

# Religion 202/Jewish Studies 223: New Testament

Spring 2013

Rutgers University

Mon/Thurs 10:55am-12:15pm

Hickman 119

Instructor	Kathleen Gallagher Elkins	Phone	848-932-9641 (main Religion department number; leave a message with the administrative assistant)
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Office Hours	Monday and Thursday 12:30-2:30pm		

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## Required Texts:

*The HarperCollins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version, with Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books.* ISBN 9780060786847

Bart Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, 5th ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). ISBN 9780199757534

John G. Gager, *Reinventing Paul*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. ISBN 9780195150858

## Description:

This introductory course is designed to enable students who lack detailed familiarity with the text of the New Testament to become familiar with large portions of it, and to enable all students to become more informed readers of it through immersion in the basic elements of critical New Testament scholarship. Students will develop skills in close reading of biblical texts, engagement with the traditions and contributions of biblical scholarship, and the process of contextualizing biblical texts in the social, political, and religious environment of the Greco-Roman world. We will consider the texts in the canonical New Testament, in addition to select noncanonical writings, and the larger question of why certain texts were canonized and others were not.

## Goals:

- Students will obtain familiarity with some of the most popular and culturally significant New Testament writings.
- Students will become familiar with the literary and rhetorical character of the books of the New Testament.
- Students will learn and apply some of the tools of modern biblical scholarship and be introduced to major critical issues in the interpretation of the New Testament, including questions of authorship, translation, transmission, and canonization.
- Students will engage in careful, critical reading of the texts and learn to ask critical historical questions about the texts, their authors, communities, and contexts.

## Religious Holidays:

It is University policy (University Regulation on Attendance, Book 2, 2.47B, formerly 60.14f) to excuse without penalty students who are absent from class because of religious observance, and to allow the make-up of work missed because of such absence. Examinations and special required out-of-class activities shall ordinarily not be scheduled on those days when religiously observant students refrain from participating in secular activities. Absences for reasons of religious obligation shall not be counted for purposes of reporting. *Students are advised to provide timely notification to instructors about necessary absences for religious observances and are responsible for making up the work or exams according to an agreed-upon schedule.*

## Evaluation:

Participation (10% of course grade): Read the assignments carefully. Think. Come to class prepared to discuss, actively listen, and think some more! I do not penalize shyness, but I do expect you to participate. Students may not miss more than three class meetings without penalty.

Map Quiz (5% of course grade): A short quiz on **January 31** will require identifying major regions and cities mentioned in the New Testament. A guide/sample will be distributed, but also take a look at the maps in your Study Bible.

Self-evaluations (5% of course grade, each): A brief self-evaluation will be distributed in class. These will be due on **March 11** and **May 2**.

Exams (25% of course grade, each): The first exam on **February 28** will focus on the world of early Christianity and formative Judaism, the apostle Paul, and the map of the ancient Mediterranean. The second exam on **April 11** will focus on the Gospels, the Synoptic problem, and the quest for the Historical Jesus. The final exam on **May 10** will focus on the legacy of Paul (and other apostles), the book of Revelation, and the process of canonization.

Course Schedule: (subject to change, with advanced notice. Readings not from the NRSV, Ehrman, or Gager will be posted on the eCollege site for this course.)

Date	Topic	Required Reading
Thursday 1/24	Introduction to the course Reading Philemon	
Monday 1/28	What is the New Testament?	Ehrman 1-16 John Riches, <i>The Bible: A Very Short Introduction</i> , New York: Oxford, 2000, pp. 70-99.
Thursday 1/31	<b>Map Quiz</b> The world of early Christians	Ehrman 29-68
Monday 2/4	Introduction to the study of Paul	Gager 3-19 Ehrman 306-312
Thursday 2/7	Pauline epistles: 1 Thessalonians	1 Thessalonians Ehrman 324-338
Monday 2/11	Pauline epistles: 1 Corinthians	1 Corinthians Ehrman 339-348 Antoinette Wire, "Women Prophets in the Corinthian Church." In <i>Conflict and Community in the Corinthian Church</i> , ed. J. Shannon Clarkson, New York: United Methodist Church Women's Division, 2000, pp. 35-52.
Thursday 2/14	The New Perspective on Paul	Gager 43-75
Monday 2/18	Pauline epistles: Galatians	Galatians Gager 145-152 Ehrman 354-362
Thursday 2/21	Pauline epistles: Romans	Romans Ehrman 372-385
Monday 2/25	Paul's legacy: Gender,	Pamela Eisenbaum, "Is Paul the Father of

	sex/uality, anti-Semitism	Misogyny and Antisemitism?" <i>Cross Currents</i> 50 (2000-2001) 506-524. Dale B. Martin, "Paul without Passion: On Paul's Rejection of Desire in Sex and Marriage." In <i>Sex and the Single Savior: Gender and Sexuality in Biblical Interpretation</i> , Louisville, Ky: Westminster John Knox, 2006, pp. 65-76.
Thursday 2/28	<b>Exam 1</b>	
Monday 3/4	Introduction to the Gospels	Ehrman 69-87, 259-274
Thursday 3/7		Gospel of Mark (preferably in one sitting) Ehrman 88-104
Monday 3/11		Gospel of Matthew (preferably in one sitting) Ehrman 114-133
Thursday 3/14		Gary Phillips, "The Killing Fields of Matthew's Gospel." In <i>The Labour of Reading: Desire, Alienation, and Biblical Interpretation</i> , ed. Fiona C. Black, et al, Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1999, pp. 249-265.
Monday 3/18	<b>NO CLASS</b>	
Thursday 3/21	<b>NO CLASS</b>	
Monday 3/25	The Synoptic Problem	Ehrman 105-113 Burton H. Throckmorton, <i>Gospel Parallels: A Comparison of the Synoptic Gospels, NRSV</i> Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1992. (selections)
Thursday 3/28		Gospel of Luke (preferably in one sitting) Ehrman 134-153
Monday 4/1		Acts of the Apostles Ehrman 154-175
Thursday 4/4		Gospel of John (preferably in one sitting) Ehrman 176-197
Monday 4/8	The Quest for Historical Jesus	Ehrman 237-252 Kwok Pui-lan, "On Color-Coding Jesus: An Interview with Kwok Pui-lan," in R. S. Sugirtharajah, ed., <i>The Postcolonial Bible</i> ,

		London: T & T Clark, pp. 176-88.
Thursday 4/11	<b>Exam 2</b>	
Monday 4/15	Apostles, Power, Leadership	Gospel of Thomas Gospel of Mary Elaine Pagels, <i>Beyond Belief: The Secret Gospel of Thomas</i> , New York: Random House, 2003, pp. 50-73. Jane Schaberg and Melanie Johnson-DeBaufre, "There's Something About Mary Magdalene" <i>Ms. Magazine</i> , Spring 2006.
Thursday 4/18	Interpreters of Pauline tradition	Ephesians Colossians Clarice J. Martin, "The <i>Haustafeln</i> (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation: 'Free Slaves' and 'Subordinate Women.'" In Cain Hope Felder, ed., <i>Stony the Road We Trod: African American Biblical Interpretation</i> , Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991, pp. 206-231.
Monday 4/22	Revelation	Revelation Ehrman 490-507
Thursday 4/25	Christians and Jews	Hebrews Epistle of Barnabas Ehrman 416-434
Monday 4/29	Textual Criticism	Ehrman 487-498
Thursday 5/2	Canonization	Ehrman 1-16 The Muratorian Canon Selections from Irenaeus and Origen of Alexandria Athanasius's <i>Festal Letter</i> 39
Monday 5/6	Jesus in Film	Adele Reinhartz, <i>Jesus of Hollywood</i> , New York: Oxford, 2007, pp. 1-42.
Friday 5/10	<b>Final Exam</b>	8am-11am