

HRS 122 (GE Area C4)
Spring 2007
Dr. Nystrom

COURSE TITLE: "Introduction to the New Testament"

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Study of the New Testament literature in its historical and cultural setting. Topics covered include the literary relationships of the four Gospels, the historical Jesus, the evolution of early Christianity, and the diverse theologies represented in the letters of Paul and other canonical and non-canonical writings.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Students who successfully complete this course will: understand the contributions of various ethnic and religious groups (Jews, Greeks, Romans, Stoics, Platonists, etc.) to the formation of early Christianity; be able to explain what contemporary scholarship says about the date, authorship, purpose, and literary features of each of the New Testament texts; be able to weigh the merits of contemporary arguments concerning issues such as the historical Jesus, the theology of Paul, and early Christian beliefs and practices; and identify the principal beliefs, values, and institutions that constituted the Christian tradition in its earliest stage.

TEXTS:

S.L. Harris, The New Testament: A Student's Introduction
The New Testament of the Jerusalem Bible

GRADES:

Your grade will be based on your performance on the essay exams and quizzes. Grades will be based on the percentage earned of the possible credit for the course:

A	93-100%	C	73-77%
A-	90-92%	C-	70-72%
B+	88-89%	D+	68-69%
B	83-87%	D	63-67%
B-	80-82%	D-	60-62%
C+	78-79%	F	below 60%

Participation in class discussions may raise your grade by one-half (e.g., from a B to a B+).

Please do not tell me at any point during the semester what grade you might need, whether to get into graduate school, keep your financial aid, or avoid academic probation.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF TOPICS:

Week 1: Introduction; The Greco-Roman World
Week 2: The Jewish Background to Christianity
Week 3: Quiz; The Gospels
Week 4: The Gospels
Week 5: The Gospels
Week 6: The Gospels; The Historical Jesus
Week 7: The Historical Jesus
Week 8: Quiz; Midterm; Acts and the Early Church
Week 9: Acts and the Early Church
Week 10: Paul and his Letters
Week 11: Paul and his Letters
Week 12: Quiz; The Pauline Tradition
Week 13: 1 and 2 Peter; Hebrews
Week 14: Revelation; Johannine Christianity
Week 15: Marcionite and Gnostic Christianity
Finals Week: Quiz; Final Examination

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND EXAMS:

February 12: QUIZ (50 points) on lectures and Harris, chapters 3-5.

March 19: QUIZ (50 points) on all lectures since the last quiz; Harris, chapters 6-12; Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

March 19: MIDTERM (100 points; essay) on all lectures and readings assigned thus far.

April 23: QUIZ (50 points) on all lectures since the midterm; Harris, chapters 13-17; Acts, Romans, Galatians, 1 Corinthians.

May 21: QUIZ (50 points) on all lectures since the last quiz; Harris, chapters 18-20; 1 and 2 Peter; Hebrews; Revelation.

May 21: FINAL EXAM (100 points; essay) on all lectures and readings since the midterm.

MAKE-UP POLICY:

There will be no make-up quizzes. However, you can miss one of the quizzes without penalty since only your three best quiz scores will count in the calculation of your course grade.

GE WRITING REQUIREMENT:

General Education Area C3 requirements include a minimum of 1500 words of “formal writing.” It is expected that this standard will be met on the midterm and final examinations, both of which are essay examinations.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

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