



### **Class Information**

**Day and Time:** Thursday 8:AM -10:30 AM

**Room Number:** E209

### **Contact Information**

**Instructor Name:** Dr. Jim Larsen

**Instructor Email:** jlarsen@criswell.edu

**Instructor Office Hours:** Contact Professor for Appointment

### **Course Description and Prerequisites**

A study of the transmission and translation of the Scriptures and of the principles and procedures of their interpretation and application. There are no prerequisites for this course.

### **Course Objectives**

This course is designed to introduce students to the aforementioned topics. While it will include classroom lectures, it also will include reading, research, and interaction with fellow classmates. Furthermore, at the end of this course, students should demonstrate the ability to:

1. Provide a brief history of the formation of the English Bible, including the process of canonization, the transmission of original language texts, and strengths and weaknesses of major translation philosophies.
2. Recognize and define pertinent issues, fundamental terms, and theological categories that are used when discussing the process of biblical interpretation.
3. Discuss historical movements, current trends, and controversial issues in hermeneutics.
4. Distinguish different genres of biblical literature and demonstrate proficiency in applying the basic rules that govern the interpretation of each kind.
5. Analyze and interpret a given passage of Scripture using the steps of the “Interpretive Journey” described in the course text.

### **Required Textbooks**

- *The Bible* – The professor typically uses the *English Standard Version* for course lectures.
- Duvall, J. Scott and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God’s Word*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012. ISBN 978-0-310-49257-3.

## Course Requirements and Assignments

**Reading Assignments (15%):** The course text forms the foundation upon which lectures are built, thus it is imperative that students thoughtfully read assigned chapters prior to each class session. The percentage of assigned reading completed will be reported weekly.

**Assignments (15%):** Since this course is intended to provide the student with both knowledge and skills associated with biblical hermeneutics, homework will be assigned as identified on the Course Schedule below, to be submitted in Canvas (unless otherwise instructed) by the start of class on the date indicated. A number of these assignments are specifically intended to help the student acquire skills necessary to successfully complete their hermeneutics project (see below). In preparation for these assignments, the student is required to select a biblical passage, in consultation with the professor, by the date specified on the “**Course Outline/Calendar**” below. No late assignments will be accepted, except as approved by the professor on a case by case basis.

**Quizzes:** It is not expected that quizzes will be given in this course, but the professor reserves the right to administer quizzes as deemed appropriate.

**Exams (40%):** There will be a midterm and a final exam in this course. The midterm exam will cover required reading and lesson material discussed up to that point in the course. The final exam will cover the remaining required reading and lesson material as well as significant concepts presented during the first portion of the course.

**Hermeneutics Project (25%):** Students will be required to produce a 12-15 page, detailed examination of a selected biblical passage. The passage to be examined must be approved by the professor by the date indicated on the “**Course Outline/Calendar**” below. The student is to demonstrate both understanding *and use* of the “Interpretive Journey” as presented in the course text, class discussions, and course assignments. In addition to the course text, the student must use *at least* three additional sources such as books and journal articles. All sources used in this project *must be properly cited* as indicated in the *Criswell College Manual of Style* (CCMS), 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., available online at [http://www.criswell.edu/current\\_students/library/](http://www.criswell.edu/current_students/library/), as well as in print form on reserve at the Wallace Library circulation desk. With the exception of online journal articles, no internet sources are to be used. This project must include a title page and be generally structured as identified in the CCMS. A bibliography is *not required*. The total page count for this project does not include the title page or bibliography (if included).

**Class Participation (5%):** Students must show up on time, and must be adequately prepared to contribute to the conduct of class sessions. This may be demonstrated by asking questions, interacting with the professor and/or other students during class discussions, and/or by responding to questions posed by the professor. As one needs to be present in order to participate in class discussions, absences will affect the class participation grade.

## Course/Classroom Policies and Information

**Textbooks and Supplemental Bibliography:** The selection of textbooks and items on the Supplemental Bibliography should not be interpreted as implying the professor’s endorsement of any of the views of the authors. Textbooks and supplemental sources are selected for their perceived value in helping to meet course goals and objectives.

**Recording:** As a general policy, students may not record class sessions for this course. If a student has a particular need that necessitates recording class sessions, please contact the Director of Student Services. If permission is granted to record class sessions, under no conditions may recordings be duplicated, given, lent, or shared with anyone else. Further, permission is **expressly denied** to upload these recordings to the internet **in any form** or to use them for purposes other than the student's own personal study to meet the requirements of this course. For additional information, see the "**Disabilities**" section below.

**Course Outline/Calendar:** The schedule provided below is intended to give the student a general idea of the flow of course topics/discussions. While the professor intends to keep as closely as possible to the indicated topic dates, he reserves the right to modify class topics as necessary to meet course objectives as well as deal with potential issues raised by students deemed appropriate to meet these objectives. Unless otherwise indicated, deviations from indicated topics *will not* affect due dates for listed assignments.

### **Class Attendance**

Students are responsible for enrolling in courses for which they anticipate being able to attend every class session on the day and time appearing on course schedules, and then making every effort to do so. When unavoidable situations result in absence or tardiness, students are responsible for acquiring any information missed. Professors are not obliged to allow students to make up missed work. Per their independent discretion, individual professors may determine how attendance affects students' ability to meet course learning objectives and whether attendance affects course grades.

### **Grading Scale**

A	93-100	4.0 grade points per semester hour
A-	90-92	3.7 grade points per semester hour
B+	87-89	3.3 grade points per semester hour
B	83-86	3.0 grade points per semester hour
B-	80-82	2.7 grade points per semester hour
C+	77-79	2.3 grade points per semester hour
C	73-76	2.0 grade points per semester hour
C-	70-72	1.7 grade points per semester hour
D+	67-69	1.3 grade points per semester hour
D	63-66	1.0 grade point per semester hour
D-	60-62	0.7 grade points per semester hour
F	0-59	0.0 grade points per semester hour

### **Incomplete Grades**

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An "I" may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their professors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar's Office. The "I" must be

removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the grade was assigned, or the “I” will become an “F.”

## **Academic Honesty**

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting. Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,
- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and
- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

## **Institutional Email Policy**

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students' institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

## **Disabilities**

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

## **Intellectual Property Rights**

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the professor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

## **Resources and Support**

Canvas and SONIS: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool and SONIS for student data. Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day. Students needing help with SONIS should contact the Campus Software Manager at [studenttechsupport@criswell.edu](mailto:studenttechsupport@criswell.edu).

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting the office at 214.818.1332 or [studentservices@criswell.edu](mailto:studentservices@criswell.edu). Pastoral and certified counseling services are also available to Criswell students. Appointments are scheduled through the Dean of Students, at [deanofstudents@criswell.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@criswell.edu).

Wallace Library: Students can access academic resources and obtain research assistance by visiting the Wallace Library, which is located on campus. For more information, go to the library website, or email the Wallace Library at [library@criswell.edu](mailto:library@criswell.edu).

Writing Center: Students are encouraged to consult with writing tutors to improve and enhance their skills and confidence by practicing techniques of clear and effective writing. To consult with a tutor, students can visit the Writing Center located on the first floor near the Computer Lab, or they can schedule an appointment by emailing [writingcenter@criswell.edu](mailto:writingcenter@criswell.edu) or calling 214.818.1373.

## Course Outline/Calendar

THU	Topic	Assignments
1/23	*Course Preliminary Matters *Introduction to Hermeneutics	
1/30	*How We Got Our Bible Part 1: Texts to Translation	<b>Chapter 1 Assignment #1</b>
2/6	*How We Got Our Bible Part 2: Texts and Textual Criticism	<b>Appendix 1 Assignment #2</b>
2/13	*Biblical Interpretation: The Big Picture	<b>Chapters 2-3 Study Passage Approved</b>
2/20	*The Basics of Biblical Interpretation Part 1	<b>Chapters 4-5 Assignment #3</b>
2/27	*The Basics of Biblical Interpretation Part 2	<b>Chapters 6-7 Assignment #4</b>
3/5	*The Basics of Biblical Interpretation Part 3	<b>Chapters 8-9</b>
3/12	*Historical & Contemporary Issues in Hermeneutics Part 1	<b>Chapters 10-11 Midterm Exam (Online)</b>
<b>March 16-20 — Spring Break</b>		
3/26	*Historical & Contemporary Issues in Hermeneutics Part 2	<b>Assignment #5</b>
4/2	*From the Text to Application	<b>Chapters 12-13 Assignment #6</b>
4/9	*Old Testament: Narrative and Law	<b>Chapters 18-19 Assignment #7</b>
4/16	*Old Testament: Poetry and Wisdom	<b>Chapters 20, 22 Assignment #8</b>
4/23	*Old Testament: Prophets	<b>Chapter 21 Assignment #9</b>
4/30	*New Testament: Letters and Gospels	<b>Chapters 14-15 Assignment #10</b>
5/7	*New Testament: Acts and Revelation	<b>Chapters 16-17 Hermeneutics Project</b>
<b>May 11-15 – Final Exams (Final Exam Online)</b>		

## Selected Bibliography

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