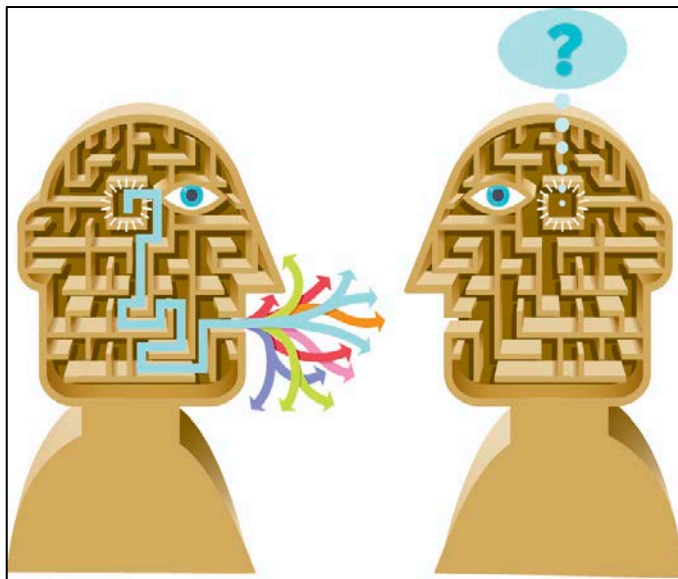




**MCMASTER DIVINITY COLLEGE
COURSE SYLLABUS
FALL 2018**

“IT SAYS IN THE ORIGINAL...”: A GUIDE TO BIBLICAL LANGUAGES (NT/OT 1L03)



INSTRUCTORS:

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Tuesdays, from 11:00 am–12:50 pm

There will be a course web page on [Avenue to Learn](#) (A2L).

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Increasingly, people are choosing not to study the original languages in which the Bible was written. However, people are still talking about what the Bible means, sometimes even with reference to “the original Hebrew” or “the original Greek.” For readers and teachers of the Bible to access useful resources and make insightful observations about the meaning of a text without making regrettable errors, they need to understand how languages make meaning—and how Hebrew and Greek make meaning—whether or not they will eventually learn to read either Hebrew or Greek. This course explores the wild world of human language, including a brief overview that summarizes the inner workings of English, Hebrew, and Greek.

This course will appeal to three types of students:




1. Those who want to begin the process of learning biblical languages, especially those who plan on doing more advanced learning. Subsequent courses will teach the intelligent use of Greek/Hebrew resources as well as a detailed knowledge of the languages.

2. Those who do not plan to take biblical languages (or those who are not sure whether they do) but want to understand how languages work, how to move from one language to another, and how to interpret the biblical text responsibly. Those who want to continue with deeper study may do so.
3. Those who have already taken Introductory Greek or Hebrew 1 and/or 2. This course provides much useful information on how languages convey meaning, and how to make interpretation of the biblical text more insightful and accurate.

OT/NT 1L03 MDiv/MTS Specializations: (BS/PS) Biblical Studies, Pastoral Studies (See http://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/sites/default/files/documents/mdiv-mts_specializations_and_outcomes.pdf)

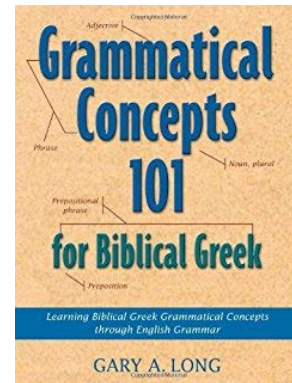
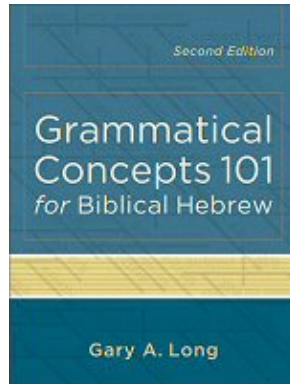
II. LEARNING OUTCOMES



- a.  Knowing
 - To know the major grammatical categories in English, Greek, and Hebrew
 - To understand how language makes meaning(s)
 - To understand the relationship between “general” knowledge of language and the “specific” interpretation of meaning in a text
 - To understand the functions of language such as the social, interpersonal, pragmatic, and propositional
 - To understand what constitutes a legitimate “word study” and avoid common errors
 - To be able to recognize and understand key biblical vocabulary in Hebrew and Greek
- b.  Being
 - “To present yourself to God as one approved, a worker who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.” (2 Tim 2:15)
 - To be a mature and responsible interpreter of Scripture as taught by the Spirit (1 Cor 6–16)
 - To allow the Scripture to motivate, form, and transform our faith, worship, and Christian way of life
- c.  Doing
 - To be able to analyze language according to its different ranks, such as morphology, words, units, and discourse structures
 - To describe how choices in language affect meaning
 - To be able to describe the functions of the basic conjugations and paradigms in Greek and Hebrew

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED TEXTS



Long, Gary A. *Grammatical Concepts 101 for Biblical Hebrew*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2013.

Long, Gary A. *Grammatical Concepts 101 for Biblical Greek*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2006.

All required textbooks for this class are available from the College's book service, R.E.A.D. On Bookstore, Room 145, McMaster Divinity College, or contact R.E.A.D. On Bookstore, 5 International Blvd., Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3. Phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; e-mail books@readon.ca. Website:

<http://webhome.idirect.com/~readon/bookstore.html#BkEducation>. Texts may be ordered ahead and sent to your home or purchased at the college. You may also order the texts from online sources.

B. SUGGESTED RESOURCES

Lamerson, Samuel. *English Grammar to Ace New Testament Greek*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.

Van Pelt, Miles V. *English Grammar to Ace Biblical Hebrew*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2010.

Note: These two little books provide very basic user-friendly introductions to grammar for those with little or no background.

Porter, Stanley E., Jeffrey T. Reed, and Matthew Brook O'Donnell. *Fundamentals of New Testament Greek*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010.

Pratico, Gary D., and Miles V. Van Pelt. *Basics of Biblical Hebrew Grammar*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2007.

Note: These are comprehensive introductory grammars for Hebrew and Greek.

C. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Two Vocab Quizzes	5%
Word Study: English	15%
Word Study: Greek or Hebrew	15%
Grammar Study	15%
Sermon or Commentary Analysis	30%
Exam	20%
Total Grade	100%

Assignment Details:

1. Assignment 1: Word Study: English 15%. Due on Friday, October 5 by 11:30 pm

Each student is to select a word from the following list and perform a suitable lexical study. In order to do such a study, the student will need to consider the various factors in performing a word study as discussed in class (synchronic vs. diachronic approaches, sense and usage, meaning and context, etc.). Students need to consult at least three standard English dictionaries to gather information on the particular lexical item of choice, including, but not limited to, etymological (word origin) discussions, definitions or glosses, word groupings, grouping of senses, usages and examples, etc. Students are to write up a (4–5 pages) report documenting their findings. Students will come up with their own categorization of senses/meanings of the chosen word based on the information gathered from the dictionaries and explain their rationale for each category (word groupings, contextual considerations, etc.). Students need to provide Scriptural examples to illustrate different usages of the word in a specific English translation, where relevant. Five examples (with brief explanations) are expected for each category. A detailed step by step guide will be provided at the beginning of the term.

English Words: love, truth, to save, serve, church (NT) / assembly or congregation (OT), to know

2. Assignment 2: Word Study: Greek or Hebrew 15%. Due on Monday, October 29 by 11:30 pm

Students will prepare a word study of a Greek or Hebrew lexeme. They should choose a different (unrelated) word from the English word study. Similar to the study of the English word (assignment 1), students need to consult the standard lexical resources for Ancient Greek or Biblical Hebrew (BDB, Clines, HALOT, BDAG, Louw–Nida, LSJ, etc.) of the selected word to establish its possible range of meanings. Students should comment on how the various senses are defined (definition or gloss), collected (source material), and categorized (semantic or syntactic criteria) in these lexicons. Students are to write up a (4–5 pages) report documenting their findings. They will come up with their own categorization of the range of meanings of the chosen word based on the information gathered from the lexicons and their own examination of five occurrences of the given word in the Bible to see how they correspond. They should also provide an attempt to explain their rationale for

each category (word groupings, contextual considerations, etc.). Comment can also be made on how the term is most commonly used/understood in a particular corpus, including the Bible, a sub-corpus within the Bible such as the Pentateuch or Pauline letters, and extra-biblical literature, etc.). Other related lexeme(s) in Greek/Hebrew can be introduced into the discussion to illustrate the possible overlapping of senses between these words. Students need to provide Scriptural examples to illustrate different usages of the word. Five examples (with brief explanations) are expected for each category. A detailed step by step guide will be provided.

Greek words: ἀγάπη (love), ἀλήθεια (truth), σώζω (I save), λατρεύω (I serve), ἐκκλησία (church), οἶδα (I know)

Hebrew words: דַּבָּר (love), אֱמֶת (truth), יָשַׁב (to save), עָבַד (to serve), הַדָּבָר or לְהִקָּבֵץ (congregation/assembly), יָדָע (to know)

3. Assignment 3: Grammar Study 15%. Due on Friday, November 16 by 11:30 pm

Students are to write a paper comparing how different languages have different ways to perform the same function. The paper (4–5 pages) should start with how a particular speech function is issued in English with reference to standard English grammars. It should then be followed by an integrative summary of how the same speech function is expressed in Hebrew and in Greek. The instructors will provide reference (grammatical) material on both languages. Students need to choose one of the following three topics:

- What are the different ways for asking a question in English, Hebrew, and Greek?
- What ways are there for issuing a command in English, Greek, and Hebrew?
- What ways are there for expressing a direct speech (quoted speech) in English, Hebrew, and Greek?

A detailed guide will be provided later by the instructors.

4. Assignment 4: Sermon or Commentary Analysis 30%. Due on Friday, Dec 7 by 11:30 pm

Evaluate and critique a sermon, article, or an excerpt of a commentary (which will be provided by the instructors) in terms of the handling of the original language. Students should utilize what they learn in class and identify the common exegetical and linguistic fallacies. Student should also provide critical and constructive comments in order to help the speaker/commentator to improve the work. The entire report should be around **10 pages** and must follow the “McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses.”

5. Assignment 5: Exam 20%. Due on Tuesday, Dec 10 in class

Information will be given in class.

Policy for Late Assignments:

Marks will be deducted for late assignments if there is no valid reason, such as illness (a doctor’s note may be required) or serious family crisis. The deduction will be 4% per day. Extensions must be approved before the due date.

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE

Typical Class:

Element	Time
Mangled Language: Interesting and/or controversial examples of biblical language use and interpretation	~20 min
Language Theory	~30 min
Practical Language in English, Hebrew, and Greek	~60 min

Wk	Date	Examples	Language Theory	Practical Theory
1	Sep 10	Mangled Language 1	Introduction and Syllabus	
2	Sep 17	Mangled Language 2	Purpose of Language	Alphabets: Names, Forms, Sounds
3	Sep 24	Mangled Language 3	Theories of Language	Parts of Speech
4	Oct 1	Mangled Language 4	Form and Function	Nominal Systems 1: Case, Word order, person; number, gender, nominal groups
5	Oct 8	Thanksgiving Monday; Reading Week		
6	Oct 15	Mangled Language 5	Words and Theology	Nominal Systems 2: Personal Pronouns 1, Adjectives
7	Oct 22	Mangled Language 6	Word Studies; Using a Dictionary/Lexicon	Verbal Systems 1: Tense/Aspect/Mood; Finite/Infinite
8	Oct 29	Mangled Language 7	Making Meaning	Verbal Systems 2: Active/Passive; Participles
9	Nov 5	Mangled Language 8	Meaning and Ranks	Word Groups: Phrases and Prepositions
10	Nov 12	Mangled Language 9	Meaning and Choice	Pronouns 2: Relative, Demonstrative, Interrogative
11	Nov 19	Mangled Language 10	Exegetical Fallacies 1	Clauses and Sentences, Clause Types
12	Nov 26	Mangled Language 11	Exegetical Fallacies 2	Relationships: Discourse Issues, Conjunctions

13	Dec 3	Mangled Language 12	Review	Review
14	Dec 10	Exam		

V. CLASSROOM BEHAVIOUR, ATTENDANCE, AND PARTICIPATION

- Students are expected to attend all classes. Missing a class in order to work on other assignments is a consequence of poor planning and is unacceptable. If you are genuinely ill, and possibly contagious, your absence is acceptable.
- Students are expected to be on time for class. Admittedly, unavoidable delays do occasionally happen. If you arrive late, please enter as quietly as possible and give an explanation to the professor after class.
- Students are also expected to stay for the entire class session.
- Computers and tablets should only be used for class related purposes, not for social networking and the like.
- All thoughtful student participation is welcome. There are no “dumb questions” or “stupid answers.” Students will respect the contributions of other students, although they may disagree, and respond to them without ridicule or scorn.
- Students may eat or drink in class as long as they do so quietly and unobtrusively and clean up afterwards.

VI. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

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 its publications. It is expected that inclusive language will be used in chapel services and all MDC assignments. In reference to biblical texts, the integrity of the original expressions and the names of God should be respected, but you will need to use gender-inclusive language for humans, and you will need to quote from a gender-inclusive version such as the following: NRSV (1989), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), TNIV (2005), and the Common English Bible (CEB 2011).

Academic Dishonesty

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 at <https://www.mcmasterdivinity.ca/programs/rules-regulations>.

Disclaimer: This syllabus is the property of the instructors 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.