I. 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.

II. Course Description

The Bible has been an influential and often fundamental source for many modern, Western views of God, nature, human beings, a just society, and the origin and destiny of humanity and the world. An intelligent, serious reading of the Bible raises most of the perennial questions that have traditionally stood at the center of philosophical and theological debate. Thus, a thorough analysis of Biblical texts in terms of the central concerns of the Core curriculum will be the primary goal of the Biblical Heritage.

Biblical Heritage is one of several ways to meet the general theology requirement at Boston College. Please note, however, that both Biblical Heritage I and II must be completed to meet the requirement.

III. Etiquette:

Students are expected to be mentally and physically prepared for class each day and to conduct themselves responsibly during class each day. This preparation includes the following:

1. Students must bring their Bibles to every class meeting.
2. Students should arrive to class punctually.
3. Cellular phones and communication devices should not be consulted during class.
4. Except in the case of emergency, students should not leave and reenter the class during session.
5. The use of electronic devices as learning aids (e.g., taking notes during lectures) is acceptable, provided the device is not used in ways that detract from learning for the student or others.

IV. Textbooks & Readings (Required)
A. Study Bible: Every student must have a study Bible in a modern English translation. The following are good options; the first of which will be available in the book store.

B. Mark Powell, Introducing the New Testament (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic)

C. There may be supplemental readings by topic; these will be available online via Canvas or sites such as Oxford Biblical Studies online (accessed through BC libraries) or Bible Odyssey.

V. Canvas
Canvas is the Learning Management System (LMS) at Boston College, designed to help faculty and students share ideas, collaborate on assignments, discuss course readings and materials, submit assignments, and much more - all online. As a Boston College student, you should familiarize yourself with this important tool. For more information and training resources for using Canvas, click here.

This course is a hybrid course, which means that elements of the course will rely on timely access to Canvas and, potentially, other online resources.

VI. Course Objectives
The Theology Department maintains the following learning outcomes for its core courses:
1. Engaging the quest for truth and meaning that generate theological insight in Christianity and other religious traditions;
2. Exploring the fundamental texts and practices that shape Christian theology;
3. Understanding the dynamic relationship between religious truth-claims and their moral implications, both personal and societal;
4. Engaging the various disciplinary methods required for theological reflection, including textual, historical, social and cultural analysis; and
5. Relating theological inquiry to the enduring questions animating the broader liberal arts tradition.

In addition, this course will have the following specific objectives:
8. Developing competence across cultural settings and will learn the impact of culture, gender, and age in biblical interpretation as evidenced through thoughtful reflection on the Household Codes.

**Grading**
The undergraduate grading system for Summer Session is as follows:

- A (4.00), A- (3.67)
- B+ (3.33), B (3.00), B- (2.67)
- C+ (2.33), C (2.00), C- (1.67)
- D+ (1.33), D (1.00), D- (.67)
- F (.00)

All students can access final grades through Agora after the grading deadline each semester. Transcripts are available through the Office of Student Services.

**Deadlines and Late Work**
Deadlines are included in the course schedule. Given the nature of the summer schedule, failure to keep up with the schedule presents a problem for both student and instructor.

**IX. Course Assignments**
As an introduction to a substantial religious text and its history of interpretation over several millennia, this course requires a significant amount of reading and writing. The course schedule below indicates the volume and pace of expected work. The university expects a minimum of 2 hours per week for every hour of instructional time and this course meets for 6 hours per week; thus, expect a minimum of 12 hours of work on reading and preparation outside of class.

Course readings are expected to be completed before the class period for which they are assigned.

In addition to course readings, assignments will include:
A. Quizzes: Brief (10 to 15 minute, short answer) quizzes on the content of the readings for the day (25%) – done online??

B. Online Discussions: (15%)
   1. Posting responses to prompting questions (from the course schedule or as posted by instructor), and
   2. Posting at least two comments to other students’ responses

C. Media Analysis Project (15%)
   1. Watch two documentary episodes pertaining to the historical Jesus
   2. Select a scholar appearing on that documentary and answer the following:
      a) How does the scholar describe the historical Jesus? (For instance: peasant, miracle worker, illiterate, anti-Roman, etc.)
      b) What evidence does the scholar present? (For instance: archaeological evidence, analysis of the biblical text, appeal to extrabiblical texts)
      c) Does the scholar appeal to the distinct message of individual gospels or treat the gospels as an undifferentiated body of text?
   3. Research the academic and religious background of that scholar in order to analyze whether these details might impact the scholar’s assessment of the historical Jesus. Likely sources include:
a) Reviews of the work of these scholars
b) Interviews with these scholars
c) Blogs by these scholars (avoid citing blogs attacking these scholars)
d) Review essays on the historical Jesus
e) ATLA: search [scholar’s name] + Jesus + history
f) Popular or semi-popular books by these scholars

4. The final project should assess whether the scholar’s
5. The final project should be approximately three pages in length, polished, and should properly cite its sources.

D. Major Writing Project (20%)
Choose one of the following options. Each version of the major writing project should result in a polished 7–10 page final project.

1. Book Review
   a. Choose a popular/semi-popular biography of a major New Testament figure such as:
      1) Paul
      2) Mary (the mother of Jesus)
      3) Mary Magdalene
      4) Peter
   b. Write a review that describes:
      1) The purpose and argument of the book
      2) Method(s) of biblical interpretation employed in the book
      3) The effectiveness of the book in making its argument
   c. The review should proceed along the following lines:
      1) Deadline 1: The purpose and argument of the book
      2) Deadline 2: Methods of biblical interpretation employed in the book
      3) Deadline 3: Effectiveness of the book in making its argument
      4) Deadline 4: Final version of the paper

2. Research Paper
   a. Select a topic in consultation with the instructor and write a thesis-driven research paper.
   b. The paper should proceed along the following lines:
      1) Deadline 1: Proposed topic and tentative bibliography
      2) Deadline 2: Proposed thesis and outline
      3) Deadline 3: Rough draft of the paper
      4) Deadline 4: Final version of the paper

E. Final Exam (25%)

Course Schedule
This is a hybrid course, which means that between 30% and 50% of instruction time will take the form of online activities. At present, I expect the class to meet in person from 6:00 to 8:00 on the days listed, with an additional 2 to 2.5 hours of online activity during the course of the week. Those online activities are still in the process of being developed. The topics and readings listed in the schedule below are more firmly set.

6/25 The Apocalyptic Background and Nature of Early Christianity
A. To Read:
   Primary:
   Daniel 7–12
   Mark 13
Revelation
Secondary:
Powell, chapter 29: “Revelation”

B. To Watch:
“Heaven Opened: The Lion, The Lamb” – YDS
“Seven Seals and 144,000” – YDS
“The Fall of Babylon and the Coming of the Messiah” – YDS

6/27 Historical Jesus I
A. To Read:
Primary
Q – Kloppenborg
1 Corinthians 15:1–11
Philippians 2:6–11
Secondary
Powell, chapter 3: “Jesus”

B. To Watch:
“From Jesus to Christ: The Many Faces of Jesus” (Kanopy) AND
“The Story of Jesus” (Course Reserve) [select sections]

7/2 Historical Jesus II
A. To Read:
Theissen & Merz: “Retrospect”
Meier, “Criteria: How Do We Decide What Comes from Jesus?” Pages 167–195 in A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus

7/9 Gospels
A. To Read:
Primary
Mark
Secondary
Powell, chapters 4, 6: “The Gospels” “Mark”

B. To Watch: The Gospel of Mark

7/11 Gospels
A. To Read:
Primary
Matthew
John
Secondary
Powell, chapters 5, 8: “Matthew” “John”

7/16 Paul
A. To Read
Primary
1 Thessalonians
Galatians
Philippians
Philemon
Secondary
7/18: Paul
A. To Read
   Primary
   1 Corinthians
   2 Corinthians (skim)
   Romans
   Secondary
   Powell, chapters 12, 13: “Romans” “1 Corinthians”

7/23 Deutero-Paulines
A. To Read
   Primary
   Colossians
   Ephesians
   2 Thessalonians (skim)
   Secondary:
   Powell, chapters 16, 18: “Ephesians” “Colossians”

7/25 Pastoral Epistles
A. To Read
   Primary
   1 Timothy
   2 Timothy
   Titus (skim)
   Secondary:
   Powell, chapter 21: “The Pastoral Letters: 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus”

7/30 Hebrews
A. To Read:
   Primary
   Hebrews
   Psalms 2, 40, 95, 110
   Secondary
   Powell, chapter 23: “Hebrews”
B. To Watch
   “Jesus, the Exalted and Incarnate Son” – YDS
   A priest “in the order of Melchizedek” – YDS

8/1 Final Exam

Written Work
Summer Session students are expected to prepare professional, polished written work. Written materials must be typed and submitted in the format required by your instructor. Strive for a thorough yet concise style. Cite literature appropriately, using APA, MLA or CLA style per your instructor’s requirements. Develop your thoughts fully, clearly, logically and specifically. Proofread all materials to ensure the use of proper grammar, punctuation and spelling. For writing support, please contact the Connors Family Learning Center.
**Attendance**
1. Attending class is an important component of learning. Students are expected to attend all class sessions. When circumstances prevent a student from attending class, the student is responsible for contacting the instructor before the class meets. Students who miss class are still expected to complete all assignments and meet all deadlines.

2. Consistent with BC’s commitment to creating a learning environment that is respectful of 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 their academic status. Students are responsible for reviewing course syllabi as soon as possible, and for communicating with the instructor promptly regarding any possible conflicts with observed religious holidays. Students are responsible for completing all class requirements for days missed due to conflicts with religious holidays.

3. Given the nature of the summer session, missing a single class is the equivalent of missing a week of classes during the academic year. As a result, only one excused absence will be permitted. Missing substantial portions of a class period will also be considered an unexcused absence. Any unexcused absences will result in the reduction of the student’s final grade by 3% per absence.

**Accommodation and Accessibility**
Boston College is committed to providing accommodations to students, faculty, staff and visitors with disabilities. Specific documentation from the appropriate office is required for students seeking accommodation in Summer Session courses. Advanced notice and formal registration with the appropriate office is required to facilitate this process. There are two separate offices at BC that coordinate services for students with disabilities:

- **The Connors Family Learning Center (CFLC)** coordinates services for students with LD and ADHD.
- **The Disabilities Services Office (DSO)** coordinates services for all other disabilities.

Find out more about BC’s commitment to accessibility at [www.bc.edu/sites/accessibility](http://www.bc.edu/sites/accessibility).

**Scholarship and Academic Integrity**
Students in Summer Session courses must produce original work and cite references appropriately. Failure to cite references is plagiarism. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not necessarily limited to, plagiarism, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty, cheating on exams or assignments, or submitting the same material or substantially similar material 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. Please see the [Boston College policy on academic integrity](http://www.bc.edu/sites/accessibility) for more information.