

# **The Corinthian Letters**

## **PhD: CHTH G105–C02**

### **MA: NT 6ZC6**

McMaster Divinity College  
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Winter 2016 (Term 2)  
Monday, 8:30–10:20am

#### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will provide an overview of scholarly issues related to 1 and 2 Corinthians, as well as an opportunity for students to pursue specialized research involving the two letters. Students will prepare each week by examining assigned passages from 1 and 2 Corinthians, and seminar discussions will explore the Greek text along with issues involved in its interpretation. A selection of historically influential works will be assigned as required reading, and seminar discussions will assess the current state of scholarship as regards key topics. Students will practice engaging in academic peer review—using both a published paper and a student paper—and the semester will culminate in a research paper that advances a clear and well-supported argument involving the Corinthian letters.

#### **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

In this course, students will be given an opportunity to:

##### ***Knowing***

- Become familiar with key works that have impacted the interpretation of 1 and 2 Corinthians
- Recognize the current state of scholarship as regards these letters
- Formulate well-informed opinions about the letters
- Become an expert on at least one specific area related to the letters

##### ***Being***

- Become a charitable giver and receiver of critical comments from fellow scholars
- Become a critical thinker who is able to produce well-reasoned arguments and carefully assess the arguments of others
- Reflect critically upon the complexities of the Corinthian situation and its implications for Christian theology, ethics, and ministry

##### ***Doing***

- Practice a particular strategy for engaging in peer review
- Practice examining the Greek New Testament
- Write an effective research paper

### **COURSE PREREQUISITES**

As a graduate seminar in Christian Theology, this course presumes a general familiarity with the New Testament and with the Pauline letters in particular. Students are also expected to have competency in Greek and to have all of the skills required for the production of graduate-level research papers.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

Students are required to complete all of the following assignments.

All written assignments must be submitted in PDF format to the relevant Avenue to Learn (A2L) dropbox (unless alternative arrangements are made with the professor in advance of a due date). A penalty of 5% per day will be applied to all late assignments. No assignments will be accepted after **April 8<sup>th</sup>**.

A schedule for student participation will be created after the initial class on **January 4<sup>th</sup>** and entered into the A2L calendar. The schedule will then be considered binding such that any changes will require permission from the professor.

1. Seminar Preparation Notes (10%). Each week, students will prepare for the seminar meeting by reading through the assigned portions of 1 and 2 Corinthians in a modern edition of Greek New Testament. Similarly, all students are expected to read assigned secondary readings and to thoughtfully interact with them in keeping with the criteria outlined in the peer-review rubric. While reading, students should record any comments and questions that arise, either with regard to Paul's Greek or with regard to the interpretive issues that arise from it. Please note that these notes can be prepared in bullet point form, as the grading will not be concerned with grammar or style; the goal is simply to ensure that the assigned readings are completed thoughtfully prior to seminar meetings. Seminar preparation notes must be uploaded to A2L **before 6:00pm on the Sunday prior to each seminar meeting**.
2. Seminar Participation (10%). Students are expected to attend each seminar and to participate in seminar discussions. Comments and/or questions should demonstrate not only that the student is acquainted with the relevant primary and secondary literature, but that he or she has critically assessed the literature and formulated some ideas with regard to future work. In the event that a student is unable to attend a seminar meeting *due to extenuating circumstances*, the student is expected to discuss his or her absence with the professor in a punctual manner (preferably *in writing* in advance of the missed meeting).
3. Secondary Literature Reviews (20%). Over the course of the semester, students will take turns preparing literature reviews, with the relevant participation schedule to be developed during the initial seminar meeting on January 4<sup>th</sup>. For each week assigned to a

student (up to a maximum of two weeks), he or she will prepare an up-to-date bibliography on the week's topic(s) for distribution to seminar participants. The student will also spend thirty minutes presenting an overview of current scholarship on the topic(s) and thirty minutes fielding questions from seminar participants. The bibliographies need not be fully annotated, but key works should be indicated and their significance very briefly summarized in one or two sentences. The overviews should be synthetic rather than summative, with the goal being to identify unresolved issues pertaining to data, method, presuppositions, argumentation, etc. As regards assessment, key parameters are: (a) the completeness and stylistic consistency of the bibliography; and (b) the clarity and depth of insight displayed in the oral synthesis. Please note the two following resources: (1) Bieringer, Reimund, Emmanuel Nathan, and Dominika A. Kurek-Chomycz. *2 Corinthians: A Bibliography*. Biblical Tools and Studies 5. Leuven: Peeters, 2008; (2) an online bibliography made available through the Corinthian Studies Zotero Group, available at [https://www.zotero.org/groups/corinthian\\_studies/items](https://www.zotero.org/groups/corinthian_studies/items).

4. Peer-Review Exercise (10%). At the beginning of the semester, students will be given a rubric such as might be used in the review process of a peer-reviewed periodical. The rubric details five criteria and asks the peer reviewer to assign a score for each criterion, giving reasons for the assigned score in a brief paragraph or two. After being introduced to this rubric, students will be asked to employ it in the assessment of a published article (to be chosen by the student) that is related to the Corinthian letters. The intention of this exercise is to familiarize students with the rubric and hence with the task of critically assessing the research of others, with emphasis being placed on the formulation of concise yet penetrating observations. The review should be between 1,000–1,500 words, and it is due on **January 10<sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm**.
5. Research Paper (40%). Each student will write a research paper on a topic of his or her own choosing (provided that the topic relates directly to the Corinthian letters). It is expected that the student will discuss his or her proposed topic with the professor early in the semester and then remain in consultation with the professor throughout the research process. The paper is to be between 6,000–8,000 words in length, and it *must* follow the *McMaster Divinity College Style Guide for Essays and Theses*. It is due on **Sunday, March 20<sup>th</sup> at 11:59pm**. For students who are uncertain about what constitutes an effective research paper, a detailed grading rubric is available on A2L.
6. Student Paper Review (10%). Each student will be assigned the task of reviewing a fellow student's research paper, with the results of this review to be submitted in writing and presented orally at the seminar. The review must employ the rubric supplied at the beginning of the semester (see above), and it must demonstrate the use of strategies (both critical and collegial) developed over the semester. In written form, the review should be between 1,000–1,500 words, and it is due before our final seminar meeting on **March**

**28<sup>th</sup>** (on which date it will also be presented orally). Please note that the author of each paper will have an opportunity to respond following the review presentation.

### GRADING SUMMARY

Seminar Preparation Notes	10%
General Seminar Participation	10%
Secondary Literature Reviews	20%
Peer Review Exercise	10%
Research Paper	40%
<u>Student Paper Review</u>	<u>10%</u>
Total	100%

### TEXTBOOKS

Students are required to own 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>–5<sup>th</sup> ed.) or Westcott-Hort.

The assigned readings listed in the schedule below will be distributed electronically and/or placed reserve at Mills Library, with the exception of the following:

Land, Christopher D. *The Integrity of 2 Corinthians and Paul's Aggravating Absence*. New Testament Monographs 36. Sheffield: Sheffield Phoenix, 2015.

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 Bookstore, 304 The East Mall, Suite 100, Etobicoke, ON M9C 5K1: phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email [books@readon.ca](mailto:books@readon.ca). Other book services may also carry the texts.

### COURSE SCHEDULE

Date	Seminar Agenda
Jan 4	Introduction to the Course & Scheduling of Student Participation Presentation of Peer-Review Rubric Discussion of Reading/Reviewing Strategies
Jan 11	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Primary Text: 1 Cor 1:1–9; 4:18–5:3 8:13–9:3; 16:13–24</li> <li>2. Secondary Topic: 1 Corinthians (esp. Integrity, Register, and Structure)</li> <li>3. Assigned Reading:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ TBD</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Assigned Reviewer: Christopher Land</li> </ol>

Jan 18	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Primary Text: 2 Cor 1:1–13a; 2:10–3:3; 5:11b–7:2; 13:11–14</li> <li>2. Secondary Topic: 2 Corinthians (esp. Integrity, Register, and Structure)</li> <li>3. Assigned Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ TBD</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Assigned Reviewer: Christopher Land</li> </ol>
Jan 25	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Primary Text: 1 Cor 4:14–21; 16:1–12; 2 Cor 1:13b–2:13; 7:3–16; 12:19–13:10</li> <li>2. Secondary Topic: History of Paul’s Dealings with Corinth</li> <li>3. Assigned Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ TBD</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Assigned Reviewer:</li> </ol>
Feb 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Primary Text: 1 Cor 1:18–31; 4:6–13; 7:1–24</li> <li>2. Secondary Topic: History and Geography of Corinth (incl. social identity of Christians within Corinthian society)</li> <li>3. Assigned Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ TBD</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Assigned Reviewer:</li> </ol>
Feb 8	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Primary Text: 1 Cor 1:10–17; 2; 2 Cor 2:14–4:6; 10:1–11:4</li> <li>2. Secondary Topic: Conflicts and Controversies in the Corinthian Letters (incl. both “internal” disputes “external” opponents)</li> <li>3. Assigned Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ TBD</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Assigned Reviewer:</li> </ol>
Feb 15	No Class (Family Day)
Feb 22	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Primary Text: 1 Cor 3:1–4:5; 9:1–23; 2 Cor 5:11b–21; chs. 8–9; 11:5–15; 12:11–18</li> <li>2. Secondary Topic: Leadership and Finances (incl. Paul’s personal practices, his critiques of other leaders, and the collection)</li> <li>3. Assigned Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ TBD</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Assigned Reviewer:</li> </ol>
Feb 29	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Primary Text: 1 Cor 5; 6:12–20; 8; 9:24–10:22; 2 Cor 6:1–7:2</li> <li>2. Secondary Topic: Impurity (esp. sexual immorality and idolatry)</li> <li>3. Assigned Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ TBD</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Assigned Reviewer:</li> </ol>
Mar 7	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Primary Text: 1 Cor 6:1–11; 11–14; 2 Cor 11:16–12:10</li> <li>2. Secondary Topic: Arrogance and Inequality (incl. lawsuits, table fellowship, veiling, spiritual gifts, etc.)</li> <li>3. Assigned Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ TBD</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Assigned Reviewer:</li> </ol>

Mar 14	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Primary Text: 1 Cor 7:25–40; 15; 2 Cor 4:7–5:11a</li> <li>2. Secondary Topic: Eschatology</li> <li>3. Assigned Reading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ TBD</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Assigned Reviewer:</li> </ol>
Mar 20	Research Papers Due @ 11:59pm
Mar 21	Concluding Discussion on the Future of Scholarship
Mar 28	Student Paper Reviews Course Evaluations
Apr 4	No Class (Exam Week) * Student Paper Reviews will be scheduled on this date if necessary

### 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 Divinity College Statement on Academic Honesty (<http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>).

In this course, a web-based service will be used for plagiarism detection (Turnitin.com). 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 still subject to normal verification standards in order to ensure that academic integrity has been upheld (e.g. online 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/MDCStyleGuide.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 the property of the instructor and is prepared with currently available information. The instructor reserves the right to make changes and revisions up to and including the first day of class.