

Syllabus for
BIB 306—Hermeneutics: Principles of Biblical Interpretation
3.0 Credit Hours
Fall 2017

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of the problems and methods of biblical interpretation, including the factors of presuppositions, grammatical relationships and historical context, genre, vocabulary, and figurative language. Beyond methodology we will look at motivation for studying Scripture, including the perspective of Christian experience and respect for the Bible's authority.

Course Prerequisites: None

II. COURSE GOALS

The purpose of this course is to enable the student to do the following:

- A. Employ responsible methods and tools in fruitful study of the varied kinds of material (genre) encountered in the Bible.
- B. Direct the use of hermeneutical skills and insights toward the goals of Christian discipleship.

III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THIS COURSE

The objectives of this course are achieved when the student has mastered the principles of hermeneutics and can apply them properly in the interpretation of Scripture. Specifically the student will be able to do the following:

- A. Define the authority and inspiration of Scripture; indicate how these influence interpretation.
- B. State the importance of responsible hermeneutics for Christian discipleship.
- C. Define, discuss, and demonstrate the basic steps of interpretation.
- D. Compare and evaluate various English translations of the Bible.
- E. Illustrate the importance of literary and historical contexts of scriptural passages.
- F. Employ appropriate tools for illuminating the historical and cultural context.
- G. Identify the interpreter's context, especially with reference to God's transcendence, the interpreter's finite historical existence, and the interpreter's place in the community of faith. Discuss cultural influences on interpretation in a global context.
- H. Identify important persons and developments in the history of interpretation.
- I. Identify figures of speech used in Scripture: simile, metaphor, personification, euphemism, hyperbole, irony, etc.
- J. Explain symbols and symbolic actions in Scripture.
- K. Apply pertinent principles of interpretation to the various genre in the Bible:
 - 1. Historical narratives in the Old and New Testaments.
 - 2. Old Testament laws, including their relevance for today.
 - 3. Poetic material in the Psalms and elsewhere, with awareness of the basic types of Hebrew poetic parallelism.
 - 4. Wisdom literature (Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, Job).
 - 5. Prophetic material in the Old Testament.
 - 6. The Gospels, their similarities and distinctives; parables and allegories.
 - 7. Epistles of the New Testament.
 - 8. Apocalyptic literature (Daniel, Revelation).

- L. Define typology and distinguish it from allegorical interpretation.
- M. Discuss the use of the OT in the NT and the challenges and insights for hermeneutics provided by the relationship between the Testaments.
- N. Employ principles of hermeneutics for applying Scripture in doctrine, worship, behavior, and growth in the grace and knowledge of Christ.
- O. Demonstrate specific methodologies for Bible study, such as book studies, passage analysis, word studies, etc.
- P. Research and write an exegetical paper.

IV. TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER LEARNING RESOURCES

Required Materials

1. *Bible* Fairly literal modern translation recommended:
ESV, NIV, NASB, NRSV, NKJV
2. Fee, Gordon and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, 4th Edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014. ISBN 978-0-310-51782-5
3. Coloring pencils—including the following colors: red, green, blue, yellow, orange, purple, black, brown (needed for in-class exercises and assignments).

Other: None

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- A. University Policies and Procedures
 1. Attendance at each class or laboratory is mandatory at Oral Roberts University. Excessive absences can reduce a student's grade or deny credit for the course.
 2. Students taking a late exam because of an unauthorized absence are charged a late exam fee.
 3. Students and faculty at Oral Roberts University must adhere to all laws addressing the ethical use of others' materials, whether it is in the form of print, electronic, video, multimedia, or computer software. Plagiarism and other forms of cheating involve both lying and stealing and are violations of ORU's Honor Code: "I will not cheat or plagiarize; I will do my own academic work and will not inappropriately collaborate with other students on assignments." Plagiarism is usually defined as copying someone else's ideas, words, or sentence structure and submitting them as one's own. Other forms of academic dishonesty include (but are not limited to) the following:
 - a. Submitting another's work as one's own or colluding with someone else and submitting that work as though it were his or hers;
 - b. Failing to meet group assignment or project requirements while claiming to have done so;
 - c. Failing to cite sources used in a paper;
 - d. Creating results for experiments, observations, interviews, or projects that were not done;
 - e. Receiving or giving unauthorized help on assignments.

By submitting an assignment in any form, the student gives permission for the assignment to be checked for plagiarism, either by submitting the work for electronic verification or by other means. Penalties for any of the above infractions may result in disciplinary action including failing the assignment or failing the course or expulsion from the University, as determined by department and University guidelines.

4. Final exams cannot be given before their scheduled times. Students need to check the final exam schedule before planning return flights or other events at the end of the semester.
5. Students are to be in compliance with University, school, and departmental policies regarding Whole Person Assessment requirements. Students should consult the Whole Person Assessment handbooks for requirements regarding general education and the students' majors.
 - a. The penalty for not submitting electronically or for incorrectly submitting a Whole Person Assessment artifact is a zero for that assignment.
 - b. By submitting an assignment, the student gives permission for the assignment to be assessed electronically.

B. Department Policies and Procedures

Note: Attendance policy is enforced. Excessive absences affect the student's grade. See syllabus attendance policy.

1. Completion of a Course
 - a. Late work will not be accepted. Assignments are due on or before the deadline given.
 - b. Under rare circumstances, exceptions may be made in consultation with the faculty member for the course. However, except in extreme emergencies, students must contact faculty members before the assigned due date and request an exception to the policy.
2. Incompletes
 - a. An incomplete is given only after the student establishes with the instructor and the department chair by written petition that his or her work is incomplete for good cause (i.e., lengthy illness, death in the family). **Incompletes are rarely granted.** Only those absences that are incurred within the time period of the extenuating circumstances prompting an incomplete are excused. The student is still accountable for any other absences and is penalized for them according to the attendance policy.
 - b. A Petition for Incomplete Grade with all supporting documentation must be submitted for approval at least one week prior to the end of normal classes. The submitting of a petition does not automatically ensure the granting of an incomplete. The petition must be approved by the appropriate academic committee of the Undergraduate Theology Department.
3. Examinations and Other Assignments
 - a. Early examinations **are not** allowed.
 - b. Late examinations are administered only when extenuating circumstances are present (such as a death in the family the week before exams, sudden and major illness the week of exams that is documented

by a physician). In fairness to all students, some persons should not have more time to prepare for an examination than others. **The granting of a late examination request is rare.**

- c. A Petition for Late Examination without penalty must be signed by the professor and the chair. Proper documentation must accompany the petition and must be submitted to the Undergraduate Theology Department. The student must schedule the makeup exam with the professor of the course. The exam must be taken no later than five (5) calendar days after the approval of the petition. **Grade penalties may be applied as indicated by the Academic Affairs Committee.**
- d. **All exams are given as scheduled.** It is the student's responsibility when purchasing airline tickets, for example, to take this schedule into consideration. **Not being present for the final examination automatically results in failure of the course.**
- e. These requirements apply to all quizzes, tests, and examinations administered by the Undergraduate Theology Department.

4. Attendance

- a. The Official Attendance Policy for the Undergraduate Theology Department is as follows for the three-semester hour class:
 - (1) If the class meets three times a week, the missing of 3 class sessions results in a grade reduction of one letter grade. Missing 6 class sessions automatically results in a grade of "F."
 - (2) If a class meets twice a week, the missing of 2 class sessions results in a grade reduction of one letter grade. Missing 4 sessions automatically results in a grade of "F."
 - (3) If the class meets once a week, then missing 1 class sessions results in a grade reduction of one letter grade. Missing 2 class sessions automatically results in a grade of "F."
- b. **The absences allowed prior to grade reduction are designed to allow for emergencies and illnesses, for example, and are not designed for indiscriminate use.** Many students incorrectly assume that they may use these allowable absences as unexcused "cuts" from class. Any illnesses, emergencies, and trips are included in exempt. Administrative excuses are granted only when a student is on official University business and has received approval in advance from the University administration.
- c. Students are expected to be prompt for classes. **Two tardies equal one absence.**

C. Course Policies and Procedures

1. Evaluation Procedures

a.	Unit 1 Exam	20%
b.	Unit 2 Exam	20%
c.	Unit 3 Exam (Final)	20%
d.	Exegesis Paper (see details below)	20%
e.	4 Brief Written Assignments	20%
f.	Whole Person Assessment compliance	0%
	(noncompliance: 0% for the assignment)	
	TOTAL	100%

2. Grading

The final grade is given on the basis of the percentage of the total points possible:

90+=A; 80+=B; 70+=C; 60+=D; 59 and below=F.

3. The **exegesis paper** will demonstrate the student's ability to employ sound hermeneutical principles to research, organize, and write an analysis of a biblical passage (chosen with the instructor's approval). The paper should be approximately 8-10 pages in length and should be based on research in at least three sources. Endnotes (rather than footnotes) and a bibliography should be included.

4. Whole Person Assessment Requirements

a. Take-home essay Unit 3 Exam

The take-home essay component of the Unit 3 exam serves as the Whole Person Assessment artifact for this course. A hard copy is submitted to the professor for grading and a copy is submitted electronically for assessment. The electronic submission is as follows: Portfolio—Theology Department, Outcome—Scriptural Knowledge, Rubric—Hermeneutics Essay, Assessor—Arden Autry.

b. Whole Person Assessment compliance (0% for the assignment for noncompliance). To be "compliant" the student must correctly submit the research paper electronically as an artifact for assessment. To be "noncompliant" the student has either not submitted or incorrectly submitted the research paper electronically. Noncompliance results in a one letter grade reduction of the final grade for the course.

d. [It is the student's responsibility to ensure that he/she is in compliance. Compliance is verified by checking for the assessment results in one's e-portfolio. If there is a problem you may receive notification by the professor/assessor through one's **ORU Group Wise email address.**]

VI. COURSE CALENDAR

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Chapters in Fee & Stuart</u>
1	Introduction to the course Need for hermeneutics; inductive methods	Ch. 1
2	Hermeneutics and discipleship	
3	General hermeneutics Context of the text: history, language, culture	Chs. 2 & 3
4	Context of the interpreter Transcendence of God Existence in time; history of interpretation Community of faith (historical and global)	
5	Exam 1 Special hermeneutics	
	Special uses of language: metaphor, simile; irony; unusual syntax, other special uses of language Symbolism	
6	Genre Historical narrative (OT, Acts)	Chs. 5 & 6
7	Law	Ch. 9
8	Poetry (Psalms and other texts)	Ch. 11
9	Wisdom literature (Prov., Eccl., Job)	Ch. 12
10	Exam 2 Prophecy in the OT	Ch. 10
11	Gospels (Four Gospels, One Gospel)	Ch. 7
12	Parables and allegories	Ch. 8
13	NT Epistles Exegesis paper due	Ch. 4
14	Apocalyptic literature (Daniel, Revelation)	Ch. 13
15	Old Testament and New Testament Christocentric reading of Scripture	
TBA	FINAL EXAM	

Course Inventory for ORU's Student Learning Outcomes
BIB 306—Hermeneutics: Principles of Biblical Interpretation
Fall 2017

This course contributes to the ORU student learning outcomes as indicated below:

Significant Contribution – Addresses the outcome directly and includes targeted assessment.

Moderate Contribution – Addresses the outcome directly or indirectly and includes some assessment.

Minimal Contribution – Addresses the outcome indirectly and includes little or no assessment.

No Contribution – Does not address the outcome.

The Student Learning Glossary at <http://ir.oru.edu/doc/glossary.pdf> defines each outcome and each of the proficiencies/capacities.

OUTCOMES & Proficiencies/Capacities		Significant Contribution	Moderate Contribution	Minimal Contribution	No Contribution
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1	Outcome #1 – Spiritually Alive Proficiencies/Capacities				
1A	Biblical knowledge	X			
1B	Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit	X			
1C	Evangelistic capability			X	
1D	Ethical behavior		X		

2	Outcome #2 – Intellectually Alert Proficiencies/Capacities				
2A	Critical thinking	X			
2B	Information literacy	X			
2C	Global & historical perspectives		X		
2D	Aesthetic appreciation	X			
2E	Intellectual creativity	X			

3	Outcome #3 – Physically Disciplined Proficiencies/Capacities				
3A	Healthy lifestyle				X
3B	Physically disciplined lifestyle				X

4	Outcome #4 – Socially Adept Proficiencies/Capacities				
4A	Communication skills	X			
4B	Interpersonal skills	X			
4C	Appreciation of cultural & linguistic differences	X			
4D	Responsible citizenship			X	
4E	Leadership capacity			X	