

SCR 100/100i Introduction to sacred Scripture and their Interpretation

Fall 2019 Initial Course Outline

Class Start Date & End Date

<u>On-campus section:</u>	<u>Online section:</u>
First day of class: Monday 9 th Sept. 2019 <i>Reading Break: 12-15 November 2019</i> Last day of class: Monday 9 th December 2019 Final exam: date tbd	Course starts: Wednesday 4 th September 2019 <i>Reading Break: 12-15 November 2019</i> Course ends: Wednesday 18 th December 2019 Final exam: date tbd

Class Meeting Time & Room & Location if Off-site

On-campus section (SCR 100) will meet on Mondays, 6.30 to 9.20 pm, St Francis room.
Online section (SCR 100i) will operate through Moodle.

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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 Scripture.

Course Objectives

This required introductory undergraduate level course aims at introducing students to the study of sacred Scripture and their interpretation within the framework of a hermeneutic of faith. Although the format and content of the course are essentially the same as those of its equivalent at graduate level (BST 400/400i), SCR 100/100i has its own set of Academic, Spiritual and Human Learning Outcomes, as well as its own requirements and assessment, as per NTC Academic Policies.¹

¹ For NTC Academic Policies, please visit www.newman.edu.

Academic learning outcomes

In this course ...

1. you will engage with contemporary scholarly debates surrounding a number of historical and theological issues raised by the material.
2. you will analyse both diachronically and synchronically the official teaching of the Catholic Church on the interpretation of Scripture.²
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.
4. you will identify and explain a number of implicit connections between the Old Testament and the New Testament.
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.

Human and spiritual learning outcomes

By the end of the course each student should be able to identify areas and articulate ways in which the course has contributed to their overall human and spiritual development, possibly including but not limited to the following:

- A contemplative, spiritual, liturgical formation that will gain an additional dimension resulting from a greater acquaintance with sacred Scripture.
- A greater awareness of their human maturing in light of their self-immersion in the text of Scripture.
- An ability to identify ways in which the course has contributed to equip them to embrace the pastoral role that will be theirs as lay people or ordained ministers.
- An ability to identify ways in which the course content has nurtured a self-awareness of their role in the social and pastoral aspect of their chosen ministries.

Instructional activity	Learning Outcomes
Class and online instruction	#1; #2; #4; #5
Self-directed study / written assignments	#1; #2; #3; #4; #5

Course Assignments and Evaluation

As per the *NTC 2019-2020 Academic Calendar*:³

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.

Written material submitted for assessment **in this course** will amount to 12 pages (4,550 words). The course will also include a final oral exam (10 minutes). A detailed breakdown of course assignments is given below.

This course introduces students to sacred Scripture, their study and interpretation in the Church. As such, the course presents essential material that will be considered assimilated in subsequent Scripture courses in the program. With this in mind, there will be **no research paper** in this course. Rather, the emphasis will be on developing basic

² Students are expected to apply those principles that pertain to their ecclesial membership.

³ Available at <http://www.newman.edu/Admissions/AcademicRegulations.aspx#CourseWork>

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.

STUDENTS MUST PROVIDE IN THE FOOTER A WORD COUNT FOR EACH PIECE OF WRITTEN ASSESSMENT.

- ***Forum Discussions* [FD] total written words: eight half pages (1,750 words) – 20% final grade**
There are ten weekly graded forum discussions scheduled through the course; students must contribute to all discussions [on average this will work out as half a page [175 words] per week. Assessment will be based on whether contributions demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the reading material as well as pertinence as to the discussion topic/question.
- ***Two seminar papers* [SP] total written words: four pages (1,400 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, instead of presenting in your own words some else's work, you are asked to articulate your own answer to a given question, making sure arguments are supported. This answer must be informed by the reading done, but it remains your own 'take' on the issue. See Course Schedule below for details. **30% of final grade.**
 - **SP1:** two pages (700 words) - based on the documents explored under the heading 'Magisterium' (see course outline)
 - **SP2:** two pages (700 words) - based on the documents explored under the heading 'Magisterium' (see course outline)
- ***One exegetical paper:* [EP] total written words: four pages (1,400 words) – 30% final grade.**
Students will submit one exegetical paper on a chosen biblical text (to be selected in consultation with instructor). Students will develop their work on this assignment conjunctly to exploring 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.

Final Grade:

Forum Discussions (20%) + Seminar papers (30%) + exegetical paper (30%) + Final exam (20%)

Textbooks⁴

- A bible with the Catholic Canon (RSV or NRSV or even Catholic Study Bible student edition)
- Pope Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini* Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation (Libreria Editrice Vaticana: 2010)
- J. Bergsma and B. Pitre, *A Catholic Introduction to the Bible – the Old Testament* (Ignatius Press: 2018 [July])
- M. Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis* (Hendrickson; 2010 rev. exp. Ed.)
- J.F. Kelly, *An Introduction to the New Testament for Catholics* (M. Glazier: 2006)

⁴ All books are available from NTC bookstore at time of printing. If you want to reserve copies for purchase from our bookstore, please contact Shirley, our bookstore manager for details (tel. 780 392 2457; or by email at Bookstore@newman.edu). Online students are encouraged to order their books as early as possible, allowing for a minimum of three weeks for delivery.

Recommended Reading

- 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).
- Pontifical Biblical Commission, *The Inspiration and Truth of Sacred Scripture* (2014)
- Cardinal Ratzinger, 'Relationship between Magisterium and Exegetes', Address to the Pontifical Biblical Commission on its 100th anniversary (Pontifical Biblical Commission: 2003).

Course Requirements

- Attendance and participation to ALL on-campus sessions is expected of on-campus students. College policy - as expounded the Student Handbook 2019-20 - will be implemented.
- Class Preparation: this must be done thoroughly and carefully.
- Moodle Forum discussions: In addition to the exegetical work, each student will contribute to weekly forum discussions.
- Individual Tutorials: Each online student will attend two tutorials (30 minutes each). Tutorial 1 will be scheduled in week 4 or 5; Tutorial 2 will be scheduled in week 8 or 9. Tutorials can take place online (FaceTime or Skype) OR on-campus face2face.
- **Exegetical work:** should be based on the student's careful consideration of two biblical commentaries. Please browse the NTC library catalogue online for biblical commentaries.⁶

General Academic Information

Academic misconduct:

Plagiarism is a serious offence and will simply not be tolerated. See *NTC Student Handbook* for details of the College policy dealing with academic dishonesty. This document is available on the College's website.

Acceptable writing style Manuals:

- American Psychological Association (APA) Publication Manual.⁷
- A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations – Kate Turabian (Chicago: University of Chicago).
- MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers (New York: Modern Language Association of America).

Late Submission Policy:

Please do not ask for extensions. Apart from the Timed Essay, late submissions *are accepted*. There is, however, a hefty PENALTY for this service: 10% off the grade per day late, up to a maximum of five days, after which an automatic Fail grade will be allocated. This is non-negotiable, although there is room for manoeuvre in case of genuine emergency.

For Incomplete courses regulations (see current *NTC Student Handbook*).

⁵ Full text available on the Vatican website.

⁶ The NEOS catalogue is available through our Library page. Online students are invited to consult our librarian, Jim Derksen (jim.derksen@newman.edu) for all matters related to library access and borrowings (including how to obtain PDF copies of sections from commentaries, books, or academic journal articles). For the purpose of this course, 'primary sources' refers to sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition. Magisterial documents, and documents emanating from the Pontifical Biblical Commission will be consulted.

⁷ APA's style rules are set out in *The Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* fifth edition.

Grading policy:

“The generally accepted class average for the C.Th., Dip.Th., B.Th., M.T.S., M.Div., G.C.C.S.A. and the M.R.E., all of which are basic degrees, diplomas and certificates, is a ‘B’ (*NTC Academic Calendar 2019-2020*).⁸

NTC has adopted Alberta Alpha Four Point Grading System. This is set out in the *NTC Academic Calendar 2019-2020*, and is here reproduced for your convenience. Please note that an ‘A’ grade is reserved for work which demonstrates excellence.

GRADUATE

UNDERGRADUATE

Grade meaning	Mark	Grade	Grade Point	Grade Meaning	Mark	Grade	Grade Point
Excellent	90% - 100%	A+	4.0	Excellent	90% - 100%	A+	4.0
	85 – 89%	A	4.0		85 – 89%	A	4.0
	80%-84%	A-	3.7		80%-84%	A-	3.7
Good	77%-79%	B+	3.3	Good	77%-79%	B+	3.3
	73%-76%	B	3.0		73%-76%	B	3.0
	70%-72%	B-	2.7		70%-72%	B-	2.7
Adequate	67%-69%	C+	2.3	Adequate	67%-69%	C+	2.3
	63%-66%	C	2.0		63%-66%	C	2.0
	60%-62%	C-	1.7		60%-62%	C-	1.7
Fail	57%-59%	D+	1.3	Marginal	57%-59%	D+	1.3
	53%-56%	D	1.0		53%-56%	D	1.0
	50%-52%	D-	0.0	Fail	0%-52%	F	0.0

For Grade Appeal Procedure, see current *NTC Student Handbook* on the website.

Important Lecture topics delivered in class will be video recorded and uploaded on Moodle by the Tuesday morning following the lecture.

⁸ For the current NTC Academic Calendar, please visit www.newman.edu.

Proposed Course Schedule⁹

Week 0 [4-8 Sept.] Course orientation

PART I: FORMATION AND INTERPRETATION OF SACRED SCRIPTURE

Week 1 [9-15 Sept.] Introduction to the Bible – defining our terms

PART II: UNDERSTANDING THE OLD TESTAMENT

Week 2 [16-22 Sept.] The Pentateuch: Biblical Geography And Archaeology

Week 3 [23-29 Sept.] The Pentateuch: Biblical Anthropology and Patriarchal History

Week 4 [30 Sept - 6 Oct.] The Law and the Land in Biblical Israel

Week 5 [7-13 Oct.] Historical Books (Part I): Joshua; Judges; Ruth; 1-2 Samuel; 1-2 Kings.

Thanksgiving week – catch up on reading

Week 6 [21-27 Oct.] Historical Books (Part II): 1-2 Chronicles; Ezra-Nehemiah; 1-2 Maccabees

Week 7 [28 Oct. – 3 Nov.] The Prophets and the Prophetic Books

Week 8: [4-10 Nov.] Wisdom Literature in Biblical Israel

Reading Week [11-17 Nov.]

PART III: UNDERSTANDING THE NEW TESTAMENT

Week 9: [18-24 Nov.] Introduction to the New Testament

Week 10: [25 Nov–1 Dec.] The Synoptic Gospels and the Book of Acts

Week 11 [2-8 Dec.] The Johannine Literature

Week 12: [9-15 Dec.] The Pauline Letters and Catholic Epistles

Final Oral Examination

This will be scheduled during exam week, as defined by the Registrar's Office (projected date is December 16 or 17)

⁹ A detailed course outline will be made available through Moodle on the first day of term.