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RELS 107.01: Introduction to New Testament Studies

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RELS 107
Section 01 (CRN 73571)
Fall Semester 2002
3 Credits
TTh 9:40-11 AM
Room: ED 312

Dr. Thomas R. Lee
Office: LA 159
Office Hours: T 11AM-1PM
W 10-11 AM
Other times by appointment
721-5347 (study--may leave messages)

INTRODUCTION TO NEW TESTAMENT STUDIES

This course will examine (1) the history of early Christianity, (2) the literature produced by the early church, and (3) the methodology used by modern biblical scholarship in studying ancient texts. As we work our way through the New Testament text, we will employ the tools of literary and historical criticism. Emphasis will be on studying what the text "meant" in its original context and not on what it may "mean" for particular religious traditions today. Given the pluralistic context of a public university, this course will approach the New Testament from a non-sectarian, non-denominational perspective.

Course Requirements

Class members will be graded on the basis of two one-hour examinations (October 3 and November 7), the final examination (Monday, December 16), and class participation. Regular class attendance is expected, even though the instructor will not routinely take roll. Students, if they desire, may take this course on a P/NP basis. If so, the last day to change from a letter grade to P/NP, or vice versa, is October 14. An examination average of 70 or above is required to pass this course under the P/NP option.

Students who may miss an examination due to illness or a family emergency should consult with the instructor about making up the exam and/or writing a term paper in place of the missed exam. Also, students should consult with the instructor regarding whether or not taking an incomplete in the course is possible. (Note: the university policy on incompletes is on page 21 of the current UM catalogue.)

Required Texts

Achtemeier, Paul J.; Green, Joel B.; and Thompson, Marianne Meye. Introducing the New Testament: Its Literature and Theology. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2001.

The Bible: Old and New Testaments with Apocrypha. Any modern translation (but not a paraphrase) is acceptable. Preferred translations include the NRSV, RSV, NEB, NIV or NAB. The bookstore has a supply of the Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha (which uses the NRSV translation), if you need to purchase a bible for this course.

Class Schedule and Reading Requirements

September 3	Introduction to the course: the New Testament as Literature from Another Time and Another Place
September 5	The New Testament: Scripture and Canon Read: Achtemeier, pp. 1-13, 589-608

- September 10 The World of the New Testament: Its Jewish and Roman Contexts
Read: Achtemeier, pp. 15-51; selections from the Old Testament and Old Testament Apocrypha (assignment to be handed out)
- September 12 The World of the Old Testament (continued)
 Slides of Jerusalem and the Cities of the Decapolis
Read: see September 10 reading assignment
- September 17 Introduction to the Gospels
Read: Achtemeier, pp. 53-87
 Selections from "Q" and the Gospel of Thomas (to be handed out)
- September 19 Introduction to the Gospels (continued)
 Video presentation from the PBS series: "From Jesus to Christ: The First Christians"
- September 23 (Monday) Last Day to Drop Course and Receive Full Refund
- September 24 The Gospel of Mark
Read: Achtemeier, pp. 123-147; and in the bible: Mark, chapters 1-16
- September 26 The Gospel of Matthew
Read: Achtemeier, pp. 89-121; and in the bible, Matthew, chapters 1-28
- October 1 The Gospel of Luke
Read: Achtemeier, pp. 149-174; and in the bible, Luke, chapters 1-24
- October 3 **One Hour Examination**
- October 8 The Acts of the Apostles
Read: Achtemeier, pp. 245-269; and in the bible, Acts, chapters 1-28
- October 10 The Gospel of John
Read: Achtemeier, pp. 175-205; and in the bible, John, chapters 1-21
- October 14 (Monday) Last Day to Drop Course; Last Day to Change Grading Option
- October 15 The Johannine Tradition
Read: Achtemeier, pp. 535-553; and in the bible, the letters of John (1, 2 and 3 John)
- October 17 The Quest for the Historical Jesus-
Read: Achtemeier, pp. 207-244
- October 22 Introduction to Paul and the Letters of the New Testament
 Slides on Early Christianity in Syria
Read: Achtemeier, pp. 271-281 and pp. 283-297
- October 24 Paul's Letters to the Thessalonians
Read: Achtemeier, pp. 427-446; and in the bible, 1 & 2 Thessalonians

October 29	Paul's Letter to the Galatians and Philippians Read: Achtemeier, pp. 355-375, 391-405; and in the bible, Galatians and Philippians
October 31	Paul's Letters to the Corinthians Read: Achtemeier, pp. 327-354
November 5	No Class--Election Day
November 7	One Hour Examination
November 12	Paul's Letter to the Romans Read: Achtemeier, pp. 299-326; and in the bible, Romans, chaps. 1-16
November 14	Paul and the Pauline Tradition Read: Achtemeier, pp. 377-389, 407-426; and in the bible, Ephesians, Colossians and Philemon
November 19	The Pastorals Read: Achtemeier, pp. 447-464; and in the bible, 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus
November 21	Guest lecture by Jean Larson on feminist and other perspectives on the New Testament
November 26	Feminist and other perspectives on the New Testament (continued)
December 3	Letter to the Hebrews Read: Achtemeier, pp. 465-490; and in the bible, Hebrews, chaps. 1-13
December 5	The Catholic Epistles Read: Achtemeier, pp. 491-534; and in the bible, James, 1 & 2 Peter, Jude
December 10	The Book of Revelation Read: Achtemeier, pp. 555-588; and in the bible, Revelation, chaps. 1-22
December 12	The Book of Revelation (continued) Review for Final Examination
December 16	Final Examination: Monday, 10:10 AM-12:10 PM, ED 312