Wayland Baptist University – San Antonio

School of Religion and Philosophy

RLGN 5353 VC 01 – New Testament Foundations II

Fall 2017

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Mission Statement – Wayland Baptist University exists to educate students in an academically challenging, learning-focused and distinctively Christian environment for professional success and service to God and humankind.

Catalogue Description – Survey of the critical issues, content, and significance of Acts through Revelation with emphasis on pertinent historical issues, theological interpretation, and contemporary application.

Textbooks –

Capes, Reeves, and Richards, “Rediscovering Paul: an introduction to his world, letters and theology” (IVP Academic, 2007).

Malina, “The New Testament World: insights from cultural anthropology”, 3rd edition (Westminster/John Knox, 2001).

Jobes, “Letters to the Church: a survey of Hebrews and the general epistles” (Zondervan 2011).

A Bible in a good modern translation (not a paraphrase), e.g. the RSV, NRSV, NAS, ESV, NIV

Outcome Competencies – Upon satisfactorily completing the course a student should

1. Grasp the basic historical and sociological contexts for each of the New Testament books covered
2. Understand issues related to the authorship and literary nature of the books covered
3. Be able to identify and analyze the primary theological and ecclesial themes addressed by the books covered
4. Be able to apply the themes of the books covered to their own personal and ecclesiastical contexts

Attendance – Timely participation each week, which demonstrates a commitment to graduate level studies, is the expectation. Discussion posts which are posted after the weekly deadline will be treated as a missed assignment.

Disability Statement – In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA), it is the policy of Wayland Baptist University that no otherwise qualified person with a disability be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any educational program or activity in the university. The Coordinator of Counseling Services serves as the coordinator of students with a disability and should be contacted concerning accommodation requests at (806) 291-3765. Documentation of a disability must accompany any request for accommodations.

Course Requirements –

1. Careful reading of all assigned texts and/or handouts each week, is necessary for comprehending and contributing to class discussions. The quality of participation will factor into the student’s course grade. Students should note that, on certain weeks, specific chapters from Malina will be discussed on the discussion boards. On these weeks, students should email to the instructor 1-2 page reactions to the relevant chapter to demonstrate understanding of the material. These papers are due by the end of the week (Saturdays at 6:00 p.m. CDT).
2. Thoughtful participation on the weekly discussion boards. Each week at least two questions will be posted related to that week’s reading. Each student is expected to post a response to each question of at least 150 words. In addition, each student is expected to post a response of at least 75 words to an answer given by a classmate to the question. This means that each week, as a minimum, a student will post two answers and two responses to the answers of classmates. Do not underestimate the importance of the class discussions that take place on the boards. Students who have skipped weeks of participation and interaction not only miss learning opportunities, but damage their course grades as well.
3. Completion of two college-level book reviews on books taken from works listed in the bibliographies contained in “Rediscovering Paul” or the Jobes text. Students will notify the instructor in advance, by e-mail, of the title chosen for review. The format for these reviews and the due dates are provided later in this syllabus.
4. The course grade will follow the Wayland grade scale, and be calculated as follows:

Malina Interactions 25%

Discussion Board Postings 25%

Two book reviews 25% (each)

1. Students shall have protection through orderly procedure against prejudices or capricious academic evaluation. A student who believes that he or she has not been held to realistic academic standards, just evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course by using the student grade appeal process described in the Academic Catalogue. Appeals may not be made for advanced placement examinations or course bypass examinations. Appeals are limited to the final course grade, which may be upheld, raised, or lowered at any stage of the appeal process. Any recommendation to lower a course grade must be submitted through the Executive Vice President/Provost to the Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee for review and approval. The Faculty Assembly Grade Appeals Committee may instruct that the course grade be upheld, raised or lowered to a more proper evaluation.

Course Schedule (subject to modification at instructor’s discretion)

Week beginning:

Aug 20 Paul’s World

Read: Rediscovering Paul (RP) chapters 1-2

Aug 27 Life of Paul; Paul in Acts; chapter 1 in Malina

Read: RP chapter 3; Malina, chapter 1

Sep 3 Galatians

Read: RP chapter 4 and Galatians

Sep 10 The Thessalonians Letters

Read: RP, chapter 5; Malina, chapter 2; 1st-2nd Thessalonians

Sep 17 The Corinthian Letters

Read RP chapter 6; 1st-2nd Corinthians

**First Book Review Due!**

Sep 24 Romans

Read: RP, chapter 7; Romans; Malina, chapter 3

Oct 1 Paul’s Prison Letters

Read: RP chapter 8; Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians

Oct 8 Paul’s Pastoral Letters

Read: RP, chapter 9; 1st-2nd Timothy and Titus; Malina, chapter 4

Oct 15 Hebrews

Read: Jobes, chapters 1-4; Malina, chapter 6; Hebrews

Oct 22 The Letters of James, Peter, and Jude

Read: Jobes, chapters 5-12; James, 1st-2nd Peter, Jude

**2nd Book Review Due!!**

Oct 29 The Letters of John and Revelation

Read: Jobes, chapters 13-14; 1st-3rd John, Revelation

Book Review Guidelines

1. Preparation
2. Determine the author’s purpose in each section and for the book/article as a whole. Re-read carefully as needed.
3. Identify and examine the author’s presuppositions and the development of his/her arguments. A reviewer must have both a sympathetic and critical understanding of the work before an honest appraisal can be made.
4. Write down your reactions both while reading, and after completing the work. When you find yourself agreeing or disagreeing with the author, ask yourself why and how. Be aware of your own presuppositions.
5. Writing the Review
6. Introduction (approx.. 1 page)
7. Introduce the author to your readers.
8. State clearly and concisely the work’s purpose and contents.
9. Analysis (approx.. 7-9 pages)
10. Before writing this section, it may be helpful to prepare an outline of the book or article to keep the line of thought clear. This outline does not need to be included in the review you submit.
11. Summarize in your own words the substance and/or argument of each section.
12. Draw conclusions in your own words about the basic thrust of each section. Don’t forget to provide the “why?” for your conclusions.
13. Conclusion (approx. 2-4 pages)
14. Note several theological points made (or attempted) by the work.
15. Note your evaluation of strengths and weaknesses in the work.