THEO100201 Biblical Heritage 2
Summer, 2015  3 Credits

Professor John A. Darr             darr@bc.edu
Office: Stokes Hall, 317N           617-552-3884
Off. Hours: Tue/Th  5-6 pm
Class schedule: Tue/Th  6--9:15 pm
Stokes Hall, 103S

Boston College Mission Statement

Strengthened by more than a century and a half of dedication to academic excellence, Boston College commits itself to the highest standards of teaching and research in undergraduate, graduate and professional programs and to the pursuit of a just society through its own accomplishments, the work of its faculty and staff, and the achievements of its graduates. It seeks both to advance its place among the nation's finest universities and to bring to the company of its distinguished peers and to contemporary society the richness of the Catholic intellectual ideal of a mutually illuminating relationship between religious faith and free intellectual inquiry.

Boston College draws inspiration for its academic societal mission from its distinctive religious tradition. As a Catholic and Jesuit university, it is rooted in a world view that encounters God in all creation and through all human activity, especially in the search for truth in every discipline, in the desire to learn, and in the call to live justly together. In this spirit, the University regards the contribution of different religious traditions and value systems as essential to the fullness of its intellectual life and to the continuous development of its distinctive intellectual heritage.

Course Description

An introduction to the literature, religious ideas, and historical settings of the New Testament. Focus is on major biblical concepts such as Christology, ecclesiology, grace, election, and ethics in the Gospels, the Pauline epistles, the Acts of the Apostles, and other canonical books.

Course Objectives

1. Gaining factual knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends).
2. Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, and theories.
3. Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments, and points of view.
4. The student will demonstrate knowledge across cultural settings and will learn the impact of culture, gender, and age in the Bible as demonstrated by intellectual interaction with ancient Mediterranean cultures and customs, and the impact of biblical texts on the development of ideas about God, humans, and nature.
5. The student will demonstrate ethical knowledge pertaining to the Bible by engaging Jesus’ teachings in parables and “sermons,” and Paul’s ethical exhortations in letters to his churches.

Grading

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<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper**</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Examination</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<td>Final Examination</td>
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*Attendance counts. A second unexcused absence will drop the class participation grade to zero. A third unexcused absence will drop the course grade by a full letter. Four unexcused absences mean failure in the course. Remember that each night session equals a full week’s worth of daytime classroom sessions during the regular semester. For more on general attendance policies, see below.

**The paper must be written (on time) for the student to pass the course.

*Summer Grading System*

The undergraduate grading system consists of twelve categories: A (4.00), A- (3.67), excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), B- (2.67), good; C+ (2.33), C (2.00), C- (1.67), satisfactory; D+ (1.33), D (1.00), D- (.67), passing but unsatisfactory; F (.00), failure; I (.00), incomplete; F (.00), course dropped without notifying office; W (.00), official withdrawal from course. The graduate grading system is A (4.00), A- (3.67), Excellent; B+ (3.33), B (3.00), good; B- (2.67), C (2.00), passing but not for degree credit; F (.00), failure.

Grade Reports. All students are required to log into the web through Agora to access their summer grades. Students must utilize their BC username and password to log on. If your username or password is not known, the HELP Desk located in the Campus Technology Resource Center (CTRC) in O’Neill Library will issue a new one. The CTRC requires a valid picture ID (a BC ID, driver’s license or passport) to obtain your password.

**Required Texts**

Bible (New Revised Standard Version or equivalent)  
R. Pregeant. Engaging the New Testament

**Recommended Texts**

K. Aland. Synopsis of the Four Gospels (in English).

**Important Policies**

**Written Work**

Graduate and undergraduate students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough, yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using APA, MLA, CLA format per instructors decision. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation,
and spelling. You are encouraged to make use of campus resources for refining writing skills as needed [http://www.bc.edu/libraries/help/tutoring.html].

Scholarship and Academic Integrity
It is expected that students will produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to reference properly is plagiarism. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on examinations or assignments, and submitting the same paper or substantially similar papers to meet the requirements of more than one course without seeking permission of all instructors concerned. Scholastic misconduct may also involve, but is not necessarily limited to, acts that violate the rights of other students, such as depriving another student of course materials or interfering with another student’s work.

Request for Accommodations
If you have a disability and will be requesting accommodations for this course, please register with either Dr. Kathy Duggan (dugganka@bc.edu), Associate Director, Connors Family Learning Center (learning disabilities or AHD) or Dean Paulette Durrett, (paulette.durrett@bc.edu), Assistant Dean for students with disabilities, (all other disabilities). Advance notice and appropriate documentation are required for accommodations. For further information, you can locate the disability resources on the web at: http://www.bc.edu/content/bc/libraries/help/tutoring/specialservices.html.

Attendance
Class attendance is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all classes and to arrive by the beginning of and remain for the entire class period. When an occasion occurs that prevents a student from attending class, it is the student’s obligation to inform the instructor of the conflict before the class meets. The student is still expected to meet all assignment deadlines. If a student knows that he or she will be absent on a particular day, the student is responsible for seeing the instructor beforehand to obtain the assignments for that day. If a student misses a class, he or she is responsible for making up the work by obtaining a classmate's notes and handouts and turning in any assignments due. Furthermore, many instructors give points for participation in class. If you miss class, you cannot make up participation points associated with that class. Types of absences that are not typically excused include weddings, showers, vacations, birthday parties, graduations, etc. Additional assignments, penalties and correctives are at the discretion of the instructor. If circumstances necessitate excessive absence from class, the student should consider withdrawing from the class. In all cases, students are expected to accept the decision of the instructor regarding attendance policies specific to the class.

Consistent with our commitment of creating an academic community that is respectful of and welcoming to persons of differing backgrounds, we believe that every reasonable effort should be made to allow members of the university community to observe their religious holidays without jeopardizing the fulfillment of their academic obligations. It is the responsibility of students to review course syllabi as soon as they are distributed and to consult the faculty member promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. If asked, the student should provide accurate information about the
obligations entailed in the observance of that particular holiday. However, it is the
responsibility of the student to complete any and all class requirements for days that are
missed due to conflicts due to religious holidays.

There may be circumstances that necessitate a departure from this policy. Feel free to
contact the Summer Session Office at 617-552-3800 for consultation.

Deadlines
Assignments are due at the beginning of the class period on the specified dates. Late
assignments will be graded accordingly.

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Course Schedule and Assignments

Students are to have done assigned readings for each class before the class
period; they must also show evidence of such reading in class discussions,
written assignments, and exams. Use of electronic devices, including laptop
computers, is prohibited during lectures.

Tue June 23
A. Introduction to the course. Syllabus. Basic aspects of the New
Testament and early Christianity. Old Testament and Second Temple
Jewish roots. The rise of Hellenism. Roman colonialism.

B. How do we get our versions of the bible? Canon, manuscript
production, and translation. The ongoing issue of interpretation.

Course Paper Assignment: Select one of the New Testament books
that we will not be able to cover in class. Write a five-page (double-spaced)
paper in which you describe the author, historical situation, and basic
message of the chosen book. Use research materials suggested in class by
the professor (no internet sources permitted). Write as though you are
presenting this material to your peers in a classroom setting. Cite sources
(footnote, with page numbers). See handout for which books count for this
project and on paper protocol. A hard (paper) copy and a digital copy will
be due from each student on July 21st at the beginning of class.
**Thu June 25**


B. Apocalypticism as the “mother of Christian theology.”

**Reading:** Pregeant 1-94 & 507-515; Daniel 7; Mark 13; Revelation 12-13.

**Tue June 30**


**Reading:** Pregeant 325-344; Philemon; I Thessalonians.

**Assignment:** Reconstruct the *story* behind the Letter to Philemon, and then, identify Paul’s *rhetorical strategies* (ways in which he tries to persuade his reader in this) short missive.

**Thu July 2**


**Reading:** Pregeant 344-354 & 378-388; Philippians, Galatians 3-6; Romans 3-6 & 9-11.

**Assignment:** As you read, consider this question: For Paul, how is a person saved, that is, how does he or she come to be in the right relationship with God?
Tue July 7


**Assignment:** As you read, reflect on how Paul expected believers to behave. In the absence of law and strong authority figures, what was to be a believer’s ethical motivation? Who was the ethical model?

Thu July 9
**Session A:** Midterm Examination (1.5 hours)

Session B: Introduction to the gospels as theological narratives. How the Gospels begin (see assignment below).

**Reading:** Pregeant 167-73; Mark 1:1-11; Matthew 1-2; Luke 1-2; John 1:1-18.

**Assignment:** Be prepared to (a) identify the major differences among these four gospel beginnings, and (b) make reasonable conjectures as to why they differ. Class discussion.

Tue July 14

**Reading:** Pregeant 174-197; Mark 16:1-8.

Thu July 16

**Reading:** Pregeant 200-232; Matthew 5-7 and 28.
**Tue July 21**


Course Paper (in both hard and digital format from each student) due at class beginning (See June 23 above)

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**Thu July 23**

Session A: The Gospel of John—Call to Decision.

**Reading:** Pregeant 284-309; John 1-3; 11:1-44; 15-20.


**Reading:** Pregeant 430-37 and 472-477; Epistle of James; I Timothy.

**Assignment:** Be ready to discuss how James and I Timothy reflect the movement toward a “catholic” church.

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**Tue July 28**

The Historical Jesus and the Christ of faith. The Parables of Jesus and the Advent of the Kingdom of God.

**Reading:** Pregeant 98-134; the parable of the Workers in the Vineyard (Matthew 20: 1-16); the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37); the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32).

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**Thu July 30**

Final Examination