



McMaster Divinity College
Course Syllabus
Fall 2024

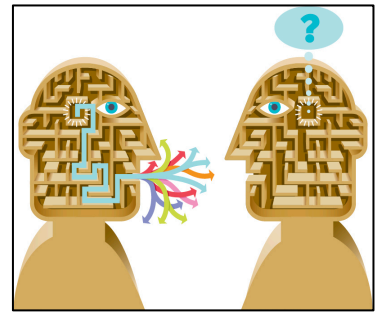
NT P31071 – Introduction to Biblical Greek

Online: Sept–Dec 2024
Virtual Office Hours:
Tuesday 11–12:50am

Instructor: Francis G. H. Pang, PhD
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Co-Lecturer: Ji Hyung Kim
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

People like to talk about what the Bible means, sometimes even with reference to “the original Greek.” However, 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 Greek makes meaning. This course explores the world of human language: language theory and how it applies to understanding texts. It will also review basic English grammar—which many students were never taught—as a basis for understanding Greek grammar. This will enable students to be better prepared to engage with our main task: learning the basics of Greek, focusing on how the linguistic elements lead to meaningful and accurate interpretation. There will necessarily be some memorization of vocabulary and main paradigms, but this course will also significantly reduce the amount of memorization usually required in language learning, since the focus is on understanding and application.



This course will appeal to two 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 resources as well as a more detailed knowledge of the languages and application to the biblical text.
2. Those who do not plan to study biblical languages in depth (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.

MODE OF DELIVERY

Synchronous learning is online or distance education that happens in real time, whereas asynchronous learning occurs through online channels without real-time interaction. This course is designed as an **online asynchronous learning only** course. Students must have a basic familiarity with computers to participate, including the ability to navigate Avenue to Learn (A2L) course site, participate in synchronous office hours using Zoom, and make and upload PDFs of assignments to A2L.

All course contents are delivered asynchronously. Video lectures/tutorials will be made available each week. Optional virtual office hours will be held on Wednesday from 10:00-11:50 pm. There are three main components to the course (“Mangled Language,” “Language Theory,” and “Practical Language”). Students will view the assigned video lectures, study the handouts, and then complete exercises for each module. The weekly optional online sessions (virtual office hours via Zoom) will be dedicated to answering questions, clarifying concepts, consolidating learning, discussing interpretation, and practicing skills.

Since this is an online course, all tests and exams will be proctored remotely using the Respondus system. Detailed instructions will be given on A2L. Students are also encouraged to come to virtual office hours to discuss any questions raised in the forum and/or the assignments. Students should expect to commit at least 4-5 hours per week on the course.

LEARNING OUTCOMES



Knowing

- To know the major grammatical categories in English and Greek
- To understand how language makes meaning
- To recognize and understand key biblical vocabulary in Greek
- To begin to learn the grammatical forms/paradigms in Greek



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 interpreter of Scripture as taught by the Spirit (1 Cor 2:6–16)
- To allow the Scripture to motivate, form, and transform our faith, worship, and Christian way of life



Doing

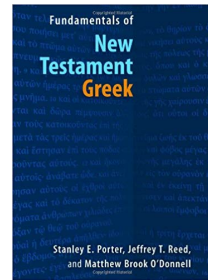
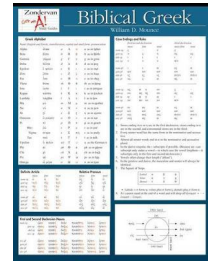
- To describe how choices in language affect the meaning of the biblical text
- To describe the functions of the basic grammatical forms in Greek and use them in interpretation
- To interpret the biblical text meaningfully without committing common mistakes

TEXTBOOK AND MATERIALS

1. Greek Summary:
Mounce, William D. *Biblical Greek Laminated Sheet. Zondervan Get an A! Study Guides*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2005.
2. Reference Grammar:
Porter, Stanley E., Jeffrey T. Reed, and Matthew Brook O'Donnell. *Fundamentals of New Testament Greek*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010.
3. Online Greek Resource:
Tyndale House: Scripture Tools for Every Person (STEP): available free from stepbible.org. Supplemental handouts will also be provided.
4. Video Lectures (required)
A series of video lectures has been prepared by the professor specifically for this course, focusing on common linguistic fallacies, language theory, and biblical interpretation. They also review and expand textbook concepts. They are available on A2L.
5. Greek Material (required)
Greek material (video lectures, tutorials, practice exercises, handouts, etc.) will be posted on Avenue to Learn (A2L) weekly.
6. Vocabulary and Online Resources (keyed to the text):
A number of vocabulary and supplemental resources are given on A2L. A Quizlet (free online flashcard program) group will be created with study sets for student to memorize and review key paradigms and common vocabularies. Class invitation link to the Quizlet study set will be posted on A2L.
7. Suggested Resources:

This is a helpful resource for Greek students unfamiliar with English grammar:
Lamerson, Samuel. *English Grammar to Ace New Testament Greek*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004.

And this is an excellent resource for doing appropriate word studies:
Baxter, Benjamin J. *“In the Original Text It Says”’: Word-Study Fallacies and How to Avoid Them*. Critical Christian Issues. Gonzalez, FL: Energion, 2012.



Textbook Purchase: 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.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All assignments must be submitted to the appropriate Assignment Box on A2L in **PDF format** only.

Bonus Activity: Mangled Language Discussions (up to 5% bonus)

Each week a question will be posted in a discussion on A2L. It will deal with a debatable interpretation of a biblical text involving the use of language. Students who read and respond with a thoughtful comment (on A2L) will earn up to a 5% bonus mark in the course.

Practical Language Assignment: Weekly Exercises 30%

(Due on Oct 6, Nov 3, and Nov 24 at 11:59 pm) – Indicated on the schedule below.

Students will complete weekly exercises provided by the instructors that involve the use of material covered in the weekly Greek videos and tutorials. The online sessions will focus in part on discussing and answering questions about these exercises to help you learn. We will work through examples together. These exercises will be collected and graded on three different dates.

Language Theory Assignment: Sermon or Commentary Analysis 20%.

Due on Sunday, Dec 1 by 11:59 pm (Indicated on the schedule below)

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 Greek language. Students should utilize what they learn in class and identify the common exegetical and linguistic fallacies (which will be covered in language theory). The entire report should be under **8 pages** and must follow the “McMaster Divinity College Style Guidelines for Essays and Theses.”

Weekly Vocabulary Quizzes: 10%

You will be responsible for learning 150-200 most common words in the Greek New Testament as well as the most common paradigms (the article, verb endings, etc.). You will be required to give an English gloss for each. The vocabulary and the paradigms will be quizzed WEEKLY on A2L.

Term Test: 20% (Week of October 21)

A term test will be scheduled during the week of October 21–25. This will be conducted with either the Respondus browser or a live video (Zoom) meeting with the students and the proctor (the instructors). More information will be given in class.

Final Exam 20%. (Week of December 8)

There will be a final exam during the week of Dec 8. Like the term test, the final exam will be conducted with proctoring software or a live video meeting. More information will be given in class.

Practical Language Assignment (Weekly)	30%
Language Theory Assignment	20%
Vocabulary Quizzes	10%
Term Test	20%
Final Exam	20%
<hr/> Total Grade	<hr/> 100%

COURSE SCHEDULE

	Week	Mangled Language ¹	Language Theory	Practical Language	Paradigm
1	Sept 9–13	Course Introduction and Syllabus		Alphabet, Vowels, Pronunciation: Names, Forms, Sounds.	—
2	Sept 16–20	“Loving God”	Functions of Language	Auxiliary System: Particles, Conjunctions, and Prepositions	Alphabet, Pronunciation and Vowels
3	Sept 23–27	“How many kinds of love?”	Form and Function; Syntax and Semantics	Nominal Systems 1: Case, gender, number	The Greek Article
4	Sept 30– Oct 4 Exercise Due Oct 6	“Righteousness of God”	Words and Theology	Nominal Systems 2: Noun and pronouns	1 and 2 Declension Nouns
5	Oct 7–11	“Divine Necessity?”	How to do word study?	Nominal Systems 3: Nominal Group	Greek Adjectives
6	Oct 14–18	Reading Week			
7	Oct 21–25 Term Test	Term Test Review		Introduction to Verb	The Verbal System
8	Oct 28–Nov 1 Exercise Due Nov 3	TBD	Exegetical Fallacies 1	Verbal Systems 1: Finite and Non-finite	The Verbal System
9	Nov 4–8	“Mirror Reading”	Exegetical Fallacies 2	Verbal Systems 2: Voice	Primary Active endings
10	Nov 11–15	“Stay-at-home Dad?”	Meaning, Choice, and Ranks	Verbal Systems 3: Tense and Aspect	Primary M/P endings
11	Nov 18–22 Exercise Due Nov 24	Word Study 101	Punctuation and Interpretation	Verbal Systems 4: Mood	Secondary Active endings
12	Nov 25–29 LT Paper Due Dec 1			Verbal Systems 5	Secondary M/P endings
13	Dec 2–6	Exam Review			
14	Dec 8–13	Exam			

¹ These are short (15–20 min) videos dealing with misinterpretations. An opportunity for bonus marks.

VIRTUAL CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR AND PARTICIPATION

- 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.
- While we are not going to introduce new content during our weekly online sessions, students are **strongly recommended** to come to these meetings to ask questions, clarify concepts, discussing interpretation, and most importantly, form a supportive learning community.
- Students are to observe proper online learning etiquette and manner.
- Please choose a location that allows you to attend the synchronous (optional) meeting with the least amount of (expected) distractions and interruptions. A busy café, for example, may not be the best environment for you to participate in various class activities.
- You are responsible for a device that meets the recommended requirements of running zoom and A2L smoothly and have a fast and reliable internet connection for the meeting.

LATE SUBMISSION POLICY

All assignments must be submitted on or before the due date, unless other arrangements are made in advance. A late penalty of 2% per day will be applied to all assignments submitted after the deadline, unless an extension has been obtained from the instructor prior to the deadline. Assignments cannot be submitted after **Dec 13, 2024** without written permission from the Office of the Registrar (mdcreg@mcmaster.ca).

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.

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).

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.

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.