



McMaster Divinity College

DPT – NT/OT 5YB5



This course begins online Sept 9, 2019.

Class meets in person during intensive Hybrid Week Fr/Sa Oct 18/19

Course continues online until conclusion on December 11

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Course Description:

This course is a study of the most important principles and methodologies used in interpreting and applying the meaning of the biblical text. We will survey a wide variety of methods and approaches (both classical criticisms and newer postmodern and emerging reading strategies) to interpreting scripture and examine relevant theological and historical issues arising from biblical interpretation. Standard tools of biblical research will be learned and practiced. Chosen methods and approaches will be applied to a project in a student's area of specialization which will clearly outline the hermeneutical framework employed. Learning experiences will cover the various genres of biblical texts, understanding historical context of texts, defining the meaning of words, the role of the church's history of interpretation, and hermeneutical principles of interpretation. This course does not explicitly lay out method in Practice-Led research, but provides tools and foundations for the use of the Bible in a DPT research project.

Course Objectives



Knowing:

- To know key principles for biblical interpretation
- To know the variety of genres within biblical literature and how to approach interpreting different types of literature
- To know the variety of methods used to interpret the Bible
- To gain familiarity with the assumptions, methods and conclusions of modern critical scholarship

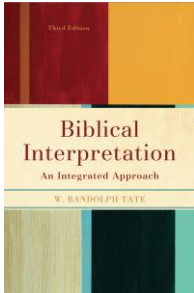
Being:

- To embrace the contemporary relevance of the whole Bible for the Church and society today
- To become a faithful and informed interpreter of scripture
- To grow closer to God through study of the Bible

Doing:

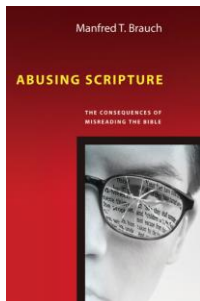
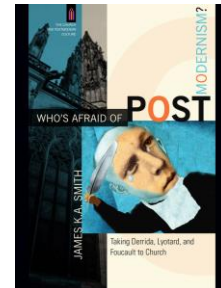
- To be able to employ various methods of biblical interpretation
- To identify common fallacies in popular biblical interpretation
- To reflect and critically consider how the Bible will inform DPT research
- To complete in-depth study relevant to a student's chosen project

Required Texts:



1. W. Randolph Tate, *Biblical Interpretation: An Integrated Approach* 3rd ed.; Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.

2. James K. A. Smith, *Who's Afraid of Post Modernism?* Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2006.



3. Manfred Brauch. *Abusing Scripture: The Consequences of Misreading the Bible*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009.

Textbook Purchase

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, 5 International Blvd, Etobicoke, Ontario M9W 6H3; phone 416.620.2934; fax 416.622.2308; email books@readon.ca. Other book services may also carry the texts.

Course Assignments and Schedule

1. Pre-class Discussions (Sept 9–Oct 14): Online

Due to this being a hybrid course, much of the class discussion will occur online on the Avenue to Learn course website. Students must actively participate in the online discussion and post minimum **two** discussion topics at the beginning of a week (Sun–Tues). Student posts must be in regard to the posted lectures / assigned readings that week. As well, to further the online discussion all students must respond to minimum **two posts** every week. Since initial posts will be online in the first part of the week, there will be adequate time for all students to respond to posts in a timely manner. Instructions on how to participate in the online classroom will be sent to each student via email before the course begins.

Participation in online discussion is an assumed foundation for this course (like class attendance) if a student fails to participate every week their final mark will be reduced by one full letter grade (A becomes B, A- becomes B-).

2. 25% - Annotated Bibliography: Due Oct 4

The student will develop an annotated bibliography of approximately 15-20 resources (4000 pages) related to **the student's topic** and write a 100-150 word annotation for each one. (The required texts for the course can be included as part of the book list if relevant.) **This assignment will be approximately 2,000 words.**

Student's topic for this course should concern how the Bible will fit into their approach to Practice-Led Research and how it will fit into their method(s) employed in the project.

E.g., your Practice-led research may use a 'triad' of sources:

- Practice Experiences,
- Bible, or Theology,
- psychology, anthropology, or some other approach

Practice Led research brings together three of these for a project. Hopefully you have thought about what your approach might be like (is there a 'triad' of sources that will contribute to your project?).

The question most relevant for this course is: where will the Bible fit into your method or approach? Be aware that where the Bible fits in PLR research is often different for every project.

Guidelines for the Annotated Bibliography

1. List the sources you select in proper bibliographic format as outlined in the MDC style guide (in alphabetical order by author's last name).
2. After each item listed include an annotation.
3. Annotations should be approximately 100-150 words explaining the author's thesis and what evidence or arguments used to support it. Annotations should show that you have read and understood the article or book and assess the relevance of the item for your own research project.

3. In-Class Component (Oct 15–19): At McMaster Divinity College

The on-campus Modules will consist of some in-class lectures, Q&A, presentations, and student presentations. Attendance is mandatory.

Student Led discussion:

As part of the on-campus modules, each DPT student will lead the class in a 30-minute discussion of their research topic based upon the research done for their annotated bibliography. Students will introduce the topic to the class and give some of the contours of previous research, commenting on key texts and studies

4. Post-Class Component (Oct 20–Dec 11): Online

A. Online Discussion

In the post-class component students must continue to actively participate in the online discussion but now only need to post **one** discussion topic at the beginning of a week (Sun-Tues) and respond to **one other post** each week. Participation in online discussion is an assumed foundation for this course (like class attendance) if a student fails to participate every week their final mark will be reduced by one full letter grade (A becomes B, A- becomes B-).

5. 25% - Critical Literature Review Assignment. Due Nov 2

A formal paper will be prepared that summarizes the key learnings from the annotated bibliography and provides a cogent foundation for a theology and practice of *the student's topic*. **The paper will be approximately 3,000 words.**

A literature review is a survey and discussion of the literature in your area of study. It is a concise overview of what has been studied, argued, and established about a topic, and it is usually **organized chronologically or thematically.**

A literature review is written to **highlight specific arguments and ideas** in a field of study.

- By highlighting these arguments, the writer attempts to show what has been studied in the field, and also where the weaknesses, gaps, or areas needing further study are.

The review should therefore also demonstrate to the reader why the writer's research is useful, necessary, important, and valid.

The literature review is written in **essay format**.

- It is not a summary; rather, it evaluates previous and current research in regard to how relevant and/or useful it is and how it relates to your own research.

Within each section of a literature review, it is important to discuss how the research relates to other studies (how is it similar or different, what other studies have been done, etc.) as well as to demonstrate how it relates to your own work.

- *This is what the review is for: don't leave this connection out!*

6. 40% - Major Assignment. Due Nov 30. Approximately 8,000 words.

The paper should include four key sections.

- a. A brief, but clear explanation of how the paper is rooted in a Practice Led-research approach.
- b. An exploration of the challenges and problems that provoke this study (i.e. why does this ministry practice need to be addressed? What are the problems that you want to identify?)
- c. A consideration of what role the Bible will play in your research project and a consideration of what hermeneutical approach will best serve the use of the Bible in your research project with a deep consideration of how new approaches to this practice can be employed in helping to address and improve ministry practice in this area.
- d. Some reflection on the application of these ideas to the student's own ministry context (both in terms of the local church and also their ministry beyond the local church).

2.

C. 10% - Class Presentation. Due Dec 7.

The student will offer a **class presentation of their final paper** and its findings to the class. Presentations may take one of the following formats:

- i. Video presentation (posted to YouTube or Vimeo)
- ii. PowerPoint along with pdf handout which will be uploaded to Avenue to Learn for the rest of the students to view and read.

Style for 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://mcmasterdivinity.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/mdcstyleguide.pdf>

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

All assignments must be in electronic format only (PDF format) —no hardcopies— and **emailed** to pevans@mcmaster.ca. Include your last name in the file name of your attachment (e.g., evans.researchpaper.pdf). To avoid late marks papers must be received by 11:59pm of the calendar day on which they are due.

Policy Concerning Late Papers

Extensions for papers will not be given except in very exceptional circumstances. (serious illness, family crises, etc.). Busy-ness, computer problems etc. are not legitimate reasons to grant extensions and in the interests of fairness any request for extensions will take into account the entire class. Late assignments will be docked at the rate of 2% per day for the first 7 calendar days (including weekends) and 4% per day after that. Late assignments receive no critical feedback. All assignments must be received by Dec 11, 2019 in order to avoid a failing grade in the class.

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 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 ~

<https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/rules-regulations/>

Disclaimer: 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.

Week	Due date:	Tate Reading	Brauch Reading	Smith Reading
1	September 14	Introduction and Historical research pp. 1–20	Ch. 1	
2	September 21	Importance of Languages pp. 21–37	Ch. 2	
3	September 28	Historical and Ideological backgrounds pp. 38–88	Ch. 3	Ch. 1
4	October 5	Bible as Literature pp. 89–101	Ch. 4	Ch. 2
5	October 12	OT as Literature pp. 102–137	Ch. 5	Ch. 3
6	NO READINGS - FACE -TO- FACE MEETINGS			
7	October 26	NT as Literature pp. 138–185	Ch. 6	Ch. 4
8	November 2	Reading pp. 189–218	Ch. 7	Ch. 5
9	November 9	Readers pp. 219–227	Ch. 8	
10	November 16	Methods pp. 228–244	Appendices A&B	
11	November 23	Integration pp. 245–265	Appendix C	
12	November 30	Appendices 1–2 pp. 273–297	Appendix D	
13	December 11	Appendices 3–4 pp. 298–342	Appendix E	

Select Bibliography

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Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. New York: Basic Books, 1981.

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- Bartholomew, Craig, Collin Greene, and Karl Möller, eds. *Renewing Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2000.
- Barton, John. *Reading the Old Testament: Method in Biblical Study*. London: Darton, Longman and Todd Ltd, 1984.
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- Carson, D. A. *Exegetical Fallacies*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1984.
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- Green, Joel B. *Practicing Theological Interpretation: Engaging Biblical Texts for Faith and Formation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2011.
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- Kuhatschek, Jack. *Applying the Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1990. Longman III, Tremper. *Literary Approaches to Biblical Interpretation*. Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation 3. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1987.
- Long, V. Phillips. *The Art of Biblical History*. Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation 5.

Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1994.

Lundin, Roger, Clarence Walhout, and Anthony C. Thiselton. *The Promise of Hermeneutics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1999.

McCarthy, Dan, and Charles Clayton. *Let the Reader Understand: A Guide to Interpreting and Applying the Bible*. Wheaton, IL: BridgePoint, 1994.

McKenzie, Steven L., and Stephen R. Haynes, eds. *To Each Its Own Meaning: An Introduction to Biblical Criticisms and their Application*. Revised and Expanded. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1999.

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McQuilkin, J. R. *Understanding and Applying the Bible*. Chicago: Moody, 1983.

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