



On-Campus Course Syllabus

NT 550

New Testament Backgrounds

Spring 2020

Class Information

Day and Time: Tuesday 1:30-4:00 pm

Room Number: E206

Contact Information

Instructor Name: R. Alan Streett

Instructor Email: astreett@criswell.edu

Instructor Phone: 214-818-1434

Instructor Office Hours: Monday 11:30 AM-1:30 PM; Tuesday 10:30-11:00 am; 12:00-1:30 pm

Course Description and Prerequisites

An advanced study of the Jewish and Greco-Roman historical, social, and literary contexts of the New Testament. (Prerequisites: NTS 501, NTS 601)

Course Objectives

The student who successfully completes this course will:

- A. Be familiar with 2nd Temple documents and texts that are relevant to understanding and interpreting the NT.
- B. Recognize the key personalities, sects, and institutions of NT times.
- C. Be able to give an accurate account of salvation history from ca 586BC–AD100,
- D. Understand the importance of knowing the socio-political context of the NT.
- E. Be aware of the main scholarly resources available that deal with this period.

Required Textbooks

- A. Suetonius. *The Twelve Caesars* (New York: Penguin Classics, 1989).
- B. Vermes, Geza. *Who's Who in the Age of Jesus* (New York: Penguin, 2006).
- C. Streett, R. Alan. *Subversive Meals*. (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2013).

Course Requirements and Assignments

A. **READING AND QUIZZES** Weekly reading will be assigned from *The Twelve Caesars*. Quizzes covering the content of the assigned reading for the week will be administered at the beginning of each class session. Students are encouraged to prepare for these quizzes by mastering the major themes, points, arguments and evidence presented by each author. Cumulatively, the quizzes will comprise 20% of course grade.

B. STUDENT-LED CLASS DISCUSSION. Graduate students will read chapters on “Zealots” and other related topics in *Who’s Who in the Time of Jesus* (Vermes) and give a report on their findings using charts, time lines, summaries, etc. Counts 20% of course grade.

C. REPORT. The student will be assigned a reading from one of the Dead Sea Scrolls. S/he will read it and give a report to the class on the nature and content of the scroll. Counts 10% of course grade. See sign-up sheet.

D. Attendance Grade Students are expected to attend all class sessions, both arriving on time and not leaving until the session is over. One absence per semester will be allowed without penalty. Students will be given a grade for attendance. Two absences, 90; three absences 80; four absences, 70; 5 absences 60; 6 absences, 50; etc. Counts 10% of semester grade.

E. Mid-term and final exams. A comprehensive exam will be given at mid-point and at the end of the semester to evaluate the student’s retention of knowledge. Mid-term and final exams account for 20% each of the semester grade, for a total of 40%.

Course/Classroom Policies and Information

All computers, iPads, and cell phones must be put away during class to assure students can engage wholeheartedly in discussion. Students may record the class upon professor’s approval.

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

Assigning grade definitions (i.e., above average, average, below average) is optional. Please delete the last column below if not assigning definitions. Additionally, delete these instructions when completing syllabus.

			Grade Definitions (optional)
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.

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. Pastoral and certified counseling services are also available to Criswell students. Appointments are scheduled through the Dean of Students, at 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.

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 or calling 214.818.1373.

Course Outline/Calendar

WK 1	Syllabus, Course Introduction
WK 2	Seutonius, chapter 2
WK 3	Seutonius, chapter 3
WK 4	Seutonius, chapter 4
WK 5	Seutonius, chapter 5
WK 6	Seutonius, chapter 6
WK 7	Spring break
WK 8	Seutonius, chapter 9
WK 9	Seutonius, chapter 10

WK 10	Vermes, selected readings		
WK 11	Vermes	“	“
WK 12	Vermes	“	“
WK 13	Vermes	“	“
WK 14	Vermes	“	“
WK 15	Vermes	“	“ (Begin outline/calendar here)

Selected Bibliography

See Streett for a comprehensive bibliography.