

## > > > COURSE DESCRIPTIONS: BIBLICAL STUDIES

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The purpose of all courses in Biblical Studies is fourfold: to acquaint the student with the tools for Bible study; to enable the student to begin building a biblical foundation for theology and practice; to encourage the development of an integrated method for Bible study; and to foster a commitment to a lifelong study of the Bible and to its use in Christian ministry.

Some courses in the area are general in nature, dealing with the entire Scriptures (BS). Other courses are related to specific portions of the Scriptures, i.e., OT or NT.

The entire area is committed to the realization of the six objectives listed below, but each Department has its own primary area of responsibility. The Department of Old Testament seeks to prepare students to interpret the Old Testament responsibly, which involves accurate understanding of Hebrew patterns of thought and expression, knowledge of the historical contexts in which Hebrew thought was formulated, and acquaintance with the history of Old Testament interpretation.

The Department of New Testament intends that students will exemplify capacity for, and appreciation of, the critical study of the New Testament, and particularly that they will demonstrate understanding of the New Testament in its historical contexts, that they will develop the ability to work with the Greek New Testament, making use of appropriate linguistic resources, and that they will evidence the ability to engage in the study of the New Testament in such a way that it will lead to personal and social transformation.

The Department of Inductive Biblical Studies introduces students to a systematic, comprehensive approach to Bible study within which they can integrate the rest of their study of Scripture and bridge to other areas of the curriculum. The hermeneutic embraced moves all the way from initial observation and interpretation of a text in its literary and historical contexts to the appropriation of that text's original meaning within the contemporary world, an appropriation performed in light of that text's function within the canon as a whole. There is thus a concern to correlate the meaning of individual passages to the whole of biblical revelation. Throughout, the emphasis is upon an inductive orientation, i.e., one that moves from rigorous examination of evidence to conclusions, over against a deductive one, characterized by an attempt to "read back" one's views into the text. Standing directly in the "English Bible" tradition identified initially with The Biblical Seminary in New York, this Department emphasizes the student's own direct work, and stresses the study of books as wholes in the vernacular, and the interpretation of passages within the book's contexts. Emphasis is placed on developing the student's own abilities to observe specifically, accurately, and thoroughly both the content and structure of scriptural units, to reason inferentially and validly from evidence gathered, and to conduct this independent, direct study of Scripture in informed conversation with the entire range of secondary sources available to students of Scripture. The use of biblical language resources is cultivated in this approach, which is finally applicable to the text in any language, ancient or modern.

The Department of Biblical Theology seeks to engage the Bible specifically as Christian Scripture, with an emphasis on its integral theological character.

The M.Div. degree initiates students into a comprehensive approach to interpreting the Bible for life and ministry. This approach recognizes several interpenetrating contexts within which the meaning of Scripture is discerned. Students developing a comprehensive, integrated approach to biblical interpretation in the church shall:

1. Employ the canonical and literary contexts as the normative framework defining the meaning of a passage;
2. Use the linguistic context, including the original languages in their respective linguistic

- worlds, as the primary resource for clarifying the meaning of the text;
3. Situate a scriptural passage in the various historical and cultural contexts that stimulated and conditioned it;
  4. Identify and appropriate the biblical-theological contexts within which a passage discloses God's character and will for his people;
  5. Relate the task and actual practice of biblical interpretation to the life of the church in the world;
  6. Incorporate insights from every aspect of biblical study into the contexts of their lives, flowing from a devotion to the reading, study, application, and celebration of Scripture.

The M.Div. requires coursework in biblical studies in two categories, Core Courses and Core Electives:

*Core Courses:*

OT501 Survey of Biblical Hebrew (3)

(Students who pass the Hebrew competency exam will receive three hours of advanced standing, thus reducing by three the number of hours necessary for graduation.)

NT500 Concise Greek (3)

*or* NT 501/502 Comprehensive Greek (6)

(Students who pass the Greek competency exam will receive three hours of advanced standing, thus reducing by three the number of hours necessary for graduation.)

OT520 Old Testament Introduction (3)

NT520 New Testament Introduction (3)

*Core Electives:*

Inductive Biblical Studies—1 (3)

(Choose any course with an IBS prefix within the range 510-549).

Inductive Biblical Studies—2 (3)

(Choose any course with an IBS prefix within the range 610-649.)

Old Testament Exegesis (3)

(Choose any course with an OT prefix within the range 610-649 or 710-749.)

New Testament Exegesis (3)

(Choose any course with an NT prefix within the range 610-649 or 710-749.)

Having successfully completed the core elective requirement in Inductive Biblical Studies—1, students should be able to:

1. Demonstrate basic skills in observing the text, including aspects that pertain to the original language, with a view toward using these observations in the interpretation of the text;
2. Demonstrate basic skills in interpreting the text by citing, describing, and drawing inferences from various types of evidence, including those that pertain to the original language;
3. Demonstrate ability to discuss some of the major hermeneutical issues surrounding observation and interpretation;
4. Demonstrate a preliminary and basic awareness of issues pertaining to the evaluation of passages for their contemporary possibilities for application and to the process of actually applying passages to specific contemporary situations; and
5. Demonstrate knowledge of the content of the book in its literary, theological, and historical contexts.

Having successfully completed the core elective requirement in Inductive Biblical Studies—2, stu-

dents should be able to:

1. Identify those areas of method in the inductive study of the Bible where they were relatively weak at the beginning of the course and demonstrate growth toward an advanced level of competency in these areas;
2. Demonstrate skill in the interpretation of both small and larger units of material;
3. Articulate the bases, importance, and process of evaluating the message of individual passages for their contemporary possibilities for application, and demonstrate skill in actually evaluating the message of these passages with a view toward their application;
4. Demonstrate the ability actually to apply specifically and creatively the interpretation of a biblical passage to their contemporary contexts;
5. Demonstrate proficiency in moving from text to sermon;
6. Demonstrate knowledge of the content of the book(s) in its literary, theological, and historical contexts.

Having successfully completed the core elective requirement in New Testament Exegesis, students should be able to:

1. Employ a range of exegetical approaches relevant to the interpretation of the New Testament book(s) in question, and to apply those approaches to other New Testament books of similar genre;
2. Situate the New Testament book(s) in question within its socio-historical, literary, and canonical contexts;
3. Identify central issues in the critical study of the New Testament book(s) in question;
4. Articulate the importance of one's own pre-suppositions in the task of interpretation;
5. Articulate the primary theological and ethical concerns of the New Testament book(s) in question;
6. Demonstrate awareness of how the theological and ethical concerns of the New Testament book(s) in question contribute to those of the canon and of constructive theology and ethics;
7. Differentiate between critical and homiletical/devotional commentaries and studies of this and other New Testament books;
8. Evaluate critically the usefulness of secondary literature in the study of New Testament books;
9. Use Greek-based language tools to demonstrate proficiency in lexical semantics;
10. Use Greek-based language tools to identify grammatical constructions (i.e., with regard to sentence structure and use of clauses); and
11. Use Greek-based language tools to engage in syntactical analyses (i.e., with regard to verbal aspect, mood, and voice; use of the dative and genitive cases).

Additionally, persons successfully completing the core elective requirement in New Testament exegesis by taking a course or courses in the range NT710-749 should be able to:

12. Fulfill the learning objectives listed above as nos. 9-11 with only limited recourse to Greek-based language tools;
13. Diagram passages in the Greek New Testament;
14. Translate with minimal lexical assistance any passage from the New Testament book(s) in question; and
15. Perform rudimentary exercises in text criticism.

Having successfully completed the core elective requirement in Old Testament Exegesis, students should be able to:

1. Confirm and refine by recourse to the Hebrew text literary analysis of longer units of

- Scripture previously studied in translation;
2. Assess the textual integrity of shorter passages of Scripture employing the Hebrew text and apparatus and basic text-critical methodology;
  3. Analyze the semantic import of the morphology, sentence structure, and prosodic form, where appropriate, of a brief passage of Scripture using the Hebrew text;
  4. Present the significance of key terms in a given brief passage of Scripture by using basic, original-language word-study tools and techniques;
  5. Identify the function of a given, brief passage of Scripture within the framework of its immediate context, its function in the literary flow of the book, and in the section of the canon within which it appears;
  6. Situate the thematic emphases of a specific passage of Scripture within the context of the Old Testament's unfolding message and in the context of the Bible as a whole;
  7. Demonstrate the impact of representative exegetical methods on the study of a passage of Scripture, employing relevant scholarly literature, and situating one's own interpretation within the ongoing discussion of biblical interpretation; and
  8. Illustrate the contribution of exegetical study of the Hebrew text to biblical exposition, instruction, theological reflection, and spiritual formation in order to construct an appropriation of the passage that is integrative and coherent.

## **Biblical Studies**

### **BS400 BIBLE SURVEY (3)**

#### *Staff*

This course is designed to survey the Bible rapidly in order to acquaint the student with geography, historical framework, persons, and the content of the Bible. Pass/Fail. Not for graduate credit.

### **BS501 INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL STUDIES—1 (3)**

#### *Stone, Thompson*

The two-course sequence, BS501-502, comprises three interrelated sections: (1) an introduction to the concept and significance of the canon of Scripture, the discipline of hermeneutics, and a contextual, text-centered approach to biblical interpretation; (2) an introduction to the Old Testament in its historical, literary, and canonical contexts; and (3) an introduction to the New Testament in its historical, literary, and canonical contexts. Course participation, reading, and projects will be configured in part so as to reflect the character of the degree specializations represented among the course participants. Required of all M.A. students except for those in Biblical Studies.

### **BS502 INTRODUCTION TO BIBLICAL STUDIES—2 (3)**

#### *Bauer, Green, Reese*

The two-course sequence, BS501-502, comprises three interrelated sections: (1) an introduction to the concept and significance of the canon of Scripture, the discipline of hermeneutics, and a contextual, text-centered approach to biblical interpretation; (2) an introduction to the Old Testament in its historical, literary, and canonical contexts; and (3) an introduction to the New Testament in its historical, literary, and canonical contexts. Course participation, reading, and projects will be configured in part so as to reflect the character of the degree specializations represented among the course participants. Required of all M.A. students except for those in Biblical Studies. Prerequisite: BS501.

**BS550 TUTORIAL IN BIBLICAL STUDIES (1-3)***Staff*

For students with specialized interests/needs in selected areas of introductory Biblical Studies. Consult syllabus for prerequisites and course requirements. See p. 25 for academic policy. May be repeated.

**BS599 INDEPENDENT RESEARCH IN BIBLICAL STUDIES (1-3)***Staff*

Guided, independent, introductory research in Biblical Studies. See p. 25 for academic policy and procedure. By contract. Credit only. May be repeated.

**BS650 TUTORIAL IN BIBLICAL STUDIES (1-3)***Staff*

For students with specialized interests/needs in selected areas of intermediate Biblical Studies. Consult syllabus for prerequisites and course requirements. See p. 25 for academic policy. May be repeated.

**BS699 INDEPENDENT RESEARCH IN BIBLICAL STUDIES (1-3)***Staff*

Guided, independent, intermediate research in Biblical Studies. See p. 25 for academic policy and procedure. By contract. Credit only. May be repeated.

**BS710 ADVANCED GREEK—1 (3)***Staff*

For persons concerned with New Testament exegesis at an advanced level as well as those interested in the development of Second Temple and Diaspora Judaism, a working knowledge of the Septuagint (LXX) and its Greek is vital. This course provides an introduction to the LXX as well as disciplined opportunity for working with the Greek of the LXX. Texts to be read are chosen by the instructor each time the course is offered. Prerequisites: NT601 or NT602.

**BS711 ADVANCED GREEK—2 (3)***Staff*

For persons concerned with New Testament exegesis at an advanced level, facility with Hellenistic Greek is vital. Depending on the semester offered, the focus of the course may be on Josephus, Philo, Hellenistic and Hellenistic-Jewish Historians, Apostolic Fathers, etc. May be repeated for credit with the permission of the instructor. Prerequisites: NT601 or NT602.

**BS715 JUDAISM (3)***Mulholland*

A study of the Jewish background of the New Testament. Special attention is given to the Sadducees, Pharisees, Essenes, and Apocalypticists and the bearing of their doctrines and literature upon the interpretation of the New Testament. Prerequisite: NT520

**BS720 ROMAN HELLENISM (3)***Mulholland*

A study of the Roman-Hellenistic background of the New Testament. An overview of the social, political, economic, philosophical, religious, and historical dynamics of the Mediterranean world from 300 B.C. to A.D. 300 are developed and their bearing upon the interpretation of the New Testament is illustrated. Prerequisite: NT520

**BS750 TUTORIAL IN BIBLICAL STUDIES (1-3)***Staff*

For students with specialized interests/needs in selected areas of advanced Biblical Studies. Consult syllabus for prerequisites and course requirements. See p. 25 for academic policy. May be repeated.

**BS/ST753 THE HUMAN PERSON: MULTIDISCIPLINARY PERSPECTIVES (3)***Green*

This seminar probes the relationship of recent findings in the neurosciences to traditional Christian understandings of the human person by pressing two questions: (1) How do the innovations in our understanding of the human person which derive from the neurosciences impinge on the sort of portraits of the human person we find in Christian Scripture and classical Christian faith? (2) In terms of a coherent Christian faith, ethics, and the practices generally associated with Christian life and ministry (e.g., spirituality, evangelism, pastoral care), what is at stake in the interaction of science and theology at this point? Prerequisites: OT520 and NT 520 (or BS501-502), ST501.

**BS799 INDEPENDENT RESEARCH IN BIBLICAL STUDIES (1-3)***Staff*

Guided, independent, advanced research in Biblical Studies. See p. 25 for academic policy and procedure. By contract. Credit only. May be repeated.

**BS850 MASTER OF ARTS THESIS (6)***Staff*

A culminating project for the Master of Arts (Research) in Biblical Studies. For policies and procedures, see p. 25. Credit only.