

# **The Original Acts of the Apostles (Greek Exegesis) NT 2J03 / 6J06**

McMaster Divinity College  
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Winter 2014 (Term 2)  
Tuesday, 3:30–5:20pm

## **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

Preachers and teachers often drop lines like, “What this actually says in the original Greek is...” In this course, we will take seriously the idea that beginning with the original Greek can provide pastors and teachers with a deeper and richer encounter with the Acts of the Apostles, so that the original language of Acts becomes a reflective starting point rather than an esoteric and authoritative-sounding add-on. Students will not only improve their ability to read Greek, they will also learn some practical techniques that will move them beyond irresponsible word studies and into the exciting experience of working with the New Testament in its original language.

Because this course is skills-oriented, it is structured around weekly assignments. Students will work through a biblical passage each week and then the passage will be discussed in class. Those who have never taken an MDC Greek Exegesis course will also complete weekly grammatical exercises and a final exam; those who have already taken an MDC Greek Exegesis course will write an exegetical paper.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

In this course, students will be encouraged to:

### ***Knowing***

- Learn more of the Greek language, including both vocabulary and grammar
- Become familiar with the Greek of Acts so as to be able to read and interpret it
- Learn what scholars are saying about Acts
- Understand the message of Acts

### ***Being***

- Appreciate the importance of participating in respectful discussions about biblical texts
- Become humble interpreters of Greek texts who are moving towards competency
- Engage with the ideas presented in Acts

### ***Doing***

Take time to look closely at Acts in its original language

Develop responsible exegetical skills, particularly those that are oriented towards the biblical text (e.g. textual criticism, lexicography, grammatical study, and discourse analysis).

### **COURSE PREREQUISITES**

Prerequisite courses are: NT 1B03 and NT 1C03, or NT 1G03 and NT 1H03 (or equivalent)

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

*Please Note: Students are required to complete all of the following assignments, and all assignments must be submitted via Turnitin.com (unless alternative arrangements are made with the professor in advance of a due date). A penalty of 2% per day will be applied to all late assignments. No assignments will be accepted after **April 16<sup>th</sup>**.*

1. Class Participation (10%). Students are expected to complete the weekly readings and assignments on schedule, to attend class, and to participate in class discussions. For each week where an assignment is due, students will receive credit for showing up to class and for having brought their completed assignment. In the event that a student is unable to attend class *due to extenuating circumstances*, the relevant classes (to a limit of 2) will be factored out of the participation grade—provided the student discusses his or her absence with the professor in a punctual manner (preferably in advance of the missed class).
2. Weekly Grammar Exercises (30%). Each week, students will learn some grammatical concepts and then practice applying those concepts to the analysis of Greek examples. Guidelines for the weekly grammar assignment will be handed out at the end of each class session together with the required instructional material. These assignments are **due at 3:00pm** on each day of class, according to the schedule below.
3. Weekly Exegetical Assignments (40%). Each week, students will examine an assigned biblical passage and then prepare both exegetical notes and an English translation. A template for the weekly exegetical assignment will be handed out at the end of each class session. These assignments are **due at 3:00pm** on each day of class, according to the schedule below.
4. Final Examination (20%). Students must complete a final examination, which is scheduled for **April 15<sup>th</sup>** during the regular class time. This exam will test each student's familiarity with the Greek language and with The Acts of the Apostles. First, Greek vocabulary will be tested using both the vocabulary lists in Porter, Reed, and O'Donnell, *Fundamentals of New Testament Greek* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010) and the relevant "Special Vocabulary" section in Kubo, *A Reader's Greek-English Lexicon of the New*

*Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1975). Second, students will be presented with a number of Greek passages and asked a variety of grammatical questions. Third, students will translate a passage from The Acts of the Apostles.

***Special Requirements for Repeat Professional Track Students:***

1. Professional track students who have already completed a Greek Exegesis course will not redo the weekly grammatical assignments but will instead examine longer passages for the weekly exegetical assignments, which will then account for 60% of the student's final grade.
2. In place of the final examination discussed above, repeat professional track students will submit a 3,500-word exegetical paper on a passage from the Acts of the Apostles. The paper must follow the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses* and must demonstrate careful interaction with the Greek text of Acts. It will be due on **April 15<sup>th</sup>** and will be worth 30% of the student's final grade.

***Special Requirements for Research Track Students:***

1. Research degree students will not receive credit for preparation and participation, although these will remain required elements of the course.
2. The weekly exegetical assignments for research degree students will require the analysis of longer passages and the inclusion of more detailed notes.
3. In addition to the weekly assignments, research degree students will submit a paper that employs a grammatical analysis in order to clarify or resolve a specific interpretive issue relevant to the Acts of the Apostles. The paper must be *at least* 3,500 words, must demonstrate a very focused analysis of the Greek text of Acts, and must follow the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses*. It will be due on **April 15<sup>th</sup>** and will be worth 20% of the final grade.

**GRADING SUMMARIES**

Professional Students:

Preparation & Participation	10%
Grammar Exercises	30%
Exegetical Assignments	40%
Final Exam	20%
Total	100%

Repeat Professional Students:

Preparation & Participation	10%
Exegetical Assignments	60%
Exegetical Paper	30%
Total	100%

Research Students:

Grammar Exercises	20%
Exegetical Assignments	40%
Research Paper	20%
Final Exam	20%
Total	100%

**TEXTBOOKS**

Students are required to possess the following:

A standard edition of the Greek New Testament, such as the Nestle-Aland (26<sup>th</sup>–28<sup>th</sup> ed.), UBS (3<sup>rd</sup>–4<sup>th</sup> ed.) or Westcott-Hort.

Porter, Stanley E., *Idioms of the Greek New Testament* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994).

A suitable Greek–English lexicon (see bibliography below).

A suitable commentary on The Acts of the Apostles (see bibliography below).

Students are recommended to possess (or have access to) the following:

Porter, Reed, and O'Donnell, *Fundamentals of New Testament Greek* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010). [The vocabulary lists in this book are required for the course, but they can also be obtained in certain flashcard apps.]

A parsing tool, such as biblewebapp.com, Bibleworks, Logos, or Accordance.

Metzger, Bruce Manning. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 1994. [A copy will be available for consultation during the semester.]

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, READ On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College. Texts may be purchased on the first day of class. For advance purchase, you may contact READ On Bookstores, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416-620-2934; fax 416-622-2308; e-mail [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca). Other book services may also carry the texts.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

Dates	Grammar Exercise Due	Exegetical Assignment Due	Material Covered	Recommended Reading
Jan 7			Expression: Phonology and Graphology	
Jan 14	1	1	Words: Morphology and Lexicography	Baxter Article
Jan 21	2	2	Grammatical Systems, Structures, and Functions	
Jan 28	3	3	Clauses: Transitivity	<i>Idioms</i> Chs. 3, 7, 11
Feb 4	4	4	Clauses: Mood	Chs. 2, 13, 18, 19
Feb 11	5	5	Clauses: Expansion	Chs. 10, 15
Feb 18	Reading Week (No Classes)			
Feb 25	6	6	Clauses: Aspect	Ch. 1
Mar 4	7	7	Clause Complexes	Chs. 14, 16, 17
Mar 11	8	8	Word Groups and Word Group Complexes	Chs. 4–6, 8, 9
Mar 18	9	9	Information Flow	Ch. 20
Mar 25	10	10	Cohesion	Ch. 21
Apr 1	11	11	Cultural Context	
Apr 8	Exam Review			
Apr 15	<b>Final Examination (First Time Students) Exegetical Papers Due (Research &amp; Repeat Students)</b>			

**SUITABLE GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICONS**

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.

Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996. [Available Online @ [www.tlg.uci.edu/lsg/](http://www.tlg.uci.edu/lsg/)]

Liddell, Henry George, and Robert Scott. *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889.

Liddell, Henry George, and Robert Scott. *Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon, Abridged*. Simon Wallenberg Press, 2007.

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.

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

**SUITABLE COMMENTARIES ON THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES**

Barrett, C. K. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*. 2 vols. ICC. London: T&T Clark, 1994.

Bock, D. L. *Acts*. BECNT. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2007.

Bruce, F. F. *The Acts of the Apostles: The Greek Text with Introduction and Commentary*. 3rd rev. and enl. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990.

Fitzmyer, J. A. *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*. AB. New York: Doubleday, 1998.

Haenchen, E. *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary*. Translated by B. Noble and G. Shinn. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971.

Johnson, L. T. *The Acts of the Apostles*. SP. Collegeville: Liturgical, 1992.

Knowling, R. J. *Acts of the Apostles*. The Expositor's Greek Testament. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, n.d.

Lenski, R. C. H. *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1961.

Meyer, H. A. W. *Critical and Exegetical Handbook to the Acts of the Apostles*. Translated by P. J. Gloag and W. P. Dickson. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1883.

Munck, J. *The Acts of the Apostles*. AB. Garden City: Doubleday, 1967.

Pervo, R. I. *Acts: A Commentary*. Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2009.

Schnabel, E. J. *Acts*. ZECNT. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.

Witherington, B. *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1998.

### **STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC HONESTY**

Academic dishonesty is a serious offence that may take any number of forms, including plagiarism, the submission of work that is not one's own or for which previous credit has been obtained, and/or unauthorized collaboration with other students. Academic dishonesty can result in severe consequences, e.g., failure of the assignment, failure of the course, a notation on one's academic transcript, and/or suspension or expulsion from the College.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. Please refer to the Statement on Academic Honesty at [www.mcmasterdivinity.info/programs/rules-regulations](http://www.mcmasterdivinity.info/programs/rules-regulations).

In this course we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) for assignment submissions, grading, and plagiarism detection. Students who do not wish to submit their work to Turnitin.com can submit an electronic copy of their work via email in PDF format and no penalty will be assigned, but all submitted work is subject to normal verification standards in order to ensure that academic integrity have been upheld (e.g. on-line search).

### **STYLE**

All stylistic considerations (including but not limited to questions of formatting, footnotes, and bibliographic references) must conform to the McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses:

<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/MDCStyleGuideMarch0413.pdf>

**Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.**

### **GENDER INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE**

McMaster Divinity College uses inclusive language for human beings in worship services, student written materials, and all of its publications. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected. The NRSV and TNIV are

examples of the use of inclusive language for human beings. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments.

**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.**