

RELG 411 / 482
NEW TESTAMENT EXEGESIS / EXEGESIS OF THE GREEK NEW TESTAMENT

MCGILL UNIVERSITY
School of Religious Studies
Winter 2017

I. COURSE DETAILS

<i>Instructor</i>	Frederick S. Tappenden, Ph.D.
<i>Email</i>	frederick.tappenden@mcgill.ca
<i>Office</i>	Birks 016
<i>Office Hours</i>	Wednesdays, 10.30 AM – 12.30 PM, or by appointment
<i>Course Webpage</i>	myCourses
<i>Course Weight</i>	3 Credit Hours
<i>Location</i>	Birks 104
<i>Time</i>	
411 and 482	Wednesday, 8.35–10.25 AM
411	Wednesday, 3.35–4.25 PM
482	Monday, 2.35–3.25 PM
<i>Prerequisites</i>	
411	RELG 311 and RELG 312
482	RELG 311, RELG 312, and RELG 381 or equivalent
<i>Language</i>	Lectures will be in English. In accord with McGill University's Charter of Students' Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

II. COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

According to the McGill University course descriptions, RELG 411: New Testament Exegesis and RELG 482: Exegesis of the Greek New Testament are described as follows:

RELG 411:

A seminar in exegesis on the basis of representative passages chosen from different parts of the New Testament in English.

RELG 482:

An intensive seminar in exegesis on the basis of representative passages chosen from different parts of the New Testament.

Both RELG 411 and 482 focus on the same selection of representative New Testament texts, the chief difference being that students in RELG 482 explore these texts in Greek. To fulfil the above descriptions, the Winter 2017 offering of RELG 411/482 will meet the following goals:

1. Students will be acquainted with the history of biblical interpretation, including major changes and movements in interpretive strategies from antiquity through the postmodern period;
2. Students will gain deeper and better exegetical skills by working with a selection of biblical texts that are representative of the literary breadth of the New Testament canon; special emphasis is placed on reading these texts carefully so as to wed exegetical and theoretically interpretive sensibilities;
3. Students will be thoroughly acquainted with a variety of reading strategies and theoretical perspectives within the modern academic study of the New Testament; students will gain understanding of such theoretical stances, as well as cultivate the abilities to engage and critically assess such critical methods and interpretive strategies;
4. Students will be able to assess the potential of various reading strategies and theoretical perspectives for contemporary biblical interpretation, particularly with an eye toward theological integration within societal and ecclesial contexts;
5. Students will develop critical thinking skills through written assignments, class discussions, and presentations.

III. REQUIRED, RESERVED, AND RECOMMENDED TEXTS

The following textbook is **required** for this course. It can be purchased at the McGill University Bookstore.

1. Green, Joel B., ed. *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 2010.
2. Students are **required** to possess at least two (preferably more!!) modern Bible translations. This is especially the case for students who do not possess knowledge of Greek, for whom careful reading of the biblical passages will include comparative analysis across translations. In English, I recommend any of the following: New Revised Standard Version, the Revised English Bible, the New International Version, the North American Standard Version, the English Standard Version, and the New Jerusalem Bible. Dynamic translations (e.g. New Living Translation), idiomatic or periphrastic translations (e.g. The Message), and classical translations (e.g. King James Version) are not acceptable for class use.

Students should also be aware that websites such as www.biblegateway.com or biblia.com allow several translations to be viewed side-by-side. Other helpful sites are www.ntgateway.com, www.earlychristianwritings.com, and www.sbl-site.org/educational/sitesofinterest.aspx, all of which can direct you to excellent online resources. However, be careful! *Though online access is convenient, such sites should always be used cautiously and critically.*

3. Students of RELG 482 are **required** to possess a copy of the Greek New Testament. This can be the NA²⁸, the NA²⁷, the UBS⁵, or the UBS⁴.

4. Students are **required** to possess a gospel Synopsis. The recommended synopsis is: Aland, Kurt. *Synopsis of the Four Gospels*. New York: American Bible Society, 2010.

Students with knowledge of Greek may wish instead to purchase the following edition, which has facing Greek and English pages: Aland, Kurt. *Synopsis of the Four Gospels: Greek–English Edition* (15th ed.; German Bible Society: Stuttgart, 2013).

A Brief Note on Gospel Synopses:

There are several Gospel synopses currently published, many of which are quite good. In addition to Aland, students may wish to consult Burton H. Throckmorton, Jr., ed., *Gospel Parallels: A Comparison of the Synoptic Gospels* (5th ed.; Nashville, Tenn.: Thomas Nelson, 1992) or Zeba A. Crook, *Parallel Gospels: A Synopsis of Early Christian Writings* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012). Students who have or intend to take Greek may wish instead to purchase K. Aland, *Synopsis of the Four Gospels: Greek–English Edition* (15th ed.; German Bible Society: Stuttgart, 2013), which has facing Greek and English pages.

Some synopsis tools can be accessed online, but these must always be used critically and with full awareness of the English translation and/or Greek text being compared. Of the web options available, John Marshall's *The Five Gospels Parallels* (sites.utoronto.ca/religion/synopsis) and Mahlon Smith's *Synoptic Gospels Primer* (virtualreligion.net/primer) are the best (though even these can be awkward to use). *Though online access is convenient, it is not a substitute for the physical manuscript—students are expected to possess a print synopsis and bring it to each class period.*

5. Readings from the following materials are **required** throughout the semester. All print materials are all on **reserve** at the Birks Reading Room; all digital materials are linked here and on the MyCourses website. Please see the course outline below for the reading schedule. Because these readings will both (a) inform your exegetical reports and (b) form the basis of class discussion, **it is strongly recommended that students photocopy the relevant portions well in advance.**

Aune, David E. *Apocalypticism, Prophecy, and Magic in Early Christianity: Collected Essays* (Backer Academic, 2006), pp. 49–64.

Aitken, Ellen B. (2001) “Portraying the Temple in Stone and Text: The Arch of Titus and the Epistle to the Hebrews.” Pages 73–88 in Jacob Neusner and James F. Strange (eds.), *Religious Texts and Material Contexts*. Buffalo: State University of New York Press. Reprinted in *Sewanee Theological Review* 45 (2002): 135–51; and as pages 131–48 in Gabriella Gelardini (ed.), *Hebrews: Contemporary Methods, New Insights*. BibInt 75. Leiden: Brill, 2005.

Beck, David. R. “The Narrative Function of Anonymity in Fourth Gospel Characterization.” *Semeia* 63 (1993): 143–58. Online only (VPN required for off-campus access):
search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rft&AN=ATLA0000878988.

Bloomberg, Craig L. *Handbook of New Testament Exegesis* (Baker Academic, 2010), pp. 37–61.

Bart Ehrman, "The Coptic Gospel of Thomas." Pages 19–28 in *Lost Scriptures: Books that Did Not Make it Into the New Testament*. Oxford: OUP, 2003. Online (VPN required for off-campus access): mcgill.worldcat.org/oclc/252579895.

Grondin, Jean. *Introduction to Philosophical Hermeneutics* (Yale University Press, 1994), pp. 17–75.

Hanson, K. C. "How Honorable! How Shameful! A Cultural Analysis of Matthew's Makarisms and Reproaches." *Semeia* 68 (1994): 81–111. Online only (VPN required for off-campus access): search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=rfh&AN=ATLA0001013794.

Hays, John H. and Carl R. Holladay. *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook* (3rd ed.; Westminster John Knox Press, 2007), pp. 72–89.

Scalise, Charles J. *From Scripture to Theology: A Canonical Journey into Hermeneutics* (InterVarsity Press, 1996), pp. 42–66.

Scott, Bernard Brandon, *Hear then the Parable: A Commentary on the Parables of Jesus* (Augsburg Fortress, 1989), pp. 161–74.

Stowers, Stanley K. "Romans 7.7–25 as a Speech-in-Character (προσωποποιία)." Pages 180–202 in *Paul in his Hellenistic Context* (ed. Troels Engberg-Pedersen; Fortress Press, 1995).

Tappenden, Frederick S. "Embodiment, Folk Dualism, and the Convergence of Cosmology and Anthropology in Paul's Resurrection Ideals." *Biblical Interpretation* 23 (2015): 428–55.

Thiselton, Anthony. "Biblical Studies and Theoretical Hermeneutics." Pages 95–113 in *The Cambridge Companion to Biblical Interpretation* (ed. John Barton; Cambridge University Press, 1998).

In addition to the foregoing, students are **encouraged to explore and use the full exegetical resources available at the Birks Reading Room and the McLennan Library**. You should also be aware of the valuable collections of **the Presbyterian College Library**, which includes a rather extensive collection of exegetical resources available for short-term loan. A research guide will be handed out in class, to help assist the exegetical process. Additionally, I have put the following resources on **reserve** at the Birks Reading Room; they will prove exegetically helpful.

Green, Jay P., ed. *The Interlinear Hebrew–Greek–English Bible: Volume 4, Interlinear Greek–English New Testament*. Peabody, Mass.: Hendricks Publishers, 2005.

Mounce, William D. and Robert H. Mounce, eds. *The Zondervan Greek and English Interlinear New Testament (NASB–NIV)*. Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan, 2008.

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Students will be graded on the following requirements:

1. **Participation (10%)**: Given this course is a seminar, students are expected to regularly attend all class sessions and participate in class discussions. Each week, students are to prepare the assigned readings in advance of the joint Monday gathering. The assigned readings serve as the foundation upon which weekly class discussions are built in the joint session. Students are *encouraged (but not required)* to prepare the assigned readings by producing a short (1 page) reading report that (a) identifies two elements in the readings that stand out to the student—perhaps something compelling, something confounding, something erroneous—and (b) elaborates a few notes of critical reflection and/or argumentation which can be shared with the class.
2. **Exegetical Reports (40%)**: Throughout the semester, students will complete a series of short (2–3 page) exegetical reflections; there will be a total of eleven (11) assignments, of which the best eight (8) will be counted for marks (note: on the weeks when students do the Exegetical Presentation, no Exegetical Report is required of them). These short papers will each be worth 5% of your final grade ($5\% \times 8 = 40\%$).
These exercises are designed to help you build exegetical skills in the reading and interpretation of New Testament texts. Students should pay particular attention to the assigned readings, as these will help in the exegetical process. Students should also plan to do a small amount of targeted research in preparing these papers (e.g. commentaries, concordances, etc.). For those in RELG 482, engagement with the Greek text is required.
These assignments serve as the foundation upon which weekly class discussions are built. We will discuss these assignments in detail in the class workshops, and at a more general level in the joint gathering.
3. **Exegetical Presentation (25%)**: In Part 3 of the course outline (see below), students are required to work together in small groups of two or three to present both a critical method and a selection of texts. The presentations must comprise at least the following three elements: (a) a group presentation on the method itself (20–25 mins), (b) individual presentations on a selection of texts whereby that method is demonstrated (one text/student, 15–20 mins each), and (c) facilitation of classroom discussion (15 mins). Students' work will be graded both collectively and individually. More information will be handed out in class. **All topics and passages must be approved by the instructor by 1 February 2017; due dates vary according to the Course Outline below.**
4. **Final Paper (25%)**: Students are required to complete one exegetical paper of 3000–3500 words (approx. 10–12 page). This paper provides students the opportunity to examine a specific New Testament text in greater, more precise detail. It is expected that the methodological tools AND at least two theoretical perspectives be brought to bear on

the student's reading of the passage in question. More information will be handed out in class. The final paper will be **due on 26 April 2017**.

Grade Breakdown:

Reading Reports	10%
Exegetical Reports (x8)	40%
Exegetical Presentations	25%
Final Paper	25%
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Total	100%

V. RESEARCH QUALITY, ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION, AND GRADING

Paper Format and Style: All papers are to be double-spaced, paginated, and typewritten in 12 pt. Times New Roman font; margins set at 1-inch (sides) and 1½ (top and bottom). All sources should be cited as in-line citations. An excellent guide to the preparation of essays, including citation styles, may be found at www.mcgill.ca/religiousstudies/current/papers. This guide also reviews standards of academic integrity; if you have questions on how to avoid plagiarism please see the instructor.

Assignment Submission and Due Dates: All assignments are to be submitted on the day they are due as indicated in the Course Outline below. **All Exegetical Reports are due *in class* according to the schedule below (411 Reports due on Wednesdays, and 482 Reports due on Mondays); the Exegetical Presentation schedule will be determined in class; the Final Paper is due 26 April 2017.** Any extensions of these deadlines must be arranged beforehand (barring unforeseen circumstances).

All assignments can be submitted either as a hardcopy to the instructor during class periods, during office hours to Birks 016, or as a softcopy via the myCourses website. When submitting a hardcopy, please be sure the time, date, and signature of the receiver are noted on the submission. When submitting electronically, be sure that you receive confirmation of your submission via the myCourses system (myCourses will automatically note the date and time of submission). For a helpful overview of electronic submission via myCourses, see the video at the following web address: www.d2l.com/resources/videos/dropbox-tool-learning-environment-basics-for-learners. Please note that, barring unforeseen circumstances, appeals to technical difficulties experienced while trying to submit an assignment electronically is not a valid excuse for handing something in late.

Grading Scale: In keeping with McGill University's grading system, RELG 312 will be graded on the following scale.

Grade	GPA	%	Interpretation
A	4.0	85–100	Very Good
A-	3.7	80–84	
B+	3.3	75–79	Good
B	3.0	70–74	
B-	2.7	65–69	
C+	2.3	60–64	Satisfactory
C	2.0	55–59	
D	1.0	50–54	Conditional Pass
F	0	1–49	Fail

Academic Integrity: McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest for more information).

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest).

Late Policy: Assignments are considered late if they are submitted after the prescribed times outlined in the *Assignment Submission and Due Dates* section above. Late assignments will be penalised one grade point per day (e.g., from B to B- for one late day; from B to C+ for two late days, etc.) up to a maximum of 3 grade points in accordance with the McGill University Grading Scale (e.g., from B to C; or B- to D). Exceptions will only be made for unusual circumstances such as illness or by prior arrangement (or at the discretion of the instructor).

VI. RELATED COURSE INFORMATION

Electronic Devices in the Classroom: Mobile computing and communications devices are permitted in class insofar as their use does not disrupt the teaching and learning process. Students are permitted to record lectures only with the instructor's permission.

Disabilities: If you have a disability and feel the instructor should be alerted, please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at (514) 398–6009 before you do this. We will make every effort to accommodate your needs and to help ensure successful learning. Such matters will be treated with appropriate confidentiality.

Course Evaluations: You will be notified by e-mail when the evaluations are available on Mercury, the online course evaluation system. Please note that a minimum number of responses must be received for results to be available to students.

General Policy: My intent and desire is to assist and guide you in the learning of the material of this course, as well as to stimulate your own thinking. Should you have any questions and/or concerns with the course content, readings, assignments, etc., *please do not*

hesitate to contact me by email or in person during office hours. I am also happy to listen to suggestions about how we use class time, the texts, and the assignments. If you need help at any point in the course, please ask. During office hours I hold an open-door policy and look forward to hearing any questions and/or concerns that you may have.

Your responsibility is to come to class prepared, especially in terms of familiarity with primary sources for discussion, and to be willing to explore ideas. I ask that you be willing to take risks, venture new ideas, ask questions, critique your preconceptions, and respect the perspectives, questions, and statements of your colleagues.

VII. COURSE OUTLINE

Week of **Course Introduction**

Jan. 4

Topics: General Introduction and Overview of Syllabus; The Exegetical Study of the New Testament; The Theoretical Study of the New Testament; “There’s No such thing as a View from Nowhere!”—Seeing Exegesis and Theory as Interlaced

Note: No 411 tutorial on January 4.

Part 1: The (Pre-)History of Hermeneutics

Week of **Textual Interpretation and the Prehistory of Hermeneutics**

Jan. 11

Topics: Scriptural Interpretation in Early Christ-believing Groups; Allegory and Typology; Scholasticism; *sola scriptura* and the Protestant Reformation

Read: Grondin, *Philosophical Hermeneutics*, 17–75 (absolutely required!).

Due in Tutorial Class: Exegetical Report 1—Self-Reflection

Week of **Philosophical Hermeneutics from the Enlightenment to Postmodernity**

Jan. 18

Topics: Historical Criticism and the Enlightenment; Schleiermacher’s Generalising of the Hermeneutical Problem; Bultmann’s Demythologising; Heidegger’s Hermeneutic of Being; Gadamer’s Fusion of Horizons

Read: Green, ch. 13; Thiselton, “Theoretical Hermeneutics,” 95–113.

Due: Exegetical Report 2—1 Corinthians 13

Part 2: Exegetical Tools

- Week of
Jan. 25 **Translations, Word Studies, and Textual Criticism**
Topics: About Bible Translations; Procedures and Tools for Word Studies; Textual Variants
Read: Green, ch. 2; Bloomberg, *New Testament Exegesis*, 37–61; Hays and Holladay, *Biblical Exegesis*, 72–89.
Due: Exegetical Report 3—Romans 3.21–26 (please consult the NIV, NRSV, KJV, and NET versions, available in parallel at www.biblegateway.com).
- Week of
Feb. 1 **Historical Criticism (I): Source/Form/Redaction Criticism**
Topics: History and its Critical Study; Evidence of Compositional Histories in the Texts of the NT; Source, Form, and Redaction Criticisms
Read: Green, ch. 6; Scott, *Hear then the Parable*, 161–74.
Due: Presentation Topics
Due: Exegetical Report 4—Matthew 22:2–14 // Luke 14:16–24 // *Thom* 64 (= Aland §216 or §279; also available in synoptic parallel at: www3.haverford.edu/religion/courses/301F09/Parable16.htm). The *Gospel of Thomas* can be accessed in Ehrman’s *Lost Scriptures* (see above). Note: your report should stress synoptic differences and similarities between Matthew, Luke, and *Thomas*, specifically speaking to the form/content of the parable in its Gospel contexts. Note: students in 482 are to translate the Greek of both the Matthean and Lukan versions.
- Week of
Feb. 8 **Literary Criticism**
Topics: Genre; Structure; Context; Literary Devices
Read: Green, ch. 8; Aune, *Apocalypticism, Prophecy, and Magic*, 49–64.
Due: Exegetical Report 5—Revelation 17.1–6.
- Week of
Feb. 15 **Historical Criticism (II): *Sitz im Leben* and Cultural Contexts**
Topics: Reading the NT Contextually; Jewish Contexts; Greek and Roman Contexts; Oral/Aural Contexts
Read: Green, chs. 4 & 5; Tappenden, “Convergence of Cosmology and Anthropology.”
Due: Exegetical Report 6—1 Corinthians 15.35–50.

Part 3: Interpretive Lenses

- Week of Feb. 22 **Rhetorical Readings**
Suggested Presentation Topics/Passages: Harmony and Concord (1 Cor 1.10–17); Paul’s Fool’s Speech (2 Cor 11.21b–33); Acts and the Lector’s Performance; Paul’s appeal to Philemon
Read: Green, ch. 9; Stowers, “Speech-in-Character,” 180–202.
Due: Exegetical Report 7—Romans 7.14–25
Due: Exegetical Presentation 1
- Week of Mar. 1 **No Class (Reading Week)**
- Week of Mar. 8 **Social-Scientific Readings**
Suggested Presentation Topics/Passages: Ethnicity and Kinship in Galatians; Patronage Structures in Corinth; Socio-Economic Readings in the Gospels
Read: Green, ch. 3; Hanson, “How Honorable! How Shameful!”, 81–111.
Due: Exegetical Report 8—Luke 6.20–31
Due: Exegetical Presentation 2
- Week of Mar. 15 **Critical Theory and Ideological Readings**
Suggested Presentation Topics/Passages: Feminist Readings (Lydia in Acts 16.13–15, 40); LGBTQ+ Readings (Acts 8.26–39); Postcolonial Readings (2 Cor 2.14–17); Imperial Readings (1 Thess 4.13–5.11)
Read: Green, ch. 14; Aitken, “Portraying the Temple in Stone and Text”
Due: Exegetical Report 9—Hebrews 1.5–14
Due: Exegetical Presentation 3
- Week of Mar. 22 **Narrative Readings**
Suggested Presentation Topics/Passages: Disciples as Characters (Acts 10.9–16); Paul’s Self-Narrative (Gal 1.10–2.14); The Beloved in John’s Gospels
Read: Green, ch. 12; Beck, “Narrative Function of Anonymity,” 143–58.
Due: Exegetical Report 10—John 20.1–10
Due: Exegetical Presentation 4

Week of **Canonical and Theological Readings**

Mar. 29

Suggested Presentation Topics/Passages: Almost Anything in Hebrews or James; the Lukan Infancy Narrative; the Prophecy-Fulfillment Pattern in Luke-Acts; 1 Peter and Baptismal Liturgy

Read: Green, ch. 7 & 17; Scalise, *From Scripture to Theology*, 42–66.

Due: Exegetical Report 11—James 4.13–5.6

Due: Exegetical Presentation 5

Week of **Course Conclusion**

Apr. 5

Topics: Overview of Course Content and Major Themes; Final Paper Instructions

Note: No 411/482 tutorial on April 3 and 5; no 482 tutorial on April 10.

Due 26 April: Final Paper