

SCR 100 Introduction to Sacred Scripture and their Interpretation

Fall Semester 2021-2022

Course Outline

Class Start Date & End Date

<i>On-campus section:</i>
First day of class: Monday 13 th Sept. 2021
Last day of class: Monday 13 th Dec. 2021
Final exam: date tbd

Class Meeting Time, Location, and Room

<i>On-campus section:</i>
Mondays; 6:30 to 9:20 pm – NTC campus (St Francis room):

Instructors Name: Stéphane Saulnier, Ph.D.
Office: 2-05 (Newman Theological College)
Office Hours: Mondays 2:45 – 4:00 pm or by appointment
Telephone: 780 392 2450 ext. 2210
Email: stephane.saulnier@newman.edu
Skype: NA

Course Description

This course introduces students to the sacred scriptures of the Christian faith, their academic study and their interpretation. The various books of the Old and New Testaments of the Catholic Bible are introduced in relation to their historical, cultural, and religious backgrounds, with timely references to geographical and archaeological data. Concurrently, students are introduced to the concepts of biblical inspiration, biblical inerrancy, and the formation of the canon.

This course also includes a seminar that explores the question of the interpretation of scripture with the mind of the Church, during which key Church documents will be analyzed while some major contributions from the world of academia to the field of biblical interpretation will be considered. The aim is to equip students with the exegetical tools and building blocks that will be necessary in subsequent scripture courses in their chosen program, and indeed in their various ministries as exegetes of Sacred Scriptures.

Course Objectives

This required introductory undergraduate level course aims at introducing students to the study of sacred Scriptures and their interpretation within the framework of a hermeneutic of faith.

learning outcomes

B.A. Catholic Studies Program Goals	Course Learning Outcomes and their relation to Program Learning Outcomes
a) Broad familiarity with the contributions of Catholicism to Western Culture b) Knowledge of major Western philosophical disciplines, and especially Thomism; c) Skills in reading, writing and oral communication; d) Skills in research and logical analysis; e) Opportunity for Growth in Christian discipleship.	1. you will explore contemporary scholarly debates surrounding a number of historical and theological issues raised by the material. (PG: a, b, c, d) 2. you will analyse both diachronically and synchronically the official teaching of the Catholic Church on the interpretation of scripture. ¹ (PG: a, b, c, d) 3. you will analyse one text in depth, summarizing the pertinent history of interpretation of the text and formulating an informed interpretation based on the application of the Catholic principles of biblical interpretation. (PG: a, b, c, d, e) 4. you will identify and explain a number of implicit connections between the Old Testament and the New Testament. (PG: c, d, e) 5. by the end of the course you will be able to articulate an informed understanding of the concepts of Divine Revelation, biblical inspiration, biblical inerrancy, and formation of the biblical canon, as they pertain to your ecclesial membership. (PG: a, b, c, e)

This is an introductory, core course.

Course Assignments and Evaluation

As per the *NTC 2021-2022 Academic Calendar*:²

All undergraduate courses, including Intersession and Summer session courses, shall require the following:

- One 10-12 page research paper or the equivalent in the form of student presentations, book reports, and/or short reflection papers. The total amount of written work including exams cannot exceed 25 pages.
- One final examination or two term examinations. Exams may be oral, written in class or 'take home'. Oral exams should be 10 minutes in length.

This course introduces students to sacred scripture, their study and interpretation in the Church. As such, the course presents and explores essential material that will be considered assimilated in subsequent scripture courses in the program. The emphasis will be on acquiring basic skills such as writing chapter synopses, articulating informed and concise answers to a set of seminar questions, and developing hermeneutical and exegetical skills through practice, using various tools/approaches considered in the course.

Please provide a word count in the footer of each of the written assignments. As a rule of thumb, a variation of +/- 10% of the required word count is acceptable.

¹ Students are expected to apply those principles that pertain to their ecclesial membership.

² Available at <http://www.newman.edu/Admissions/AcademicRegulations.aspx#CourseWork>

<i>On-campus section:</i>
Five Chapter Synopses (300 words each) Two Seminar papers (750 words each) One exegetical paper (2000 words) Final exam (Oral – 10 minutes)
See relevant descriptions below
Final grade: Chapter Synopses (20%) + Seminar Papers (30%) + Exegetical Paper (30%) + Oral Exam (20%)

- ***Five Chapter Synopses:*** [CS] cumulated length: 1500 words – **20 % final grade**
 Each chapter synopsis is due in hard copy at the start of class on the day it is scheduled for. Students must take great care to summarize *in their own words* that which they consider to be the main points/arguments of the chapter. This is an important skill which must be mastered as soon as possible at the start of your programme of studies.

 - **CS1:** 300 words – based on one chapter from Bergsma/Pitre, *A Catholic Introduction to the Bible – the Old Testament* (see course schedule below).
 - **CS2:** 300 words – based on one of the primary sources explored under the heading ‘Sacred Tradition’.
 - **CS3:** 300 words – based on one chapter from Bergsma/Pitre.
 - **CS4:** 300 words – based on one chapter from Bergsma/Pitre.
 - **CS5:** 300 words – tbd.

- ***Two seminar papers:*** cumulated length: 1,500 words – **30% final grade**
 Each seminar paper is due in hard copy at the start of class on the week it is scheduled for. Students must take great care to address the seminar question specifically. In this exercise, rather than presenting in your own words someone else’s work, you are asked to articulate your own answer to a given question, providing adequate support to your argument. This answer must be informed by the reading done, but it remains your own ‘take’ on the issue. See Course Schedule below for details.

 - **SP1:** (750 words) - based on Béchard’s *The Scripture Documents* (see course outline)
 - **SP2:** (750 words) - based on Béchard’s *The Scripture Documents* (see course outline)

- ***One exegetical paper:*** length: 2,000 words – **30% final grade.**
 The exegetical paper is due in hard copy at the start of class on the week it is scheduled for. Students will submit one exegetical paper on a chosen biblical text (to be selected in consultation with instructor). Students will develop their exegetical paper conjunctly over the second part of the course, following the method set out in M. Gorman’s *Elements of Biblical Exegesis*. **30 % of final grade.**

- ***One Final Oral exam:*** **20% final grade.**
 The oral exam will last 10 minutes. Final exam topic will be circulated two weeks prior to the final exam.

Please note that, as per NTC academic policies, the oral exams will be audio recorded.

Textbooks

** A Catholic Study Bible (latest edition of the RSV or NRSV or NAB).³

D. Béchard, *The Scripture Documents – an Anthology of Official Catholic Teachings* (The Liturgical Press: 2002).

J. Bergsma and B. Pitre, *A Catholic Introduction to the Bible – the Old Testament* (Ignatius Press: 2018).

M. Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis* (Hendrickson; 2010 rev. exp. Ed.).

C. Hall, *Reading Scripture with the Church Fathers* (IVP: 1998).

Recommended Reading

Catechism of the Catholic Church (Libreria Editrice Vaticana: 1994).⁴

Catechism of the Ukrainian Catholic Church - Christ Our Pascha (Synod of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church: 2016).

International Theological Commission – *Theology Today: Perspectives, Principles and Criteria* (2011).⁵

Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Jewish People and Their Sacred Scriptures in the Christian Bible* (Libreria Editrice Vaticana; 2002).⁶

Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Inspiration and Truth of Sacred Scripture* (The Liturgical Press: 2014).

Pope Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini - Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation* (Libreria Editrice Vaticana: 2010).⁷

Course Requirements

<i>On-campus section:</i>
Attendance and participation to all sessions (College Policy applies).
Careful reading of the materials in preparation for class.
Each student is to attend one individual tutorial (on campus - 15 minutes)

Late Submission Policy.

Late submissions are accepted for a fee: 10% off the grade per day late, up to a maximum of THREE days. Beyond this delay an automatic Fail grade is allocated (49% for completed assignments; 0% for non-completed assignments). In case of attenuating circumstances, the submission of supporting evidence (doctor’s note and the like) automatically suspends the application of this policy. PLEASE avail yourselves of the Incomplete Grade Policy.

Course Schedule

NOTE: a detailed schedule identifying weekly readings and assignments deadlines will be circulated at the start of the course.

³ Students who belong to another Christian denomination are of course free to use the version commonly in use for the liturgy or worship in their church.

⁴ Full text available on the Vatican website.

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Week	Lecture Topics	Biblical books explored
Week 0	Course orientation	
Week 1 13 Sept	Introduction to the Bible – defining our terms; timelines	Genesis 1-2; Luke 24; Revelation
Week 2 20 Sept	The Pentateuch I: Primeval History; Patriarchal History; Covenant	Genesis
Week 3 27 Sept	The Pentateuch II: The Exodus; Covenant	Exodus; Numbers
Week 4 4 Oct	The Pentateuch III: The Exodus; Covenant	Leviticus; Deuteronomy
11 Oct	<i>Interlude 1 – Thanksgiving</i>	
Week 5 18 Oct	Historic Books I: From the Conquest to the Rise of the Monarchy to the Babylonian Exile; Covenant	Joshua; Judges; 1-2 Samuel; 1-2 Kings
Week 6 25 Oct	Historical Books II: Restoration to the Promised Land; Covenant	1-2 Chronicles; Ezra; Nehemiah; 1-2 Maccabees
Week 7 1 Nov	The Prophets; the Prophetic Books; Covenant	Isaiah; Jeremiah; Ezekiel; Zechariah; Malachi
8 Nov	<i>Interlude 2 – Reading Week</i>	
Week 8 15 Nov	Biblical Wisdom; Covenant	Job; Proverbs; Ecclesiasticus; Wisdom
Week 9 22 Nov	St Paul: Life and Letters; Covenant	Gal; 1 Cor; Phi; Rom ; Pastoral Epistles
Week 10 29 Nov	The Synoptic Gospels and the Book of Acts; Covenant	Matthew; Mark; Luke; Acts
Week 11 6 Dec	The Gospel and Letters of John; Revelation; Covenant	John; 1 John; Revelation
Week 12 13 Dec	The Catholic Epistles; Revelation; Covenant	Hebrews; James; 1-2 Peter
Week 13 20 Dec	Final exam (hint: the exam questions will be on Covenant in the Bible)	

General Academic Information

Course Attendance

No credit will be given for a course if the student has been absent, for any reason whatever, from one-third or more of the lectures and/or seminars scheduled for the term. Likewise, no credit will be given if term assignments or other assignments are or remain incomplete.

Leave of Absence and Policy for Incompletes

Extensions to an incomplete grade may be granted in extenuating circumstances, but may not exceed 16 weeks following the end of the course. Students who fail to complete course work by the agreed deadline will have a grade assigned which is based on work completed.

Academic Integrity

Acts of academic dishonesty (plagiarism, cheating, etc.) are subject to an appropriate penalty. The grade “F” may be assigned to a student guilty of such acts by the professor of the course in which the infraction occurred. A second offense against academic integrity renders the student liable to automatic dismissal from NTC. Further details are available in the Academic Calendar in the Academic Misconduct Policy.

Academic Grievances

Students may appeal grades received; the procedure is outlined in the Academic Calendar in the Grade Appeal Policy. For other grievances, students will refer to the Student Grievances Policy also outlined in the Academic Calendar.

NOTE: The GPA is computed on the basis of cumulative grade point (letter) values, not percentage values. All courses are included in this calculation except those exceeding degree requirements and/or received as transfer credits from other recognized institutions.

Grading System

Undergraduate Studies		
Grade Meaning	Grade	Grade Point
Excellent	A+	4.0
	A	4.0
	A-	3.7
Good	B+	3.3
	B	3.0
	B-	2.7
Adequate	C+	2.3
	C	2.0
	C-	1.7
Marginal	D+	1.3
	D	1.0
Fail	F	0.0

Graduate Studies		
Grade Meaning	Grade	Grade Point
Excellent	A+	4.0
	A	4.0
	A-	3.7
Good	B+	3.3
	B	3.0
	B-	2.7
Adequate	C+	2.3
	C	2.0
	C-	1.7
Fail	D+	1.3
	D	1.0
	F	0.0

Written Assignments - Style and Format

Newman Theological College requires that all written work be submitted in acceptable academic format and style. Please note the following regulations:

Regulations

Research papers, book reports, article summaries, reflection papers, and essays should be double-spaced, printed on one side only, and submitted on white, 8.5" x 11" paper.

A standard type style, such as Times New Roman, with a 12-point font size, must be used. The instructor will specify the most recent edition of the style manual to be used:

1. Kate Turabian, "A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations" (Chicago: University of Chicago Press).
2. Joseph Gibaldi & William Acharts, eds., "MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers" (New York: Modern Language Association of America).
3. American Psychological Association "Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association" (Washington: APA Publications).

Copies of these standard references may be purchased in the NTC bookstore.

Ignorance of standard form is not considered an acceptable excuse for deviation from required standards of format and style.

Academic Regulations

The following Academic Regulations are located in the Academic Calendar for your reference:

- Changes in Registration: Add/Drop/Withdraw Notice
- Course Work
- Final Examination Schedule
- Incomplete Grade Policy
- Inclusive Language

Related Academic Matters

The following Related Academic Matters are located in the Academic Calendar for your reference:

- Grade Reports & Posting
- Glossary of Academic Terms

Other Related Policies

The following policies are located in the Academic Calendar for your reference:

- Academic Misconduct Policy
- Grade Appeal Policy

Recording of Lectures

Audio or video recording of lectures, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior consent of the instructor. Recorded material is to be used solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Student Accessibility Services:

A student with special needs that could affect their performance in class should contact their professor during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. They should also register with Student Services by contacting Sr. Zoe Bernatsky at 780-392-2450 ext. 2213; email zoe.bernatsky@newman.edu

Bibliography (May be distributed in class.)

A detailed course bibliography will be circulated at the start of the course.