

**ST. PETER'S SEMINARY / KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE**  
**at *The University of Western Ontario***  
**Fall 2023**

**BIBLSTUD 5101**  
**Introduction to Sacred Scripture**  
**Tuesdays 9:30 am -12:30 pm**

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Office hours: Tuesdays 1-2 pm, or by appointment.

**A. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

How do Catholics read the Bible? This course deals with introductory issues such as the Church's current teachings about reading and interpreting the Bible as Catholics, the history and environment of the Scriptures, the different types of biblical literature, the academic methods of exploring the Scriptures, and the development of new methods of Scriptural interpretation. (3 hours per week; *antirequisite: the former Biblical Studies 136b*)

**B. GOALS**

This course will assist students to grow in the following knowledge, skills and attitudes:

**Knowledge:**

1. To introduce students to the Church's teaching on Scripture as revealed and inspired.
2. To introduce students to the main critical methods, tools, and resources for the study of Scripture in the Church.
3. To introduce students to the historical "story" of the Bible, and the main themes and genres of literature found in the Bible.

**Skills:**

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Articulate and employ the twin principles of Catholic biblical scholarship: exegesis and actualization.
2. Identify and use the important tools and resources for the study of Scripture.
3. Research a passage of scripture using the abovementioned tools and resources in order to come to an understanding of the historical context of the passage, and then to integrate this information into contemporary applications.
4. To present written work in a coherent and thoughtful manner, and to employ standard citation formats for referencing material.
5. To communicate exegetical material into a format accessible to the average lay parishioner in a ministry setting.

**Disposition:**

1. A love for the Sacred Scripture as interpreted in the life and mission of the Church.
2. A open-minded willingness to explore new meanings within the Old and New Testaments by approaching scripture exegetically.
3. A respect for, and understanding of, the work of exegetes and other biblical scholars.
4. A desire to make appropriate use of Scripture and contemporary scholarship in the service of evangelization.

### C. ASSESSMENT

**Attendance and Participation (5%):** The following comprise your participation and attendance grade:

- a) **Attendance:** Weekly attendance is mandatory. Seminarians must provide a valid excuse for all absences (e.g., significant illness).
- b) **Participation:** Preparation for, and active and informed participation in class discussion is a major aspect of this component of your grade. Since students interact with material in different ways, various kinds of participation will be noted towards your grade. For example, listening attentively, asking questions (even by email), and making comments are all good ways to demonstrate that you are thinking critically about the material. Participation marks are lost when it is clear that a student has not done the readings, and, though perhaps physically present, is not engaged with the material or class discussion. Participation marks are also lost when a student engages in disruptive or distracting behaviours (e.g. multiple interruptions, derailing the flow of discussion, ‘hijacking’ other students’ comments, etc.)

**Please note:** Texting and all other forms of social networking are not permitted during class time. Cell phones must not be on one’s desk. Students are welcome to check phones and social media during breaks.

1. **Conversation Prompts, 10%**  
Our classes will be a mixture of lecture and conversation. Students will have two (2) opportunities to open the conversation by highlighting a specific topic and its implications, or question that stood out to you from the assigned reading or supplementary readings. You can provide a brief overview of the article or chapter in question, and then home in on your specific topic or question. The goal of these Conversation Prompts is to allow students to demonstrate what they have drawn from the readings, as well as to open the conversation period. A sign-up sheet will be distributed during the first week of classes.
2. **Catholic Biblical Studies: Summary and Implications, 15% (1000 -1200 words): Due Tuesday, Oct 3, 2023, 11:59 pm, uploaded to OWL:** In this assignment, students will produce a report in the style of a journal article in a publication such as *The Bible Today*. The subject of the report is to provide a comparison between Vatican I’s *Dei Filius* (1870), *Divino Afflante Spiritu* (1943), and *Dei Verbum* (1965). Your report should address issues such as

revelation, inspiration, authorship, and inerrancy in Sacred Scripture. What are the important areas of overlap or contrast between these documents? What are the implications for Catholic biblical engagement?

3. **Old Testament Exegesis, 20% (1200-1500 words): Due, Tuesday Oct. 31 2023, 11:59 pm, uploaded to OWL:** The goal of this assignment is to expose you to the wealth of resources available to biblical studies through the library system. Guidance for using the library system and employing exegetical methodology will be provided in class. A selection of Old Testament passages will be provided for students to choose from, if desired. Complete instructions and guidelines will be provided on the assignment page in OWL
4. **New Testament Exegesis, 25% (2000 words): Due Tuesday, Dec 5, 2023, 11:59 pm, uploaded to OWL:** Students will select a passage from the New Testament to research in depth. More guidance for this assignment will be provided in class.
5. **Final Exam, 25%:** A final, in-class, written examination in mixed formats (multiple choice, definitions, passage identification, short answer, essay). The examination will be held during the examination period after the end of classes and will be on the date set by the Dean of Theology.

#### D. READINGS OR TEXTBOOKS

Students are required to have the following resources. electronic editions are perfectly acceptable for the textbooks, but the Bible (#1), should be in hardcopy. All resources are also available in the library.

1. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*. Fully Revised Fifth Edition, Michael D. Coogan, editor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018).  
Available here: <https://a.co/d/7QhBzFF>

*Please bring your bible to every class meeting.*

**N.B.** While students may already own a copy of the Bible, this edition of the Bible is required for the course since it contains essays and tables that will be referenced throughout the semester. You can never have too many bibles!

2. Lawrence Boadt, *Reading the Old Testament*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. New York and Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2012.  
Available here: <https://a.co/d/4SSq42g>
3. Raymond Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament: The Abridged Edition*. New York: Doubleday, 2016.  
Available here: <https://a.co/d/7f0UyRm>

4. Richard R. Gaillardetz, *By What Authority? Foundations for Understanding Authority in the Church*. Second Edition. Liturgical Press, 2018.  
Available here: <https://a.co/d/eNyWeMG>
  
5. Throughout the semester the instructor will distribute or assign additional resources via OWL. Please ensure you have access to OWL, and that your UWO email address is active and able to receive messages (i.e. not full!), since OWL sends notices to UWO addresses only.

### **Recording Lectures**

As a courtesy, students who wish to record lectures must first request permission from the instructor.

### **Email Policy**

I am always happy to respond to students via email. A few things to keep in mind when emailing:

- Please use your “@uwo.ca” email address. Email providers like Gmail, Hotmail, etc tend to go to the spam filter and I may not see them.
- During the regular work week (Mon-Fri, 9am - 5pm), I try to respond to emails within 24 hours; however, there may be times when I am delayed. Thank you for your understanding.

## **E. SCHEDULE of TOPICS & READINGS**

*\*To be distributed on the first day of class\**

## **F. UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS AND SUPPORT SERVICES**

**Students are responsible** for knowing the University’s academic policies and regulations and any particularities of their own course of study. Ignorance of these policies is not an excuse for any violation thereof. The following policies are particularly important to note:

### **Accommodations for Tests/Examinations:**

Students are responsible for seeking accommodation with appropriate documentation, prior to writing tests/examinations, if they are of the view that their performance may be affected by extenuating circumstances.

### **How to Request Academic Accommodation – King’s Students:**

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/courses-enrolment/exams-and-tests/medical-accommodation/>

**All students requiring academic accommodations for tests and examinations must use the services offered through King’s University College.**

**Scholarly Citations:** According to the policy adopted by the faculty of St. Peter’s Seminary, all citations, references and bibliographies in written assignments are to follow the formatting prescribed in the Chicago Manual of Style. Footnotes are to be used, rather than author-date references in the body of the text. Please review and consult the summary provided by Kenrick-Glennon Seminary at <https://www.kenrick.edu/wp-content/uploads/Guide-to-Academic-Papers-and-Citations.pdf> for further information.

In addition to citing written and electronic sources (i.e a video documentary or podcast), it is expected that students will also acknowledge any assistance they have received with proofreading or editing. For example, in a footnote, you may include something like, “I wish to acknowledge the advice and proofreading assistance from [first name] [last name].”

**Submission of Assignments:** It is the responsibility of the student to organize his or her work so that the assignments are completed on time. A penalty of 10% of the value of the assignment will be deducted for each day it is overdue without permission. To receive an extension, students are advised to dialogue with their instructor well in advance of the due date. An extension form will be signed by both the instructor and student and submitted to the Dean of Theology.

Students who are unable to hand in assignments or take examinations for legitimate reasons must consult with the instructor. If the reason is medical, students may be required to provide a note from a doctor. Ordinarily, all assignments and exams will be made up at a later date. In certain circumstances, the final grading scheme may be re-weighted if the missed assignment is of a low weight.

**Scholastic Offences:** Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf)

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system.

### **Course Policy on Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools**

St. Peter’s Seminary is committed to fostering a culture of professionalism, honesty, and academic integrity, and all members of our community—faculty, staff, and students—have a role to play in promoting an ethical learning environment. Furthermore, through the work they submit for academic evaluation, students develop important habits of

critical thinking, independent inquiry, and creativity. Thus, it is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor.

Within this course, use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools [such as Chat GPT] is not permitted for written work submitted for evaluation.

**Copyright re: Course Material:** Lectures and course materials, including power point presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty Members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a Faculty Member. Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member is interested in posting a student's answers or papers on the course web site he/she should ask for the student's written permission. (Commercial use of Course material - <http://umd.edu/legal/commercial.html>)

**Selection and Registration of Courses:** Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded, that all prerequisite course(s) have been successfully completed, and that they are aware of any anti-requisite course(s) that they have taken.

**Classroom Conduct:** Students are expected to conduct themselves with respect for everyone and with professionalism in all classroom activities. Laptops and other electronic devices may be used for classroom academic activities only. The use of such devices must always be in accord with the common good of the whole learning community as specified by the instructor. The instructor may choose at any time to limit their use for instructional purposes or because of the disruptive use of such devices.

You are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations.

**Support Services:**

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan:

<http://westernusc.ca/services/>

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:

[https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental\\_wellbeing/](https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/)

These services are not meant to replace those offered at the Seminary but may be beneficial to our students after consultation with the appropriate instructors, administrators, and formators.

### **G. SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY and REFERENCE INFORMATION**

According to the policy adopted by the faculty of St. Peter's Seminary, all citations, references and bibliographies in written assignments are to follow the formatting prescribed in the Chicago Manual of Style. Footnotes are to be used, rather than author-date references in the body of the text. Please review and consult the summary provided by Kenrick-Glennon Seminary at <https://www.kenrick.edu/wp-content/uploads/Guide-to-Academic-Papers-and-Citations.pdf> for further information. Students may also consult the *SBL Handbook of Style* (on OWL) for assistance formatting many biblical resources.

#### **Papal and Magisterial Documents on Biblical Studies**

Béchar, Dean P., ed. *The Scripture Documents: An Anthology of Official Catholic Teachings*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 2002.

Benedict XVI, Pope. *Verbum Domini: The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church*. Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation. Ottawa: CCCB Publications Service, 2010.

Lysik, David A. ed. *The Bible Documents: A Parish Resource with Commentary and Index*. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 2001.

#### **Catholic Approaches to Biblical Studies**

Bergant, Dianne. *Scripture: History and Interpretation*. Engaging Theology: Catholic Perspectives. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2008.

Brettler, Marc Zvi, Peter Enns and Daniel J. Harrington. *The Bible and the Believer: How to Read the Bible Critically and Religiously*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012. (NB. This text presents Jewish, Catholic, and Protestant perspectives on the bible and is a valuable resource for examining the bible with interreligious concerns in mind.)

Brown, Raymond E. *101 Questions and Answers on The Bible*. New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1990.

Gaillardetz, Richard R. *By What Authority? A Primer on Scripture, the Magisterium, and the Sense of the Faithful*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003.

Hahn, Scott, ed. "Biblical Criticism", in *The Catholic Bible Dictionary*. New York: Doubleday, 2009. 111-119.

Harrington, Daniel J. *How Do Catholics Read the Bible?* Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto, Oxford: Rowan and Littlefield Publishers, 2005.

Nutting Ralph, Margaret and Catherine Cory, editors. *Understanding the Bible: A Guide to Reading the Scriptures*. Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2008.

Schneiders, Sandra M. *The Revelatory Text: Interpreting the New Testament as Sacred Scripture*. Second Edition. Collegeville, MN. Liturgical Press, 1999.

### **Old Testament Resources**

Boadt, Lawrence. Edited by Richard Clifford and Daniel Harrington. *Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction*. Second Edition. New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2012.

Duggan, Michael W. *The Consuming Fire: A Christian Guide to the Old Testament*. Updated and Revised. Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2010.

### **New Testament Resources**

Brown, Raymond E. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland: Doubleday, 1997.

Harrington, Daniel J. and Christopher R. Matthews, eds. *Encountering Jesus in the Scriptures*. New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2012

McMahon, Christopher. *Reading the Gospels: Biblical Interpretation in the Catholic Tradition*. Winona: Anselm Academic, 2012.

Perkins, Pheme. *Reading the New Testament*. Third Edition. New York/Mahwah: Paulist Press, 2012.

Scholtz, Daniel J. *Jesus in the Gospels and Acts: Introducing the New Testament*. Winona: Anselm Academic, 2012.