

Fifth Year
PRE-CLASS WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT
PERKINS COURSE OF STUDY SCHOOL

521 – Bible V: Acts, Epistles, and Revelation

(New Testament II- 511)

Michelle J. Morris

michelle.morris@arumc.org

This course focuses on the content and message of Acts, the Epistles and Revelation, as well as the theological perspectives of various books in this portion of the New Testament. The practice of exegesis and its use in preaching and teaching will be emphasized.

Course Goals

COS 521 – Bible V: Acts, Epistles, and Revelation

This course focuses on the content and context of these writings, and the theological emphases of their writers. In addition to Acts and Revelation, Pauline, deuter-Pauline, and Catholic letters will receive special attention. Students will articulate a theology of scripture.

Students will be able to:

1. Distinguish these genres of biblical literature, and understand the major theological themes in these writings.
2. Faithfully exegete these forms of biblical literature.
3. Apply exegesis to preaching, other pastoral responsibilities, and issues of the present day.
4. Articulate the unity and authority of Scripture as a whole.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Warren Carter/ Amy-Jill Levine *The New Testament: Methods and Meanings*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2013.

Jouette Bassler. *Navigating Paul: An Introduction to Key Theological Concepts*. Louisville: KY, Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.

PRE-CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

I. Course Description. This course is a continuation of the third year New Testament course with a focus on the practice of exegesis of New Testament texts. Emphasis is placed on integrating previous learning in exegesis and biblical interpretation with a contextualization of that work in the practice of ministry. There will be a special focus on the Acts, Romans, Revelation, additional Pauline, deuter-Pauline, and Catholic letters.

II. Pre-Class Assignments.

1. Read the Book of Acts and the chapter on “Acts” in Carter and Levine’s *The New Testament: Methods and Meanings*. Prepare a digital storytelling submission. Identify 3 photos that share something of your own story, and 3 photos that represent the story of Acts. These must be original photos that help you interpret the Book of Acts in your own life. Do not use copied photos or graphics of paintings or other images you find online. This pre-class assignment will be submitted online in Canvas as part of your introduction. **Course will open on Canvas starting May 30, 2024. This assignment is due the first day of class (100 points).**
Example: I have a photo of my son looking at a butterfly. My son is wearing camouflage, and the butterfly is approximately the same color as its surroundings. This photo could either be used as one of my personal photos (showing you my son), or I could use it to represent part of Acts, as the church in Acts tries to look like the world around it in some ways (see Paul’s speech about the unknown God) but it also stands out as different.
2. Read the Epistle to the Romans and Bassler’s *Navigating Paul* in its entirety. In light of your reading, write a four page essay on the key themes in Paul’s letters. On the first two pages, discuss the issues you find most important to understanding Paul’s writings. In the remaining two pages, pick one of the themes and discuss how it is developed in Romans, specifically discussing how Bassler’s reading challenges how you have previously understood Romans, and suggest how it might influence how you teach/preach on it now. The paper should be formatted using 1-inch margins on all sides, 12 pts Times New Roman font, with paragraphs double spaced. (100 points). **Due by June 3, 2024.**
3. Read the Apocalypse of John and the chapter on “Revelation” in Carter and Levine’s *The New Testament: Methods and Meanings*. In light of your reading, write an essay of 4 pages on the message of the Apocalypse of John (Revelation). On the first two pages, using the information you gained from Carter and Levine, discuss the traits of an apocalypse and describe how the Apocalypse of John fits that definition. Then identify an apocalypse of your choosing in current pop culture (produced since the year 2000) and discuss in the remaining two pages how it fits the definition of an apocalypse and how it could be used to teach your congregation about apocalyptic traditions. The paper should be formatted using 1-inch margins on all sides, 12 pts Times New Roman font, with paragraphs double spaced. (100 points). **Due by June 3, 2024.**

III. Coursework During the Course Session

In addition to daily reading and preparation for face-to-face class, participation in online coursework will be required for the remaining 70% of the grade. This will include quizzes, online discussion posts and responses to fellow students, digital storytelling submissions, participation in synchronous discussions, etc. Details of specifics will be shared at the beginning of the course.

IV. Criteria of Evaluation. All the above pre-class assignments will be evaluated on the following *criteria*: a) fulfillment of the requirements of the assignment; b) personal creativity and thinking; c) meeting the deadline established by Perkins COSS (remember that there will be sanctions against late, misplaced, or lost work); and d) grammar, syntax, and style where appropriate (clarity, precision and formatting).

Do not utilize sources for these papers other than those assigned on the syllabus and your pop culture choice for the comparison with the Apocalypse of John. The goal of these assignments is to demonstrate your developing skills in understanding the message of these NT books. Secondly, the assignments should demonstrate a developing ability to offer your own perspective. Students should keep a copy of each assignment to protect against lost papers. You should use inclusive language (i.e. not exclusively male-centered) language when referring to humans or to God, unless context deems that gendered language is necessary.

Completed pre-class work for students in second- through fifth-year courses must be submitted to Michelle Morris via email (michelle.morris@arumc.org) by **June 3, 2024 (except the photos for digital storytelling, which are due the first day of classes)**. Pre-class work submitted after that date is subject to grading penalties.

Guidelines for writing pre-class assignments and information on academic dishonesty are provided in the Course of Study catalog, available on the website. Students are expected to understand what constitutes plagiarism. Students who are found to plagiarize are subject to grading penalties, which may include dismissal from the school.

All the assignments above are worth **300 points** of the final grade for this course. The remaining **700 points** will be covered by work online.

Outline for COSS 521, Summer 2024

Monday

I. Orientation

II. Introduction to Biblical Studies in the 21st Century

III. Digital storytelling exercise

Tuesday

Introduction to and Exegeting Acts (Read Acts ad Carter/Levine pp. 91-111 before class)

Wednesday

Introduction to Paul and Romans (Read Romans and Carter/Levine pp. 112-128 before class)

Thursday

Introduction to the Apocalypse of John (Read Revelation and Carter/Levine pp. 341-358 before class)

Exegeting the Apocalypse of John

asynchronous portion

TBA – specific schedule will be available on the syllabus in the Canvas course.

If you want to work ahead, read the following biblical books and the corresponding chapters in Carter and Levine: 1 Corinthians, Ephesians, 1 Timothy, Hebrews, James.