NT 1506: New Testament Introduction II
Spring Semester 2011
Mondays/Bangor 6 p.m.-9 p.m.

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Course Description
This course is a survey of the contents of the New Testament, its historical contexts, diverse literary forms, and religious ideas. It includes analyses of selected texts from representative sections of the New Testament and consideration of their various theological visions of God, the human person, and the people of God in interrelationship, along with the ethics of these documents.

Course Objectives:
The student, at the completion of this course will be able to:

1. demonstrate familiarity with the contents of the New Testament and its major theological formulations with awareness of its diversity (demonstrated by successful completion of the course exams).

2. locate the New Testament its proper historical context; i.e. having developed an accurate mental picture of what the 1st century was like for Jesus, Paul, and the early Christians (demonstrated by successful completion of the course exams, completion of exegetical exercises, and explication of the historical context of selected texts in the final exegetical project).

3. read the New Testament critically; engaging a variety of methods used to interpret the New Testament today (demonstrated by successful completion of course exams and clarity about the critical methods used in the final exegetical project).

4. appropriate the witness of the New Testament and its major theological insights for the life of faith, for the life of faith communities, and for the needs of the world today (demonstrated by clear, coherent, and integrated application of exegetical insights in the final project – sermon, curriculum, retreat plan, etc.).

Required Outcomes
Students will be evaluated according to their levels of ability to meet these M.Div./M.A. Outcomes Criteria:

I. Religious Heritage
   A. Scripture
      1. Place the text in its historical context. (outcome 2)
2. Locate the text’s relationship to the biblical narrative. (outcomes 1 and 2)
3. Effectively use source, literary, and sociological criticism. (outcome 3)
4. Develop effective word studies. (outcome 3)
5. Converse with various hermeneutical positions. (outcomes 3 and 4)

B. The Broader Church’s Theologies
1. Engage contemporary theological ways of thinking. (outcomes 3 and 4)

II. Cultural Context
A. Contemporary Social/Cultural Issues
1. Recognize new opportunities posed by cultural developments (outcomes 3, 4)

III. Personal and Spiritual Formation
A. Spiritual Growth
1. Express mature personal faith sensitively and skillfully. (outcomes 3, 4)
2. Articulate responsibly one’s theological identity and authority. (outcomes 2, 4)
C. Moral Development
1. Be oriented by prophetic hope. (outcomes 1 and 4)

IV. Capacity for Ministry and Public Leadership
A. Arts of Ministry
1. Integrate biblical, historical, theological, and pastoral disciplines (outcome 4)

Required Texts
1. The Bible (a modern critical edition, preferably the New Oxford Annotated, College Edition or the HarperCollins Study Bible; any respectable scholarly translation, e.g. RSV, NRSV, NAB)
5. There will occasionally be copies of chapters, short essays, handouts, and on-line readings that will be assigned.

Recommended
   - We will be reading three chapters from this book: chapter 7, “Writing the Biblical Essay Well: Part I”; chapter 8, “Writing the Biblical Essay Well: Part II”; and chapter 9, “Toward a Theological Style and Voice of Your Own”
We will be reading the “Introduction,” Chapter One/“Texts and Readers,” and Chapter Two/“Midrash, the Bible, and the Early Church” from this volume.

**Important note regarding the Harris textbook**

The textbook has an accompanying website with outlines and study questions you may find valuable, especially to guide your reading and to review for exams. The website is:

[http://www.mhhe.com/harris6e](http://www.mhhe.com/harris6e)

**Course Requirements**

1. **Active class participation and preparedness.** (20%)  
   - Regular attendance, constructive participation in class discussions, active listening. There are no excused absences (although they will be treated with compassion and understanding). Two and more absences will result in an incremental lowering, by half-grades, the grade for this part of the course.
   - Read the assigned biblical texts and prepare for class discussions by identifying passages that are confusing, provocative, require more background knowledge, would be challenging to preach, are good examples of points made in the secondary reading, etc.
   - Read secondary reading assignments and be prepared to participate in discussions – bringing two to three questions, discussion starters, comments. When a chapter from Harris has been assigned, please give attention to the “Review” and “Discussion/Reflection” questions posed at the end of the chapter.

2. **Three Take-Home Exams/Quizzes.** (45% total; 15% each)  
   Exams will be distributed during:
   - class session #3/February 14  (Paul, Philippians, Acts of the Apostles)
   - class session # 6/March 7   (the Johannine literature)
   - class session #10/April 11 (Deutero-Pauline and other letters; Revelation)

3. **Final project.**  (35% total; split between preparation of exegetical memos and the final project/presentation)  
   You will develop retreat materials/adult bible study/sermon/confirmation class materials/OR something similar for use in a non-church-related setting, reflecting a process of exegesis and an awareness of hermeneutical issues.

   The class will select one or two texts that will be the focus of everyone’s exegetical work this semester (a change from last semester where you chose your own for the final paper). I’d like at least one text to be from the Gospel of John.
Schedule of classes

#1 January 31
Personal introductions, course introduction, syllabus, calendar
Picking up where we left off
Paul’s letter to the Philippians; Paul’s letter to the Romans

Preparation:
Harris, 17, pp. 360-66; 368-72
Harris, 16, pp. 348-57


Recommended:
Brown, Intro to NT, 20, 24 Please try to read as much of the chapter on Philippians as you are able; just the introductory pages of the chapter on Romans will be helpful

#2 February 7

Preparation:
Harris, 13


#3 February 14
Acts of the Apostles, continued

Exam 1 Distributed
Preparation:
Brown, Intro to NT, 10


#4 February 21
Exam 1 Collected
The Gospel of John

Preparation:
Harris, 10, pp. 215-33
Brown, The Gospel/Concise Commentary, pp. 9-70
Jasper, Hermeneutics, “Introduction" and Chapter 1

exegetical exercise 1
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<th>#</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Preparation</th>
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<tr>
<td>#5</td>
<td>February 28</td>
<td>The Gospel of John, continued</td>
<td>Harris, 10, pp. 233-40</td>
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<td>Jasper, <em>Hermeneutics</em>, Chapter 2</td>
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<td><em>exegetical exercise 2</em></td>
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<td><strong>Recommended:</strong> Brown, <em>Intro to NT</em>, 11</td>
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<td>#6</td>
<td>March 7</td>
<td>The Johannine Letters</td>
<td>Harris 19, pp. 406-9</td>
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<td>Exam 2 Distributed</td>
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<td>Brown, <em>The Gospel/Concise Commentary</em>, pp. 105-26</td>
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<td>Brown, <em>Intro to NT</em>, 12, 13, and 14</td>
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<td>#7</td>
<td>March 21</td>
<td>Issues of Pseudonymity, 2 Thessalonians, Colossians</td>
<td>Harris 18, pp. 373-77</td>
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<td>Exam 2 Collected</td>
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<td>Brown, <em>Intro to NT</em>, 25, 26, and 27</td>
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<td>#8</td>
<td>March 28</td>
<td>Ephesians; the letters known as the Pastorals</td>
<td>Harris 18, pp. 378-85</td>
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<td>Brown, <em>Intro to NT</em>, 28, 29, 30, and 31</td>
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<td><em>exegetical exercise 4</em></td>
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#9 April 4
the letter to the Hebrews, letters to Peter, James, and Jude
Brown, Intro to NT, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36

#10 April 11
letters, continued/overflow
Revelation and other apocalyptic works
Preparation: Harris 20
Erickson, 9 “Apocalyptic”
Brown, Intro to NT, 37
exegetical exercise 5

#11 April 25
Other gospels; development of the NT Canon
Preparation: Erickson, Beginner’s Guide to Exegesis 10, “Moving On”
Harris 11, 2
Harris 11, 2
project presentations in class

#12 May 2
project presentations in class

Week of May 9
READING WEEK
May 13
SENIOR GRADES DUE
May 20
COMMENCEMENT/SEMESTER ENDS/ALL WORK DUE
NOTES ON THE EXEGETICAL EXERCISES:

Exercise 1 [combination of elements from Yaghjian’s memos 1, 2, and 3]:
prepare for February 21

Write out the passage, word for word, not according to “verse” breaks, but according to the natural breaks in the text as you experience them in your reading. Using your own “written” version, read the text aloud to yourself and silently several times, until you have begun to internalize the language, sound and rhythm of the passage.

Stay as long as you can with the “text” as “text,” without trying to decipher or interpret it. Then, when you are ready, but before you proceed to what the text “says” or “means,” write three “impressions” and three questions about the text (these should be your own questions about the text, however seemingly “stupid” or insignificant, that could potentially direct your own investigation of this passage. To the extent that your questions address the original context of the document, so much the better; but sooner or later one of them will lead you there, so do not be afraid to cast a wide net at this stage of the process). [Yaghjian, 154]

Take this text and look at it. What are the literary features of the text? Is it a historical narrative, parable, poetry, dialogue, epistle? What structures provide clues to the beginning and end of the passage? If you had to teach this passage in a Bible study, how would you outline and divide it into sections? How many parts are there? How do they relate to the whole piece? Is there progress in the flow of the narrative? Can you identify a climax? Are there any key words, recurring themes, organizing metaphors? What does the passage show, prove, illustrate, argue? When you read this text, what other biblical texts come to mind? If it contains references from other Hebrew Bible or New Testament passages, what are they? How does this wider textual frame of reference enrich your comprehension of the passage? [Yaghjian, 155]

Exercise 2: Yaghjian’s Memo 5 and Memo 6
prepare for February 28

This exercise will require the use of commentaries on the Gospel of John; I’d recommend any of the following which are available in our library.

- The Gospel of John 225.7 Sa14p v.4 Francis J. Moloney
- The Gospel of John 226.5 B83g F.F. Bruce
- Becoming Children of God 226.5 H838b Wes Howard Brook
- The Gospel according to John 220.7An21 v. 29A Raymond E. Brown

Exercise 3: Yaghjian’s Memo 7 and Memo 8
prepare for March 21

relevant entries in the Anchor Bible Dictionary or another biblical “Dictionary”
Malina, Bruce Christian Origins and Cultural Anthropology
The New Testament World: Insights from Cultural Anthropology
The Social Setting of Jesus and the Gospels
Social Science Commentary on the Synoptic Gospels
Exercise 4: Yaghjian’s Memo 10  [Memo 9 not really relevant since this passage has no parallel in the synoptic]

*prepare for March 28*

Resources/references needed here:
- Theological Dictionary of the New Testament (TDNT)
- Greek-English Lexicon
- New Testament Concordance

Exercise 5: Yaghjian’s Memo 11

*prepare for April 11*