

## Associated Canadian Theological Schools of Trinity Western University

### **BIB 505A: Biblical Hermeneutics**

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Professor of Old Testament  
Spring - 2019  
3 credit hours  
Prerequisite: RES 502

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Course Dates: Jan. 8 – Apr. 12, 2019  
Class days and times: Mondays  
11:30 am – 2:10 pm

### **I. Course Description**

This course focuses on the development of a systematic approach to the interpretation of Scripture. Although reference is made to various interpretative systems and strategies, special attention is given to the historical-grammatical method. The predominant literary genres of the Bible are examined and relevant principles of interpretation highlighted. Emphasis is placed on understanding the original, intended meaning of Scripture in its canonical context as the basis upon which to prepare expositions and make appropriate contemporary applications.

### **II. Objectives**

By the end of this course, each student should:

- 1) demonstrate knowledge of the basic history of biblical interpretation;
- 2) be able to articulate key theological presuppositions and to engage critically with significant issues involved in the field of biblical hermeneutics;
- 3) evince competence in determining the context and establishing the textual meaning of biblical passages on the basis of sound hermeneutical methodology;
- 4) be conversant with the various literary genres of the Bible and the hermeneutical procedures that are relevant for each genre;
- 5) give evidence of employing appropriate tools and resources for the study and practice of biblical interpretation;
- 6) demonstrate an ability to formulate applications that are consistent with the original intention of biblical passages and the trajectories that they sketch.

### **III. Course Textbooks**

Enns, Peter. *Inspiration and Incarnation*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015. 198 pages. [= PE]

Klein, William W., Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2017. 609 pages. [= KBH]

McKnight, Scot. *The Blue Parakeet: Rethinking How You Read the Bible*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2018. 304 pages. [= SM]

### **IV. Course Assignments**

Typically, a student is expected to spend approximately 40 hours to complete the work necessary to earn 1 semester hour of credit, hence 120 hours for a 3 credit course. This includes time spent in class, so unexcused absences will result in grade reductions. If a student is absent from more than two classes for any reason, s/he will either be required to do make-up work to avoid further grade reductions or will have to retake the course to receive credit for it, depending on the number of absences. For full credit, assignments must be completed on time. Grades for late written work will be reduced 5% per day (weekends = 1 day) to a maximum reduction of 35%. All assignments must be completed in order to receive credit for this course. Those that have not come in by April 12, 2019 will not be accepted.

Several kinds of assignments have been created to help students work through the required material and to acquire the skills that are necessary for the responsible interpretation of Scripture.

1) Readings and Review Paper:

Students will read the three course textbooks (PE, KBH, and SM) in their entirety.

Then in a 2000 word review paper students will discuss the effectiveness of the course textbooks in orienting them to the history and practice of biblical interpretation. The review will be submitted along with a signed Reading Statement (due April 8). This will count for 30% of the total course grade.

2) Participation and Class Presentation

Students will participate in classroom discussions and online forums (Jan. 14, 21, 28, Apr. 8) on subjects related to the assigned readings and other topics. Furthermore, each student will do a short class presentation on an assigned topic. More information will be provided via the Moodle site. This will count for 25% of the total grade.

3) Hermeneutics Paper

Students will select one of the following passages for analysis in accordance with appropriate interpretative methodology: Deuteronomy 20, Joshua 9, Psalm 74, Proverbs 6:1-19, Jeremiah 26:1-19, Mark 8:1-21, Acts 17:16-34, Colossians 2:8-23, Revelation 12. They will write a 4000 word paper in which they:

- a. identify the literary genre(s) of the passage;
- b. describe the hermeneutical process(es) involved in their analysis of it;
- c. discuss relevant biblical, historical, cultural or literary backgrounds which contribute to their understanding of the passage;
- d. outline the structure and describe the compositional flow of the passage;

- e. identify any key word(s), and explain why it/they are key and what it/they mean;
- f. explain any significant point(s)/idea(s)/theme(s) to which the preceding steps lead the person who studies this passage;
- g. suggest at least one specific, contemporary application/illustration that you would use to drive home this/these point(s) if you were expositing this passage in your home church congregation.

This paper is to be well researched, properly footnoted, and is to include an outline/table of contents (the headings of which appear in the body of the paper as well) and a bibliography. You may consult the class texts, reference works (e.g., a concordance, Bible dictionaries/encyclopedias, atlases, theological dictionaries, commentaries, etc.), and other reputable and recent books and journals/periodicals (but do not rely on Study Bible notes). At least ten such sources should be used. However, be sure to employ these sources for background and contextual information. Do not simply survey the interpretations of commentators for the passage that you investigate, but give evidence of having worked through interpretative issues for yourself. Citation or other use of sources must be scrupulously documented. This assignment will be worth 45% of the total grade. This paper is due on April 1 and is worth 45% of the total course grade.

Notes:

1. The grades for written assignments will be based on both their content and the quality of the student’s writing.
2. Plagiarism in submitted assignments will not be tolerated. Penalties may range from receiving an F on the paper to failing the entire course.

**Grading Scale**

Letter Grade	Assessment	Grade Point
A+	Superior	4.30
A	Excellent	4.00
A-	Very Good	3.70
B+	Proficient	3.30
B	Good	3.00
B-	Average	2.70
C+	Adequate	2.30
C	Acceptable	2.00
C-	Needs Work	1.70
F	Below Standard	0.00

**Grade Allocations**

1. Readings, Reading Statement, Review Paper (April 8) .....30%
2. Online Forums (Jan. 14, 21, 28, Apr. 8), Class Discussions, Class Presentation .....25%
3. Hermeneutics Paper (April 1) .....45%

## **V. Submission of Assignments**

Written assignments should be submitted as Word documents.

## **VI. Course Outline**

- Jan. 14 The Need for Hermeneutics. Read KBH, pp. 27-65; SM, pp. 9-38; PE, pp. ix-xiv, 1-11. Forum 1.
- 21 The Interpreter and the Goal. Read KBH, pp. 201-290; SM, pp. 39-87; PE, pp. 13-60. Forum 2.
- 28 The Canon, Translations, and the History of Interpretation. Read KBH, pp. 66-197; SM, pp. 89-122; PE, pp. 61-101. Forum 3.
- Feb. 4 General Hermeneutics: Prose. Read KBH, pp. 293-360; SM, pp. 123-154; PE, pp. 103-155.
- 11 General Hermeneutics: Poetry. Read KBH, pp. 361-413.
- 18 NO CLASS (Reading Week & Modular Courses)
- 25 Application. Read KBH, pp. 571-636; PE, pp. 157-193.
- March 4 Special Hermeneutics: Narratives, Law. Read KBH, pp. 417-450; SM, pp. 155-194.
- 11 Special Hermeneutics: Psalms, Wisdom. Read KBH, pp. 451-461, 493-505.
- 18 Special Hermeneutics: Prophecy, Apocalyptic. Read KBH, pp. 462-493, 505-509.
- 25 Special Hermeneutics: Gospels, Acts. Read KBH, pp. 510-541.
- April 1 Special Hermeneutics: Epistles, Revelation. Read KBH, pp. 541-567; SM, pp. 195-261. Hermeneutics Paper.
- 8 Now What?: SM, pp. 262-67, 273-318. Forum 4.  
Review Paper & Reading Statement.

## **VII. Select Bibliography**

See PE, pp. 9-11, 56-60, 99-101, 152-155; KBH, pp. 637-681; SM, Notes, pp. 319-333.

### ***Supplement: Important Academic Notes from ACTS***

**Web Support – Student Portal** <https://www1.twu.ca/services>

All students at TWU have a TWUPass username and password. This is determined at the time of an online application or can be managed through the computing services help desk or the link on the student portal. The student's email account is also available through this student portal and is vital for communication about grades, account statements, lost passwords, sign-up instructions, etc. If the student does not know his/her account or password, there is a link at the login area called "I forgot my password." When one clicks on that link, one will be walked through the process of retrieving one's account information.

### **Campus Closure**

In the event of deteriorating weather conditions or other emergency situations, every effort will be made to communicate information regarding the cancellation of classes to the following radio stations CKNW (980 AM), CKWX (1130 AM), STAR FM (107.1 FM), PRAISE (106.5 FM), and KARI (550 AM). As well, an announcement will be placed on the University's campus closure notification message box (604.513.2147) and on the front page of the University's website (<http://www.twu.ca> – also see <http://www.twu.ca/campus/campus-notification.html> for more details).

An initial announcement regarding the status of the campus and cancellation of classes will be made at 6:00 a.m. and will cover all classes that begin before 1:00 p.m. A second announcement pertaining to classes that begin between 1:00 p.m. and 5 p.m. will be made at 11:00 a.m. A third announcement pertaining to classes that begin after 5:00 p.m. will be made at 3:00 p.m.

### **Paper Formatting**

Students need to adhere to Turabian Notes (Bibliography) format except in counselling courses, for which APA format is used, and in CanIL courses.

Students are strongly encouraged to use EndNote Basic/Web (available through the library home page [www.twu.ca/library](http://www.twu.ca/library) - lower left) as their bibliographical manager and as a tool for formatting bibliographies. It is free. The link to EndNote from the library home page provides detailed instructions. Students will need to be aware of the need to “clean up” most bibliographies generated by this program. Students are encouraged to view the documents on the following websites for format samples:

[http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian\\_citationguide.html](http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html) or <http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>. In EndNote Basic/Web the available formatting styles are those of Turabian Bibliography, and APA 6<sup>th</sup> edition. For Turabian, there are two formats – Notes (Bibliography) and Reference List (a short format citation style). ACTS uses the Notes (Bibliography) format, not Reference List.

Counselling students are expected to purchase the APA Publications Manual. More information can be found at the following website: <http://www.apastyle.org/pubmanual.html>.

For free online programs that will enable students to create properly formatted bibliography citations, they should go to <http://www.calvin.edu/library/knightcite/> (“Chicago” stands for “Turabian”) or <http://www.sourceaid.com/citationbuilder/>

CANIL students can locate this on the CANIL intranet, under the “student” side. More information is given to incoming students in the fall.

**Please check with your professor to see which style he/she recommends you use!!**

### **Course Evaluations**

Course evaluations are important for improving teaching outcomes, faculty professional development, and the student learning context. Completion of course evaluations is, therefore, considered to be a course expectation. Professors will schedule time for students to fill out online course evaluations (20-30 minutes) on their personal laptops or a collegium computer during the last scheduled class of the semester. Students who are absent that day or who are otherwise

unable to complete the online course evaluation during the last class will be expected to make every effort to do so by the last day of exams. Information about how to access online evaluation forms will be provided to the faculty and students prior to the last week of classes by the ACTS Administration.

### **Research Ethics**

Please note that all research projects involving human participants undertaken by members of the TWU university community (including projects done by ACTS students to satisfy course or degree requirements) **MUST** be approved by the Trinity Western University Research Ethics Board. Information and forms may be found at <http://www.twu.ca/research/research/research-ethics/default.html>. Those needing additional clarification may contact the ACTS Academic Director's office. Please allow at least three (3) weeks from the date of submission for a review of the application.

### **Academic Integrity and Avoiding Plagiarism at TWU**

Christian scholars at TWU regard academic integrity to be a core value. Students are invited into this scholarly culture and are required to abide by the principles of sound academic scholarship. This means that all members of the TWU academic community must avoid all forms of plagiarism and cheating in scholarly work. ACTS uses the TWU Student Handbook as a guide for seminary students. Though some features in the handbook are focused on the university's undergraduate population, it provides the essential student life information for ACTS students as well. It can be found online at: <http://www.twu.ca/studenthandbook/>.

Learning what constitutes plagiarism and avoiding it is the student's responsibility. An excellent resource in this regard has been prepared by TWU Librarian William Badke and is freely available for download (PPT file) or can be viewed in flash (self-running) tutorials of different lengths:

<http://acts.twu.ca/library/plagiarism.ppt>

<http://acts.twu.ca/library/Plagiarism.swf> (14 minute flash tutorial)

[http://acts.twu.ca/library/Plagiarism\\_Short.swf](http://acts.twu.ca/library/Plagiarism_Short.swf) (8 minute flash tutorial)

### **Equity of Access**

Students with disabilities who need assistance are encouraged to contact the Equity of Access Office upon admission to TWU to discuss their specific needs. All disabilities must be recently documented by an appropriately certified professional and such documentation should include a statement regarding the educational impact of the disability along with recommended accommodations. Within the first two weeks of the semester, students must meet with their professors to agree on accommodations appropriate to each class. Students should follow the steps detailed by the Equity of Access Office outlined on the TWU website at

<http://twu.ca/life/wellness/learningresources/disabilities-and-equity-of-access/steps-to-attaining-disability-services.html>.

## *Appendix: Live-Streamed Courses*

A live-streamed course makes it possible for students at a distance to observe and also to participate interactively with an on-campus class in real time. Those who attend a class by live-streaming see and hear the instructor. They can watch class media presentations (e.g. PowerPoint) on their computer screens. They can follow class discussions, posing questions and making comments of their own. They can join in-group discussions with other learners when the class breaks into smaller groups. Through internet-based simulcast, they are able to share all the essential elements of the formal class experience with those who attend class in person.

Unless otherwise stated in the syllabus, live-streaming students will do the same course assignments and follow the same course schedule as on-campus students.

### Requirements for Participating in a Live-streamed Course

- Because the number of live-stream participants to a course is limited, ***students must receive faculty permission prior to the beginning of the course*** in order to participate through live-streaming.
- ***Students must participate in classes in real-time***, as they would if they were attending class in person. For example, those who take a live-streamed course that meets on Thursday mornings will be expected to be in that class virtually, or physically, when that class meets. (A live-streaming student who is in the area and able to do so may attend class in person when possible if he/she wishes.)

ACTS has the capacity to record live-streamed courses for later viewing, but we do not record them as a matter of routine. If it is difficult for students to participate in a class session, they may ask the instructor for permission to watch recorded versions of the class. This will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.

- Participation in a course through live-streaming ***requires a fast and consistent internet connection (ADSL or cable), a reasonably up-to-date computer system, a webcam, and a quality headset with a microphone***. Students must familiarize themselves with the live-streaming software platform and ensure that their link, webcam, and headset are working properly before the first class session.

Please arrange for a practice run on the system with the instructor prior to class, especially if this is your first live-stream course. This can be arranged by email.

- As much as possible, ***be sure you are fully ready for each class session before the class begins***. To the degree that logging in and connecting with the system can be done from your end, there is some flexibility for you to “arrive” as you are able. But testing the system and other logistics that require faculty assistance should be done before class starts. The instructor will do his/her best to ensure that everything is in place for the live-

stream session; but he/she cannot allow live-stream setup to significantly delay or interfere with the smooth flow of the class session for other students once class begins.

- Arrange a backup plan with your instructor in case of system failure. ACTS uses high-caliber, current equipment and communication platforms for live-streaming, but hardware and internet connections are not infallible and do occasionally fail. Your instructor cannot stop class in order to troubleshoot and resolve technical problems in the unlikely event that these occur. To minimize possible disruption in the case of a loss of connection:
  - Provide email, text, or phone contact information so that he/she can contact you at the next natural break in the class.
  - Discuss the possibility of a back-up link to the class in case of system failure. (E.g.: a skype or phone link if the Webex link fails.)
  - Have a plan for follow-up contact with the instructor and/or with a fellow student to fill any gaps in your interaction with the class (as you would if you had to miss a class for other reasons).

Note that under the policy guidelines of our accrediting body, the Association of Theological Schools, live-stream courses are classified as “distance” education and are subject to the normal policies, limitations, and expectations that apply to distance courses. See the ACTS academic catalogue, or consult with the Academic Program Advisor or your Program Chair if you have any questions about the way that distance courses operate within your degree program.



**Reading Statement  
Biblical Hermeneutics  
BIB 505A**

Assigned Readings:

- Jan. 14 The Need for Hermeneutics. Read KBH, pp. 27-65; SM, pp. 9-38; PE, pp. ix-xiv, 1-11.
- 21 The Interpreter and the Goal. Read KBH, pp. 201-290; SM, pp. 39-87; PE, pp. 13-60.
- 28 The Canon, Translations, and the History of Interpretation. Read KBH, pp. 66-197; SM, pp. 89-122; PE, pp. 61-101.
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- 11 General Hermeneutics: Poetry. Read KBH, pp. 361-413.
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- March 4 Special Hermeneutics: Narratives, Law. Read KBH, pp. 417-450; SM, pp. 155-194.
- 11 Special Hermeneutics: Psalms, Wisdom. Read KBH, pp. 451-461, 493-505.
- 18 Special Hermeneutics: Prophecy, Apocalyptic. Read KBH, pp. 462-493, 505-509.
- 25 Special Hermeneutics: Gospels, Acts. Read KBH, pp. 510-541.
- April 1 Special Hermeneutics: Epistles, Revelation. Read KBH, pp. 541-567; SM, pp. 195-261.
- 8 Now What?: SM, pp. 262-67, 273-318.

*Record the percentages for the appropriate options below. Then sign (legibly and in English) and date this statement. Due: April 8, 2019.*

I completed \_\_\_\_\_% of the assigned readings.

I failed to complete \_\_\_\_\_% of the assigned readings.

**NB:** The total of the preceding percentages cannot exceed 100%!!

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Please print your name (in English!) \_\_\_\_\_