

4ON504

Advanced Biblical Exegesis

Spring 2016

Syllabus

INSTRUCTOR

Dr Bruce Lowe received his first doctorate in Analytical Chemistry and taught, consulted and researched in a university setting over several years in both Chemistry and Chemical Engineering. He then completed his MDiv at RTS Orlando, becoming an ordained Presbyterian minister and working in university ministry, as a youth pastor and in church revitalization. His second doctorate was in Ancient History/New Testament Studies, where his dissertation has focused on the cultural backdrop to Romans. Bruce has a special interest in hermeneutics. He is keen to not simply teach the *contents* of the Bible, but *approaches* that will equip students for a lifetime of fruitful learning & growth in their own reading of the Scriptures.

< Office hrs: Monday 4-5pm; Thursday 12-1pm, 4-5pm. Email me for an appointment;
blowe@rts.edu >

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What is more important than understanding the Bible? Yet our understanding is often hampered by inadequate skills or a faulty overarching lenses for putting it all together. This course will seek to provide both the lens and the skills. The reading will add a theoretical edge to the lectures (e.g. Silva's book), but also a practical edge (i.e. Greidanus' book), rounding out the course. The desire is that students will leave with the framework and skills for a lifetime of better understanding God's word.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. That students will be able to put the entire Bible together into a cohesive framework.
2. That students will have skills to interpret individual passages, within their different genres.
3. That students will be able to integrate interpretive skills into skills for teaching the bible today.
4. That students will learn to sing the truth of Scripture.

TEXTS & READING

- M. Silva, ed. ***Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*** (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996) ISBN 9780310208280
- S. Greidanus. ***Preaching Christ from the Old Testament*** (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999) ISBN 9780802844491
- J. B. Green, ed. **Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation** (2nd Ed.; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012) ISBN 9780802864208
- F. D. E. Schleiermacher **General Hermeneutics** (PDF loaded onto Self-Service).

ASSESSMENT

- 10%** 3 page succinct answer to the following question: “What does Sidney Greidanus mean by Preaching Christ from the OT?”¹ **Due date: see schedule below.**
- 10%** 3 page succinct summary of three different chapters from Green’s Hearing the New Testament. **Due date: see schedule below.**
- 20%** 12 page summary of Silva’s book.² **Due date: see schedule below.**
- 60%** Final Exam applying the content of the course to real passages.³ **Due date: see schedule below.**

WHEN IS THE COURSE BEING RUN?

Monday **1st of February** to Monday **9th of May**; **6pm to 9pm.**

¹ This is *not* a book review. This is almost like an open book exam, but with more time to work on it. This question will force you to read over Greidanus’ book and answer it. Note though, I do want you to read the whole thing – you will be asked to write on the top of the assignment “I have read what X% of the book”.

² This is a challenging assignment, which is why it is due at the end. The book is really 6 books in one and so it is really a 2 page summary for each. It is worth 20% and so I will be looking for strong indications that you have digested the material. **Do not leave this assignment until the last minute! In fact, to get the most out of the course, it would be best to do it before you start – then we can interact on this material and you could ask questions.**

³ The point of this course is to learn to interpret better. The final will test how well you have integrated the information from the course.

General Outline

Week/Date	Hour	Subject
F1	1 2 3	POETRY
F8	4 5 6	NARRATIVES (I)
F15	7 8 9	NARRATIVES (II)
F22 (Greidanus due)	10 11 12	NARRATIVES (III)
F29	13 14 15	LETTERS
M7	16 17 18	RHETORIC
M14	19 20 21	PROPHECY
M21 (Green due)	22 23 24	INTERPRETATION – SCIENCE OR ART?
M28	25 26 27	OLD TESTAMENT IN THE NEW TESTAMENT
A4	Spring Break	
A11	28 29 30	DRAWING THREADS TOGETHER
A18	31 32 33	APOCALYPTIC
A25 (Silva due)	34 35 36	PRACTICE
M2	37 38 39	SUMMARY & PRACTICE
M9	Final 60% Exam (6-9pm).	

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<p><i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None 	
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Written exam. 2. Written book reviews
Scripture	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Strong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Laying a foundation for the theory of interpretation. 2. Theory applied in practice.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The continuity of scripture will receive special attention.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Meaning will be translated into practice at various points.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Strong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A main focus of this course will be to see how the bible shapes our worldview.
Winsomely Reformed	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In this course we will be willing to deal with other views (not just reformed).
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Application at various points will highlight how a given passage may best be taught.
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Some worship songs will be sung together.
Shepherd	Ability to shepherd the local		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Practical illustrations of

	congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.	Moderate	instructor's experience. 2. Application to ministry.
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Strong	1. The theme of how to use these texts in counseling has significant impact on relations with the world.

Extension Policy

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class.

Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed.

Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an Extension Request Form from the Student Services Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 49 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 14)

Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 49)