

The Corinthian Letters

PhD: CHTH G105–C08

MA: NT 6ZT6

McMaster Divinity College
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Winter 2021 (Term 2)
Tuesday 9:00–10:50am

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will provide an overview of scholarly issues related to 1 and 2 Corinthians and an opportunity to pursue specialized research involving the letters. Selected primary and secondary readings will be assigned, and seminar discussions will assess the current state of scholarship as regards key topics. The semester will culminate in a research paper that in some way advances our understanding of Paul's Corinthian correspondence.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through their active participation in this course, students will:

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 charitable givers and receivers of critical comments from fellow scholars;
- Become critical thinkers able to produce well-reasoned arguments and carefully assess the arguments of others;
- Reflect critically upon the complexities of the Corinthian situation and the contextual nature of all Christian theology, ethics, and ministry;

Doing

- Learn to engage in peer review;
- Improve in their ability to exegete the Greek New Testament;
- Develop their ability to write effective research papers.

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 the skills required for the production of graduate-level research papers.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

NB: Students are required to complete all of the following assignments. If a student fails to make a valid attempt at any one of these requirements, this will constitute grounds for failure of the course.

Written assignments must be uploaded to Avenue to Learn either as Word documents (.doc, .docx) or in Rich Text Format (.rtf). A penalty of 2% per day will be applied to all late assignments, including assignments submitted in incorrect file formats. Assignments cannot be submitted after April 8th without written permission from the Office of Registrar (strickpd@mcmaster.ca).

1. Seminar Preparation (20%). Each week, students will prepare for the seminar meeting by reading through assigned portions of 1 and 2 Corinthians and assigned secondary literature (both available via Avenue to Learn). The biblical passage(s) should be read in Greek, and comments or questions related to the text should be noted as annotations on A2L. Completion of the secondary reading should be reported on A2L. Preparatory work must be completed each week prior to the 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. Seminar Presentation (20%). Each seminar meeting will begin with the distribution of an up-to-date annotated bibliography (note the topics in the schedule below), followed by a presentation of approximately thirty minutes. This will then be followed by thirty minutes of open discussion among seminar participants. Beginning on February 8th, students will take responsibility for the initial presentations, with the relevant participation schedule to be developed during the initial seminar meeting. (Once formulated, the schedule will be considered binding such that any changes will require permission from the professor.)

The distributed bibliographies should list at least seventy-five sources. Older sources and foreign language sources should not be neglected. Annotations should describe the most

significant works (or works whose relevance might otherwise be obscure), with the length of each annotation at the discretion of the student (in some cases, a single sentence will suffice). An introduction to Zotero (www.zotero.org) will be presented during the first seminar meeting, and it is recommended that students compile their bibliographies using Zotero or an alternative citation manager. To accelerate your work, 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.

Seminar presentations should not summarize the bibliography or its annotations but should be synthetic overviews that systematically organize the relevant material. The goal is to sketch the history and present state of the field and to identify unresolved issues pertaining to data, method, presuppositions, argumentation, etc. By the end of the presentation, seminar participants should be left with a clear understanding of the assigned research area and the potential it affords for future research.

4. 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). The paper is to be 7,000 words in length and it is due at **11:59pm on March 24th**. For students who are uncertain about what constitutes an effective research paper, a detailed grading rubric is available on A2L.
5. Peer Review (10%). Once all of the research papers have been submitted, they will be randomly distributed to participants in the seminar. Each participant will then assess a fellow student's paper in a manner such as would be used for a peer-reviewed journal (i.e. it should assess the work both in terms of its internal argument and in terms of its contribution to the field, making explicit reference to key developments, authors, and works where relevant). To facilitate this process, students will be given a peer-review rubric that details five criteria and that asks the reviewer to assign a score out of ten for each criterion, giving reasons for the assigned score in written paragraphs. The peer review should include a brief introduction that summarizes the article under consideration, a distinct section for each of the required criteria, and a brief conclusion that summarizes the overall results of the review (see the handout for details). The peer review must be uploaded to A2L before **11:59pm on March 31st** and it must be 2,500 words in length.

GRADING SUMMARY

Seminar Preparation	20%
Seminar Participation	10%
Seminar Presentation	20%
Research Paper	40%

Peer Review	10%
Total	100%

TEXTBOOKS

Students are required to own a standard edition of the Greek New Testament, such as the Nestle-Aland (26th–28th ed.), UBS (3rd–5th ed.) or Westcott-Hort.

The assigned readings listed in the schedule below will be distributed electronically and/or placed on 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. Other book services may also carry the texts.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Date *Professor to present	Seminar Agenda
Jan 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the Course • Presentation of Peer-Review Rubric • Introduction to Zotero • Introduction to Hypothes.is • Scheduling of Student Participation
*Jan 18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 Corinthians (Integrity, Structure, Register, Situation) • 1 Cor 8:1–11:1
*Jan 25	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Corinthians (Integrity, Structure, Register, Situation) • 2 Cor 5:11–7:16
*Feb 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Chronology of Paul and Corinth (Visits, Letters, Partnerships) • 2 Cor 1:3–2:13; 12:11–13:10

Feb 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City & Church of Corinth (History, Geography, Sociology) • 1 Cor 1:10–3:23
Feb 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Jewish Message to the Nations (Judaism, Scripture, Proclamation) • 1 Cor 16:1–12; 2 Cor 8–9
Feb 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Cosmic Hope (Apocalyptic Eschatology) • 1 Cor 7; 15
Mar 1	Intensive Week (No Class)
Mar 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Call for Purity (Ethics, Ecclesiology, Church Discipline) • 1 Cor 4–6
Mar 15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unity & Conflict in the Church (Divisions, Poverty, Patriarchy, Disorder) • 1 Cor 11:2–14:40
Mar 22	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unity & Conflict among Leaders (Apollos, The Twelve, Paul's Opponents) • 2 Cor 10:1–12:10
*Mar 29	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assessing Paul (Honour & Shame, Paul & Power, Paul's Legacy, 1 Clement) • 2 Cor 2:14–5:11
Apr 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussion of Student Research Papers • Course Evaluations

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 at:

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

In this course, we will be using a web-based service (Turnitin.com) for plagiarism detection and the 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.

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

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

STYLE

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

<https://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).

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.