



McMaster Divinity  
College

# ACTS OF THE APOSTLES

## NT 2XA2 (GREEK EXEGESIS)

McMaster Divinity College  
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Fall 2023  
Wednesday 11:00am–12:50pm

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

The book of Acts tells the story of a bunch of people trying to make sense of what God is doing. The book has played (and continues to play) an important role in shaping the church's sense of its identity and mission. This course is partly an exegetical study of the book of Acts. It will examine the book's historical, literary, and theological qualities, and will situate these within relevant first-century contexts. It will also involve a sustained discussion of how the message of Acts can be heard, considered, and integrated into the life of the church today.

In addition, this course will provide an opportunity for further engagement with the Greek of the New Testament. Students will learn additional vocabulary and will practice reading and exegeting passages from the Acts of the Apostles.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through their active participation in this course, students will:

#### KNOWING

- Remember the story told in the book of Acts;
- Become familiar with introductory issues and scholarly debates concerning the book of Acts;
- Understand the major theological themes of the book of Acts;
- Be more familiar with the Greek of the NT.

#### BEING

- Appreciate the importance of participating in respectful discussions about biblical texts;
- Become self-aware as a modern reader of the Bible, recognizing both the antiquity of the texts and the various ways in which contemporary life influences our understanding of it;
- Embody the mission that is so central to the book of Acts;
- Be cautious interpreters of Greek texts.

#### DOING

- Have the ability to quickly locate reliable scholarly resources that discuss a particular NT book or passage;
- Have the ability to ask key questions in order to explore the meaning of a NT book or passage;

- Have the ability to reflect canonically, theologically, and contextually so as to explore how people can/should understand the New Testament today;
- Be able to examine the Acts of the Apostles in the original Greek.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Note: Students are required to complete all of the following assignments. No unfinished assignments are permitted. *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. Assignments cannot be submitted after December 8th without written permission from the Office of the Registrar ([mdcreg@mcmaster.ca](mailto:mdcreg@mcmaster.ca)).*

### CLASS MEETINGS (0%)

**Attendance at weekly meetings** is expected, because class discussions about the biblical text (in general, not just its language) are a significant part of the overall learning experience.

Greek exegesis students will also have weekly **opportunities to meet with the professor and/or his graduate assistant** to discuss student progress on the assignments and to take up any questions prompted by the work. *These optional tutorials will be scheduled at the beginning of the semester at a time that accommodates student schedules.*

To provide some guidance on analyzing Greek texts, there will be **videos posted online**. Students should watch these videos and to come to the tutorial meetings with questions/comments about how the material can be applied to the specific passages being studied in the assignments.

### WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS (5 x 20%)

These are due according to the Coursework Schedule below. In each assignment, students will select a passage from the Acts of the Apostles (**minimum of twenty verses**) and then perform the following tasks. More detailed requirements will be disseminated on A2L.

1. Memorize a list of Greek words and complete a vocabulary/parsing quiz.
2. Read in Greek the biblical passage listed in the Coursework Schedule below.
3. Find, read, and list some scholarly resources that prove useful to you in exploring the Greek of your passage.
4. Identify some interpretive (or translational) issues in the passage and provide a discussion that illuminates each issue, citing your listed resources to show how they have helped you.
5. Answer some supplied interpretive questions that will help you to approach the language of your passage with a view towards its *overall* meaning and significance.
6. Supply a rough English translation of your passage.

## GRADING SUMMARY

Written Assignments	5 x 20%
Total	100%

## TEXTBOOKS

Students are required to possess the following:

An English translation of the New Testament;

A standard edition of the Greek New Testament, such as the Nestle-Aland *Novum Testamentum Graece* (26th–28th ed.) or the UBS *Greek New Testament* (4th–5th ed.).

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

Students are recommended to have access to the following:

Omanson, Roger L. *A Textual Guide to the Greek New Testament: An Adaptation of Bruce M. Metzger’s Textual Commentary for the Needs of Translators*. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft, 2006.

All required textbooks for this class are available from the Hurlburt Family Bookstore located beside the entrance to the Nathaniel H. Parker Memorial Chapel of McMaster Divinity College. To purchase in advance, you may contact the bookstore manager, Bernice Quek, by phone at 416.620.2934 or 416.668.3434 (mobile); or by email at books@readon.ca. The Hurlburt Family Bookstore also carries other books and merchandise and is open throughout the academic year during posted hours.

## MEETING SCHEDULE

Week	Class Meeting Topics	Assignments Due (Sunday @ 11:59pm)
Sept 11–17	Introduction to the Course	
Sept 18–24	Introduction to Acts	
Sept 25–Oct 1	“The Beginning of the Church” (1:1–2:47)	Assignment #1 (DRAFT)
Oct 2–8	“The Church and the Jewish Authorities” (3:1–5:42)	
Oct 9–15	Reading Week (No Class)	Assignment #1
Oct 16–22	“The Church Begins to Expand” (6:1–9:31)	
Oct 23–29	“The Beginning of the Gentile Mission” (9:32–12:25)	Assignment #2

Oct 30–Nov 5	“The Mission to Asia Minor and Its Aftermath” (13:1–15:35)	
Nov 6–12	“Paul’s Missionary Campaign in Macedonia and Achaia” (15:36–18:17)	Assignment #3
Nov 13–19	ETS/SBL Conferences (Optional Tutorial)	
Nov 20–26	“Paul’s Missionary Campaign in Asia” (18:18–20:38)	Assignment #4
Nov 27–Dec 3	“Paul’s Arrest and Imprisonment” (21:1–28:31)	
Dec 4–8	Summary and Implications for Theology, Life, and Ministry	Assignment #5

## SUITABLE GREEK-ENGLISH LEXICONS

[BDAG:] 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.

Diggle, James et al. *The Cambridge Greek Lexicon*. 2 Vols. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

[LSJ:] Liddell, Henry George, Robert Scott, and Henry Stuart Jones. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th ed. Oxford: Clarendon, 1996. [Available @ <http://www.tlg.uci.edu/lj/>] [8th edition available @ <https://archive.org/details/cu31924012909697>]

Liddell, Henry George, and Robert Scott. *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1889. [Available @ <https://archive.org/details/intermediategree00lidd>]

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. [Available @ <https://archive.org/details/04508981.1536.emory.edu>]

## STATEMENT ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Academic dishonesty is not qualitatively different from other types of dishonesty. It consists of misrepresenting the ownership of written work by deception or by other fraudulent means. In an academic setting this may include any number of forms such as: copying or using unauthorized aids in tests, examinations; plagiarism, i.e., submitting work that is not one’s own (regardless of the means of its production) but passing it off as if it is; submitting work for credit in a course for which credit is being or

has already been given, unless the previously submitted work was presented as such to the instructor of the second course and has been deemed acceptable for credit by the instructor of that course; aiding and abetting another student's dishonesty; giving false information for the purposes of gaining admission or credit; giving false information for the purposes of obtaining deferred examinations or extension of deadlines; forging or falsifying McMaster University or McMaster Divinity College documents.

Students are responsible for understanding what constitutes academic dishonesty. For more information, 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.

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 McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses:

<https://mcmasterdivinity.ca/resources-forms/mdc-style-guide/>

Failure to observe appropriate form will result in grade reductions.

## AODA

In accordance with the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA), the content of this course is intended to be accessible to all students who are enrolled in the course, including those with disabilities. If a student requires accommodation to participate fully in this course, that student is to contact SAS at McMaster University, who will then work directly with the McMaster Divinity College Registrar to negotiate reasonably appropriate accommodation for the student. The MDC Registrar will communicate with faculty regarding necessary accommodations. Please note that an accommodation is not retroactive and must be requested in advance to allow sufficient time for implementation.

## 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, for example, the following: NRSV (2021), NCV (1991), TEV/GNB/GNT (1992), CEV (1995), NLT (1996), NIV (2011), and the 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.**