

COS 121 Bible I: Introduction

Effective beginning Spring 2019 term

Course Goals - 121 Bible I: Introduction

This course introduces biblical interpretation. Attention is given to the inspiration, formation, and function of the canon and to the development of a methodology of interpretation consistent with the nature of scripture. The importance of the Bible as a witness to the life and faith of ancient Israel and earliest Christianity will be emphasized.

Students will be able to:

1. Articulate the place of scripture in the life of the congregation and the role of the pastor in interpretation.
2. Articulate the role, place and function of the Holy Spirit in the reading and interpretation of the Bible.
3. Understand the inspiration and formation of the canon and its authority within the community of faith.
4. Understand and apply historical, literary, and theological approaches to various types of literature in scripture using Genesis, Amos, Mark, Luke, Acts and Philippians.
5. Develop a method of exegesis consistent with the nature and authority of the Bible.
6. Understand theological hermeneutical approaches in the readings of Both Hebrew and New Testaments.

Text Book List

Unless otherwise noted, please use most recent edition.

Required Texts for 121 Bible I: Introduction

1. Bernhard Anderson, *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible* (Augsburg Books; 4 edition (September 1, 2006); ISBN 978-08006335602).
2. Mark Allan Powell, *Introducing The New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey* (Baker Academic, 2009) ASIN: B004GYIB3Y
3. Michael Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers* (Baker Academic; Revised, Expanded edition (2008); ISBN 978-0801046407).
4. Richard Bauckham, *Bible and Mission: Christian Witness in a Postmodern World* (Baker Academic (January 1, 2004); ISBN 978-0801027710).
5. The New Interpreter's Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version With the Apocrypha (Abingdon, May1, 2003) 978-0687278329

Recommended texts

None

References

Advance Assignments or Pre-Class Assignments:

Assignment 1:

Read closely Genesis 1-11, and carefully read the creation accounts in Genesis 1: 1-2:3 and Genesis 2:4 – 3:24 and write 750 – 1000 words describing the reasons why these two accounts might have been a result of oral transmission or intentionally written to mean what they stand for in the history of the creation of the world. Whether orally transmitted or not, how did each creation account function in the religious life of ancient Israelites worldview and how theologically do they function in the 21st century Christian church? In your response, take note of the repeated words and phrases from Genesis 1 – 11, and describe how these repetitions are markers in helping you understand the nature of God and how you would explain this God to people who believe or may not fully believe in God.

Assignment 2:

The prophets Amos and Hosea were active in the Northern Kingdom of Israel in the mid 8th century BC. In your reading of Anderson, what activities do these two prophets condemn and how can these prophets' message be one to be heard in the 21st century church. Reading the prophet Jeremiah, how in your own understanding does the theology of Covenant be the recurring theme in all the prophets. What makes the messages of these three prophets powerful testimonies to God and God's expectations of people in the world today? What are the parallels in today's church to Israel's transgressions and forgetfulness of its traditions?

Assignment 3: In your reading of Mark Allan Powell chapter 1, pages 15 – 45, summarize the main parts of each section in a way that assists you and your lay people to grasp the history, social, religious and political world of the New Testament books. How is this world similar and different from the 21st century world of your ministry context? Chapter 2 of Mark Allan Powell gives you the nature of New Testament writings and approaches to reading and analyzing these writings. Write a summary of this chapter and pick one approach or method you would use to read and analyze the books of the New Testament. Give one or two reasons as to why you chose the approach among the ones given by the author. In part two of the paper, include the summary message or theme of each of the five Gospels, summary of Paul’s message and a summary of the Book of Revelation. *The paper should be between 750 – 1000 words.*

Assignment 4: Using Michael Gorman’s book, define what exegesis is and list the steps needed to have a well-grounded theological exegesis of the Bible, and in your response, summarize the 8 hermeneutical principles given by the author. Of these 8 principles, which one hermeneutical principle would you use to analyze and apply any of the Bible books. Give some reasons in relation to your choice of principle. The paper should be between 750 – 1000 words.

Assignment 5: Mission or ‘*Missio Dei*’ is what ministry encompasses and so you are to read Richard Baulkham’s book and write 8 – 10-page summary of the book focusing on how you would apply his insights into your ministry context?

Saint Paul Course of Study School Expectations and Preparation

The mission of the Course of Study School is to educate and share in the formation of Local Pastors as effective and faithful spiritual leaders of the ministry of the Church, the body of Jesus Christ in the world.

Our agreement with the Division of Ordained Ministry, General Board of Higher Education and Ministry in Nashville is that we will provide a year-round experiential and classroom learning process. This process assumes cooperation between the instructors, the students and clergy mentors in the annual conferences.

The Division of Ordained Ministry recommends a guideline of 15-20 pages of written work for each course. That translates into 30 to 40 pages of written work for each module. If a student takes four classes (two modules), that individual will write about 80 pages during the year. Those papers are based on the reading of approximately 4-5 textbooks per class.

In order to keep our promise of **year-round learning**, and to keep the assignments from accumulating and overwhelming a student, the book list is available for students so that they can **begin reading** as early as possible. We encourage students to put dates on their calendars and plan for reading days, as well as time for writing. You know the demands of certain religious seasons such as Advent, Lent, and Easter. Work around them.

The writing manual approved by the Saint Paul Course of Study School faculty is: **Turabian's A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 7th edition**. It is recommended that each student have a good collegiate-size American English dictionary of the student's choice in paperback or hardcover and copyrighted since 1998.

Related to Structure

- Use Turabian's *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th edition. You may find further help at www.eturabian.com.
- Unless otherwise indicated, all papers must be typed, 1" margins on all sides, Arial 11 or Times New Roman 12, double-spaced, with indented paragraphs (no additional line spacing between paragraphs), and page numbers. Cover pages and bibliography are not included in assigned page count.
- Cite any quoted sources with appropriately formatted footnotes (not endnotes or parenthetical notes); list these and other sources within an appropriately formatted bibliography. If you use a scriptural reference, cite the translation you use in a footnote and the actual Bible in the bibliography. Each paper should have a bibliography.
- Do not begin sentences with "and" or "but." Do not use contractions. Do not include parenthetical commentary in your papers.
- Use inclusive language when referring to God and/or humankind.
- Use appropriate formatting for page numbering, book titles, etc.
- Double-check spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence fragments, tense agreement, etc.

Related to Content

- Read the assigned books thoroughly.
- Resist the temptation to write a book report! Instead, focus your writing on what the author(s) have to say about the assigned topic(s), integrating your own thoughts about the topic(s).

Related to Critical Thinking

- Read the assigned books thoroughly, making notes of what resonates within you and what brings up resistance in you.
- Are there other books or resources that would be appropriate? Bring them into the conversation.
- Practice being in dialogue with all the authors and their material. Who would say what? How would you and the other writers respond? This practice dialogue will not be included in your papers, but it will help you to move into critical reflection.
- If you strongly agree or disagree with an author's point of view, offer your own affirmation or disagreement, supporting your view with additional resources.
- Watch for unsupported "leaps" made by a writer. What, in your opinion, is missing? Use additional resources to fill in the gaps.

Related to Timeliness

- Submit all your assignments on time.

In the event of an emergency situation, a student may request an **extension** from the Director (not assigned faculty) to the due date for advance assignments. This request may be made via email, and if granted, may extend to a *three-week maximum*. A student may only receive *two extensions during their tenure* as a Saint Paul Course of Study student – so use them wisely. If assignments are not completed, the policies of the COS are such that the student may be asked postpone participation in a particular session of COS until that individual can complete all of the work.

Learning can be fun! Consider your reading as a dialogue with authors – some will be more interesting than others. All will have something to teach us. Share the learning process with friends or colleagues or interested members of your congregations.

Book List

Required Texts. Students are required to read them, use them in their assignments and are accountable in the classroom for any discussion or presentation of materials individually and in groups.

Students may acquire the books in a variety of ways: Order from Cokesbury.com; order from another vendor such as Amazon etc.; purchase a used book; or borrow from a colleague.

Instructions for sending assignments to COS office at Saint Paul School of Theology

Course of Study Students are to upload their papers through Moodle. You will need to set up a Moodle account in order to submit your assignments. If you need assistance in setting up your Moodle account, please contact cos@spst.edu for informational handouts. Additional questions on Moodle can be directed to our IT help desk at helpdesk@spst.edu (hours: M – F 8:00am – 5:00pm).