



Course Syllabus

NTS 315 L1

Topics in New Testament Studies

Fall 2025

Class Information

Day and Time: Mondays, 4:45-7:15 pm

Room Number: E208

Contact Information

Instructor Name: Steven Sanders

Instructor Email: ssanders@criswell.edu

Instructor Phone: 214-818-1328

Instructor Office Hours: [Mondays, 3:30-4:30 pm](#); [Tuesdays, 12:30-1:30 pm](#); [Wednesdays, 12:30-1:30 pm](#); [Thursdays, 3:30-4:30 pm](#)

Course Description and Prerequisites

A study of selected topics related to the language, history, background, hermeneutics, or theology of the New Testament. The topic this semester is an introduction to exegesis. (Prerequisites: NTS 101, NTS 201.)

Course Objectives

This course will:

1. Provide students with a framework for better understanding the exegesis of the New Testament.
2. Provide students with practical experience and feedback using exegetical tools.
3. Explore ways of using exegetical tools within a ministry context.
4. Encourage students to develop a plan for consistent future exegetical work.

Required Textbooks

1. Bock, Darrell L., and Buist M. Fanning, ed. *Interpreting the New Testament Text*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2006. (ISBN: 978-1433519222)
2. Tenney, Merrill C. *Galatians: The Charter of Christian Liberty*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1957. (ISBN: 978-0802832535)

Course Requirements and Assignments

The student's final grade for the class will be based on a series of ten assignments. Further instructions and requirements will be given in class. The following is a list of the assignments with their relative weights and a brief description:

1. Synthetic Observations (5%) – A list of observations from a synthetic study on a given New Testament book. Due Sept 15.
2. Book Chart (15%) – A synthetic book chart of a given New Testament book. Due Sept 29.
3. Structural Layout (10%) – A structural layout of a given New Testament passage with a given translation. Due Oct 13.
4. Plot Diagram (5%) – A plot diagram of a given New Testament narrative passage. Due Oct 20.
5. Exegetical Outline (15%) – Subject-complement statements that fill a outline framework for a given New Testament passage. Due Nov 10.
6. Word Study (10%) – A diachronic word study for a given New Testament term. Due Nov 24.
7. Validation Paper (10%) – A validation paper on a given New Testament problem passage. Due Dec 1.
8. Topical Study (10%) – An overview study of a given New Testament topic. Due Dec 8.
9. Curricula Assignment (15%) – Discussion questions for a given New Testament passage. Due Dec 12.
10. Calendar Assignment (5%) – Topical preaching/curricula calendar. Due Dec 12.

Course/Classroom Policies and Information

Video Recording

To ensure FERPA compliance when a course is live-streamed or recorded, students can opt out of video recordings by requesting seating in a designated area off camera. Students who sit outside of this area are giving implicit permission to be recorded.

Class Attendance:

Students should only enroll in courses they are able to attend regularly.

- **On-campus** students are expected to attend class **in person** according to the course syllabus.
- Students enrolled in the **online section** must pay any applicable online course fees.
- Online students are expected to attend class **synchronously** at the scheduled time via the designated video conferencing platform, Zoom, found in the left-hand global menu in Canvas.
- Online students must have their **cameras turned on with sound muted** during class, and actively participate in discussions and activities. In order to be properly identified, students must upload a picture ID to their Canvas Account Profile *prior to the first online meeting*. For instructions on how to upload a profile picture, [click here](#).

Missed Classes:

- Each instructor may decide how attendance impacts your grade and learning objectives. Details are provided within the course syllabus.
- Students are responsible for catching up on any material missed due to absence or tardiness.
 - Instructors are **not required** to allow make-up work for missed classes.
 - *If a student misses more than 2 class periods in the semester, the professor may change the student's final grade at his discretion based on the amount of time missed.*

Attendance & Financial Aid:

- Students receiving **grants, loans, or scholarships** must meet participation requirements set by the college.
- It is the student's responsibility to:
 - Review relevant sections of the Academic Catalog.
 - Contact the **Financial Aid Office** for details on how attendance affects aid.
 - Understand the consequences of non-participation.

Census Period Attendance Requirement:

- Though Criswell College does not officially take attendance, it must verify that students **begin their courses** to meet federal aid regulations.
- **During the census period** (first two weeks of a 16-week semester or first week of shorter terms), students must participate in **academically related activities**, or they may be dropped from the course.

Examples of Qualifying Activities:

- Attending class in person or via live video with the instructor present
- Submitting an assignment, quiz, or exam
- Taking part in assigned tutorials, study groups, or discussion boards
- Having documented communication with the instructor about course content

Important Note:

Simply logging into Canvas or a Zoom session without participating (e.g., camera off, no interaction) **does not count** as attendance.

Canvas:

- Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based Learning Management System (LMS).
- **For online courses** at Criswell College, instructors use Canvas to:
 - Organize course content on a module basis using organizational tools within Canvas
 - Control the timing of course requirements through module control or assignment due dates to ensure that students are engaged for the full length of the semester or term
 - Accept assignments from students only inside the Canvas course (emailed assignments are not acceptable)
 - Provide written feedback on assignments only within Canvas, preferably through Speedgrader
 - Use the Announcement or e-mail feature in Canvas to communicate with the students rather than by broadcasting to a class email listserv outside of canvas
 - Use Zoom in Canvas for all "live" (synchronous) class sessions

Important Note:

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.

Campus Closure

To ensure the health and safety of students and employees, college administrators may decide it is necessary on rare occasions to close the campus. Once this decision is announced, instructors will contact students to provide further details regarding the campus closure's impact on those courses. Students are responsible to watch for communication from their instructors and respond appropriately. (Unless otherwise specified by the instructor in this syllabus, this communication will be sent to the student's Criswell College e-mail account.)

In order to make progress toward the courses' objectives, instructors have the freedom during most campus closures to require students to participate in activities as alternatives to meeting on campus. An instructor may, for example, hold class remotely (through Zoom) at the scheduled time, provide a recording of a class or presentation for students to watch independently, or assign other activities that students are to accomplish before returning to campus. Students are responsible for accomplishing these alternative activities as well as any course requirements listed in this syllabus during the period of the campus closure. If, during the period of the campus closure, personal circumstances prohibit a student from accomplishing these alternative activities or course requirements and assignment listed in the syllabus during the campus closure, the student is responsible for communicating with the instructor as soon as possible. Instructors will not penalize students who do not have the means to accomplish the alternative activities during the period of the campus's closure and will work

with students whose circumstances during the campus closure prohibited their timely completion of course requirements and assignments in the syllabus.

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 instructors 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 close of the term or semester in which the grade was awarded, 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.

Course Policy on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Examples of AI-related functions you **may not use** without permission:

- Text Generation – You may not use AI to generate text for use in an assignment.
- Outline Generation – You may not use AI to generate an outline for an assignment.

AI-related tools you **may use** without permission:

- Spellcheck and grammar – built into Word, Pages, and Google Docs
- AI re-writing tools – tools that take what you’ve written and help make it clearer, such as what Grammarly offers. However, you must cite Grammarly or other sources in your assignment/paper and submit both original draft of paper and the final paper.
- AI research and summarize – tools that help you find sources to cite, such as the new AI tools built into Logos Bible Software.)

Institutional Assessment

Material submitted by students in this course may be used for assessment of the college’s academic programs. Since programmatic and institutional assessment is done without reference to specific students, the results of these assessments have no effect on a student’s course grade or academic standing at the college. Before submitting a student’s work for this type of assessment, the course instructor redacts the work to remove anything that identifies the student.

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 instructor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

Research and Writing Standards

The default writing style for written assignments in Criswell College Courses is the latest edition of *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses and Dissertations* by Kate Turabian. However, instructors are free to require alternative writing styles in their courses. These styles include but are not limited to the American Psychological Association (APA), Chicago Manual of Style, Modern Language Association (MLA), and Society of Biblical Literature (SBL) writing guides.

Resources and Supports

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. The Student Services Office also works with local counseling centers to ensure that every student has access to helpful mental health resources. More information is located on the college website at [Criswell College Mental Health Resources](#), and students may contact the Director of Student Services if they have any questions.

Wallace Library: Students can access a wide range of academic resources and receive research assistance by contacting or visiting the Wallace Library, located on the second floor of the Education Building.

Login credentials for accessing the library's databases are emailed to students near the beginning of each semester.

For more information or assistance, email the Wallace Library at library@criswell.edu or visit www.criswell.edu/academics/wallace-library/.

Tutoring Center: Students are encouraged to consult with tutors to enhance their skills and build confidence. All tutors are recommended by faculty to ensure they are qualified to support the student body. To meet with a tutor, students can schedule an appointment through Calendly at <https://calendly.com/criswell-tutoringcenter>. The Tutoring Center is located in room E203 of the Education Building.

For questions, email tutoringcenter@criswell.edu.

Course Outline/Calendar

Date	Topics	Related Reading	Assignment Due Date
Aug 18	Syllabus Overview of Exegetical Method	Bock/Fanning: 23-32 Tenney: 21-22	
Aug 25	Synthetic Method Synthetic Observations Theory	Tenney: 25-29	
Sept 8	Synthetic Observations Example Book Chart Theory	Tenney: 29-35	
Sept 15	Book Chart Example Synthetic Method in the Gospels	Bock/Fanning: 167-195, 255-291 Tenney: 97-109, 189-203	Synthetic Observations
Sept 22	Analytic Method Structural Layout Theory	Bock/Fanning: 90-100 Tenney: 165-168, 174-185	
Sept 29	Structural Layout Example Plot Diagram Theory	Bock/Fanning: 197-219	Book Chart
Oct 6	Plot Diagram Example Exegetical Outline Theory	Bock/Fanning: 100-132 Tenney: 168-173	
Oct 13	STUDENT DEVELOPMENT WEEK; No class		Structural Layout
Oct 20	EO Example Structure Word Study Theory	Bock/Fanning: 135-154	Plot Diagram
Oct 27	EO Example Form & Applications Validation Theory	Bock/Fanning: 155-166	
Nov 3	Word Study Example Validation Example	Bock/Fanning: 293-310 Tenney: 207-211	
Nov 10	Topical Method Topical Study Theory	Tenney: 153-161, 67-93, 113-132	Exegetical Outline
Nov 17	Topical Study Example Curricula Writing Theory		Word Study
Dec 1	Curricula Writing Example Calendars		Validation
Dec 8	Sermon Theory Exegesis and Ministry		Topical Study
Dec 12			Curricula Assignment Calendar Assignment