



McMaster Divinity
College

GREEK SYNTAX

NT 3P1073

McMaster Divinity College
Dr. Christopher D. Land
landc@mcmaster.ca

Winter 2027
Friday, 11:00am–12:50pm

The mission of McMaster Divinity College is to develop effective evangelical Christian leaders for the Church, academy, and society through graduate-level education, spiritual development, and vocational formation.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Today, it is possible for preachers and teachers to examine the Greek New Testament using many different resources (including commercial software, free websites, AI models, written commentaries, etc.). Nevertheless, responsible users of these tools still need an understanding of Greek grammar, including not just the morphology of individual words but also the syntax that makes entire Greek sentences meaningful. Ultimately, then, responsible interpretation of both primary and secondary texts requires the ability to evaluate syntactic claims responsibly. Moreover, for those who hope to sight-read Greek, learning common syntactic constructions is the next step once the individual words can be recognized.

Each module in this course will begin on Monday morning and end on Sunday evening. You will begin with videos that describe and explain the syntax of Greek. You will then do assigned reading and participate in an online tutorial meeting. Finally, you will complete weekly exercises that review your introductory Greek (i.e. vocabulary and parsing) and push you to practice applying your emerging understanding of Greek syntax.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through your active participation in this course, you will:

KNOWING

- Know some of the most frequent inflections in the New Testament;
- Know how individual words combine in order to make meaningful units;
- Know the main grammatical choices that enable the construction of Greek wordings;

BEING

- Become self-aware as a modern reader of the Bible, recognizing the antiquity of the texts;
- Dispense with over-confidence (or lack of confidence) concerning knowledge of the biblical languages, adopting instead an attitude of life-long learning;

DOING

- Be able to talk intelligently about the structure of a specific wording by invoking alternative wordings (i.e. explain both *what* the wording means and *how* it means what it means);
- Be able to move cautiously from an analysis of Greek grammar to a preliminary understanding of an actual passage of scripture.

TEXTBOOKS AND RESOURCES

All students are required to possess (or have access to) the following:

A standard edition of the Greek New Testament, such as the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece* (26th–28th ed.) or the UBS *Greek New Testament* (4th–5th ed.).

Land, Christopher D. *Syntax: How Sentences Make Meaning*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, forthcoming. [Unpublished PDF to be disseminated via A2L]

All students are recommended to possess one of the following:

Mathewson, David, and Elodie Ballantine Emig. *Intermediate Greek Grammar: Syntax for Students of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2016.

Porter, Stanley E. *Idioms of the Greek New Testament*. 2nd ed. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

MODULE MATERIALS AND DISCUSSIONS (20%)

Each week on Wednesday, a video will be made available on A2L along with an excerpt from the forthcoming book, *Syntax: How Sentences Make Meaning*. **You will review these materials before the weekly tutorial (i.e. prior to Friday at 2pm)**, then come to class prepared to ask questions. Because the material in this course is very abstract, tutorial discussions will be a vital part of your learning. We will look at examples and endeavour to make the material understandable in relation to the goal of understanding the Greek New Testament. Following each tutorial, **you will report on A2L your attendance and the quality of your preparedness**. These self-reports will be a factor in your final grade, along with your oral participation in tutorial discussions.

EXERCISES (10 x 6% = 60%)

Throughout the semester, there will be ten online modules that include accompanying exercises. **These exercises must be completed on A2L before the end of each module (i.e. prior to Tuesday evening at 11:59pm)**. Each module will include a small vocabulary and parsing component, in which you will parse and/or define twenty (20) words drawn from the most common inflected forms in John 9 and 1 John (flashcard sets will be available on A2L). Following this, you will be asked to explore the Greek New

Testament with a particular focus on the grammar topic(s) for the week. The goal of these exercises is to cultivate two skills: (1) the ability to identify particular kinds of wording; and (2) the ability to discuss with clarity what each particular kind of wording can contribute to the meaning of a text. If you have questions about a particular exercise, please email me or post your question to the weekly discussion forum.

FINAL EXAM (20%)

For the final “open book” examination, you will be given a passage of Greek and some questions like the ones in the exercises. You may consult academic resources to answer the exam questions, provided you cite any sources that discuss the specific Greek text in view (you need not cite general information regarding the Greek language, whether from the class readings or other general resources). The exam is designed to ensure that you can recognize important grammatical constructions as well as explain how they are meaningful. **The take-home exam must be uploaded to A2L by December 12th at 11:59pm.**

GRADING SUMMARY

Module Materials & Discussions	20%
Module Exercises	60%
Final Exam	20%
Total	100%

COURSE SCHEDULE

NB: Every effort will be made to avoid cancelling classes, but if a class must be cancelled then an announcement will be posted on Avenue to Learn (A2L). Please check for announcements each week.

Dates	Video & Reading Topics (Available Monday @ 6:00am)	Zoom Tutorial (Friday @ 11am)	Weekly Exercises (Due Sunday @ 11:59pm)
Jan 11–17	Preliminary Considerations	Jan 15	
Jan 18–24	Modules	Jan 22	Exercises #1
Jan 25–31	Sentences & Clauses	Jan 29	Exercises #2
Feb 1–7	Verb Phrases	Feb 5	Exercises #3
Feb 8–14	Nominal Phrases & Ad Phrases	Feb 12	Exercises #4
Feb 15–21	Reading Week (No Class)		
Feb 22–28	Coordination, Apposition, and Adjunction	Feb 26	Exercises #5
Mar 1–7	More Sentences & Nominal Wordings	Mar 5	Exercises #6
Mar 8–14	More Adverbial Wordings	Mar 12	Exercises #7
Mar 15–21	More Nominalized Wordings	Mar 19	Exercises #8
Mar 22–28	More Verb Phrases	Mar 26	Exercises #9
Mar 29–Apr 4	Ellipsis, Intonation, & Linearization	Apr 2	Exercises #10

Apr 5–11	Exam Review	Apr 9	
Apr 12–16	Exam Week (No Class)		

COMMUNICATION

AVENUE 2 LEARN (A2L)

We will make extensive use of Avenue to Learn (A2L) in this course; it will be the primary hub for all course content and for all course announcements. **It is your responsibility to log into the system regularly to check for announcements, course content, and course activities.**

EMAIL

I can be contacted using the email address listed at the top of this syllabus. To protect confidentiality and confirm your identity, all communication must originate from your McMaster email account. Similarly, if I need to contact you for any reason, I will send mail to your McMaster email address. **It is your responsibility to ensure that that you are actively using and monitoring your McMaster email account.** If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address (that is, an address other than the student's McMaster email address), the instructor may not reply at their discretion. **Students must not use the "Instant Message" feature within A2L, nor should they send emails using A2L.**

OFFICE HOURS

I maintain office hours on at least two days per week, with the specific hours for each semester available both on A2L and outside my office door. **Office hours can be used for drop-in visits**, ideally kept to a half-hour maximum. If you need more time to visit or cannot come during office hours, please schedule a meeting by contacting me via email. **I am willing to meet in person or via Zoom as needed.**

SCHEDULED ACTIVITIES

PARTICIPATION

Presence and participation in this course are expected. Mediocre participation translates into mediocre learning outcomes. Moreover, logging into A2L or showing up to class are not, by themselves, sufficient as a demonstration of participation. Students are expected to engage with the professor and with one another, both in structured course activities and before/after class. **Relational engagement is an important part of belonging to and maintaining a community of learning.** Late arrivals disrupt the class and may affect your participation grade.

Conversely, excessive participation can amount to dominating class discussions. Please limit your interactions so that they do not overwhelm other students or hinder others from participating. If I discern that you are dominating our discussions, I may ask you to take a step back to allow others to participate more fully.

ETIQUETTE

It is critical that students show respect for classmates and instructors. Most, if not all, courses at MDC are devoted to the interpretation of Scripture. Invariably there will be disagreements; these **disagreements must be discussed and negotiated in a respectful manner**. This applies to individual and group communications involving the instructor and others enrolled in the course.

As the instructor of the course, it is my responsibility to model respectful disagreement and to help you to feel comfortable expressing your views in a respectful manner. I expect that you will give thought to your questions and comments. Please avoid sweeping statements that caricature or dismiss ideas or people with whom you disagree. Instead, identify concrete facts and speak clearly about their implications. When evaluating ideas or people, identify the underlying presuppositions or commitments that undergird your evaluation and make these explicit as part of your observation. Students who violate these guidelines may be dismissed from class.

ABSENCE DUE TO ILLNESS

If you must miss class due to an illness, please email me as soon as possible. If you are an in-person student and you are ill, please email me even if you plan to attend class online. Although I may be able to share a video recording of the class, I cannot guarantee that this will be possible, so you may wish to have a fellow student take notes for you.

CLASS CANCELLATIONS

If I should become ill and unable to attend class, I will communicate via A2L as soon as possible. **Please check A2L before coming to class, so that you do not miss any last-minute scheduling changes.** Similarly, please be sure to check whether MDC has closed due to inclement weather. If we must cancel class, I reserve the right to move the week's material to A2L (asynchronous format). This will help to ensure that we stay on schedule.

RECORDING

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course, whether by an instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution or by a student for the purpose of personal study. **Your voice and/or image may be recorded during the class** and your participation in the course serves as tacit acceptance of this fact. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you. Also, please respect the privacy of peers: **do not share images, recordings, or written contributions outside the class environment.**

COPYRIGHT

Please be advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor represent copyright-protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, *including lectures* by university instructors. **You are not permitted to share or otherwise distribute course materials or class recordings without written permission** from the relevant copyright holder(s).

ONLINE PARTICIPATION

Online participation is like face-to-face participation in that it requires planning, engagement, and respect. In addition, **online participation has the following specific requirements.**

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

- Ensure you have a reliable internet connection, a device with audio and video capability, and the course platform installed (i.e. Zoom).
- Test your link and connection before class.
- Keep your microphone muted unless speaking.
- Use headphones, if possible, for better audio quality.

WEBCAM & ENVIRONMENT

- Unless otherwise instructed, enable your webcam for the duration of the class session.
- Dress in casual but appropriate attire.
- Minimize distractions in your background. Virtual backgrounds are acceptable if professional.

NETIQUETTE

- Use the “Raise Hand” feature before speaking; avoid interrupting others.
- Keep chat messages on topic; avoid ALL CAPS, sarcasm, or humor that could be misinterpreted.
- Stay focused—do not multitask during class.

ASSIGNED READING & WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

HURLBURT FAMILY BOOKSTORE

All required and recommended books for this class are available from the Hurlburt Family Bookstore located beside the entrance to the Nathaniel H. Parker Memorial Chapel of McMaster Divinity College. To purchase in advance, you may contact the bookstore manager, Bernice Quek, by phone at 416.620.2934 or 416.668.3434 (mobile); or by email at books@readon.ca. The Hurlburt Family Bookstore also carries other books and merchandise and is open throughout the academic year during posted hours.

ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSIONS

Written assignments must be submitted via Avenue to Learn (A2L) prior to the relevant due date (see schedule below and/or A2L). **Emailed assignments will not normally be accepted.** Under extenuating circumstances, I may be willing to accept an emailed assignment as submitted, but this is at my own discretion. At the end of the semester, any missing assignments will receive a grade of “0,” unless the student has already been granted an incomplete or deferral from the Office of the Registrar.

FILE FORMATS

Written assignments must be uploaded to A2L either as Word documents (.doc, .docx) or in Rich Text Format (.rtf). If your file is not being accepted by the system, please ensure that you are using an accepted file format.

MDC STYLE

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the latest edition of the MDC Press Style Guide, which is available on A2L from MDC Student Services. **Failure to observe appropriate style will result in grade reductions.**

LATENESS

Everyone benefits when the entire class proceeds uniformly on schedule. Conversely, both students and professors suffer when work begins to pile up or become scattered. In this class, **a non-negotiable penalty of 2% per day will be applied to all late assignments.** Furthermore, **late submissions will not receive detailed comments from the professor** and may not be returned at the same time as work submitted on time.

Please do not email me to request an extension, because no extensions will be given. **If you are unable to submit work on time, you can email me using the exact subject heading *didaskale eleēson*,** which means “Teacher, have mercy!” I will not necessarily reply to your email. However, when I am calculating final grades after the last week of class, I will search for this specific subject heading and consider each request. Please keep in mind that busyness and poor planning do not generally provoke compassion. Also, assignments cannot be submitted after the final week of class without written permission from the Office of the Registrar (mdcreg@mcmaster.ca).

ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresenting the authorship or ownership of written work through deception or other fraudulent means. In an academic setting this may include copying or using unauthorized aids during tests or examinations; plagiarism, that is, presenting another person’s (or generative AI’s) words, ideas, data, or creative work as one’s own without appropriate acknowledgement and citation; or submitting work for credit in more than one course without instructor permission.

A useful guide to avoiding plagiarism is the Harvard Guide to Using Sources:

<http://usingsources.fas.harvard.edu/icb/icb.do>

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Students are expected to do their own thinking and write their own papers and assignments. Generative AI is not to be used to do this work. **The use of AI to produce content that is then submitted as though it were the student's own work constitutes plagiarism and is a violation of the Academic Honesty Policy.** While AI tools may be used to correct errors in English grammar, usage, and mechanics, **Generative AI must not be used to translate assignments from a student's native language into**

English. All degree programs at MDC are taught in the English language. Students are expected to be sufficiently proficient in English to engage fully in academic discourse in these programs.

TURNITIN

In this course, we will be using a web-based service (turnitin.com) for plagiarism detection. A student's continuation in the course represents his or her consent to the use of this service. If a student has objections to the use of this service, alternate arrangements for assignment submission must be made with the professor in advance of the assignment deadlines.

GENDER INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all its publications. It is expected that students will use inclusive language in all MDC assignments. When referencing biblical texts, students should preserve the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God while using gender-inclusive language when referring to human beings. Biblical quotations should be taken from a gender-inclusive translation such as: NRSVue (2022), NIV (2011), CEB (2011), NLT (1996), or CEV (1995).

GRADING SCALE

Percent Grade	Letter Grade	Grade Point (12)	Grade Point (4)	Grade Guidelines
90–100 85–89 80–84	A+ A A–	12 11 10	4.0 4.0 3.7	For work displaying mastery of the subject matter, creativity, and individualized integration of insights and their relationship
77–79 73–76 70–72	B+ B B–	9 8 7	3.3 3.0 2.7	For work displaying a good level of competence and comprehension
<i>For M.A, D.P.T, and Ph.D programs, any course grade below B– does not count for credit and must be repeated.</i>				
67–69 63–66 60–62	C+ C C–	6 5 4	2.3 2.0 1.7	For work which meets the basic course requirements but demonstrates a low level of comprehension
<i>For M.Div, Dip.Min, Cer.C.S, and occasional programs, any course grade below C– does not count for credit and must be repeated if it is a required course</i>				

AODA

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), McMaster Divinity College (MDC) is committed to supporting a learning environment that is inclusive and accessible to all students, including those with disabilities. **Students who require academic accommodations to participate fully in this course must register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS)** (<https://sas.mcmaster.ca/>) of

McMaster University. SAS will work directly with the MDC Registrar to ensure reasonably appropriate accommodations are in place. Students with accommodations must use the SAS portal to activate the accommodations relevant to each course at the start of each term in which they are enrolled. This will generate a notification to course instructors outlining the activated accommodations for the student in their course. Please note that accommodations must be requested in advance to allow sufficient time for implementation. Accommodations are not retroactive and will not be applied to coursework or activities that have already concluded.

Contact Information:

Student Accessibility Services General Inquiries: sas@mcmaster.ca

Roksana Sobota (SAS Representative for MDC): sobotar@mcmaster.ca

MDC Registrar: mdcreg@mcmaster.ca

GUARDME

Students at McMaster Divinity College have access to the GuardMe Student Support Program (GMSSP), which offers free, confidential mental health and wellness support 24/7. Through the program, students can connect with counsellors, access helpful tools and resources, and receive support anytime, from anywhere. Support is available by phone (1-844-451-9700) or visit gmssp.org to download the Student Support App.

SUITABLE GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICONS

[BDAG:] Bauer, Walter, Frederick W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich. *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000.

Danker, Frederick W. *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009.

Diggle, James et al. *The Cambridge Greek Lexicon*. 2 Vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

[LSJ:] Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996. [Available @ <http://www.tlg.uci.edu/ljsj/>] [8th edition available @ <https://archive.org/details/cu31924012909697>]

Liddell, Henry George, and Robert Scott. *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889. [Available @ <https://archive.org/details/intermediategree00lidd>]

[L&N:] Louw, J.P., and E.A. Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament Based on Semantic Domains*. 2 vols. New York: United Bible Societies, 1989.

Montanari, Franco. *The Brill Dictionary of Ancient Greek*. Leiden: Brill, 2015.

Thayer, J.H., *A Greek–English Lexicon of the New Testament*. New York: American Book Company, 1897.

[Available @ <https://archive.org/details/04508981.1536.emory.edu>]

This syllabus is for information only and remains the property of the respective professor. This syllabus is prepared with the best information available, but the professor reserves the right to change the content and format of the course.