
1. For Hamilton, Charlotte, or CLUME students, extensions should be requested through your home campus’ registration office.
2. For off-campus students, extensions should be requested through the Semlink office.
3. Extension requests must be made in writing and must be submitted on or before the due date of your course. Your extension request should include the unavoidable/avoidable circumstances that have prevented you from completing your course and the amount of time lost due to those circumstances. You should also state what work you have completed and what is still unfinished. Please state for which course work you are seeking an extension.
4. Off-campus students who have not matriculated on to a campus should submit extension requests with a $25 processing fee per course.
5. Generally, extension requests based on avoidable circumstances are granted with a grade penalty.
6. Extensions cannot be granted after the due date.
7. You cannot withdraw from a course after receiving an extension.

How do I withdraw from a course?
1. You can withdraw from your course up to the due date.
2. For Hamilton, Charlotte, and CLUME students, requests to withdraw must be in writing and are to be submitted to your home campus registration office.
3. For off-campus students, requests to withdraw must be in writing and are to be submitted to the Semlink office.
4. Should you withdraw from the course, the tuition refund policy is as follows:
   a. 100% up to 15 days, 50% up to 30 days, no refund after 30 days.
   b. Material cost is non-refundable.
   c. Courses dropped prior to the 15 day deadline will not appear on your transcript. A “W” (withdrawn) will appear on transcripts for courses dropped after 15 days.

What is the penalty for late work?
All course work submitted to the Semlink office after the due date will be assessed a grade penalty. On-campus students should contact their home campus’ registration office for more information on the specific grade penalty that will be applied. Off-campus students should contact the Semlink office.
When is my course due?
1. Your course due date can be found on the confirmation sheet sent to you separately. We highly recommend that you make this sheet a part of your course materials.
2. Your course is due six months after your start date which is based on the date you registered for the course allowing time for preparation of the course materials by the Semlink office and shipping the materials to you.
3. Graduating seniors should note that during their final semester the due date for Semlink courses will be the due date for course work for seniors.

Contact Information
At Semlink, there are a number of different offices working together as a team in order to care for you as a student. Please read the following descriptions and contact the appropriate office when questions arise.

For Questions About: Course materials
Administrative issues
Exam requirements
Registration information
Extensions
Due dates
If you’re unsure whom to call

Contact:
The Semlink Office
The Semlink office handles your registration, course materials, and exams. They also handle extensions and other administrative issues. If you are unsure whom to call, the Semlink office will be able to direct you.
Phone: 978-646-4144 or 1-877-736-5465 (toll free)
Fax: 978-646-4565
Email: semlink.office@gcts.edu
Address: Semlink Office
130 Essex Street
S. Hamilton, MA 01982
Hours: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday-Friday

For Questions About: Ordering textbooks

Contact:
The Gordon-Conwell BookCentre
The BookCentre stocks the required textbooks for every course.
Phone: 1-888-252-4287 (toll free) or 978-646-4017
Email: books@gcts.edu
Website: gcts.christianbook.com
For Questions About: Interactivity requirements

For Questions About: Course content
Suggested supplemental reading

Contact:

The Semlink Teaching Fellows
The Semlink teaching fellows have been selected for demonstrated proficiency in a particular subject area. The teaching fellows work closely with the mentoring professor to help you to interact at a deeper level with the course content and to provide you with opportunities to interact with other students and instructors in an area related to this course.
Email: semlink.ministry@gcts.edu
Website: www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/semlink

Contact:
The Mentoring Professor
The mentoring professor grades your course work, sets the course syllabus, and can answer questions about the course content. Please contact the mentoring professor only with the above type of questions.
Name: Dr. Scott M. Gibson
Phone: 978-646-4152
Email: sgibson@gcts.edu
Address: Dr. Scott M. Gibson
130 Essex Street
S. Hamilton, MA 01982