

PERKINS COURSE OF STUDY SCHOOL
521 – Bible V: Acts, Epistles, and Revelation

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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. Record a short video of yourself in which you: 1) share your name and a little bit about yourself; 2) share information about where you currently serve; 3) summarize one story from Acts and share how you think that story compares with ministry today. Then, watch the videos of your classmates and comment on them. This pre-class assignment will be submitted online in Canvas as part of your introduction. **Course will open on Canvas starting June 1, 2025. Your video should be posted by June 22, 2026; your response to others is due July 6, 2026 (100 points).**
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 22, 2026.**
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 22, 2026.**

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 22, 2026, except for the video on Acts which should be posted on Canvas by June 22 and responded to by July 6**. 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 2026

Synchronous Portion

Monday

- I. Orientation and introduction
- II. Introduction to Biblical Studies in the 21st Century

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)

Friday

Practical approaches to the Apocalypse of John.

Asynchronous Portion

TBD – 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.