



THEO6310 The Historical Jesus
New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary
Theological and Historical Studies Division
***Defend* Conference, Jan. 3–7, 2022**

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Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

Course Description

The course introduces students to theological, biblical, philosophical, and methodological issues related to contemporary Historical Jesus research. Issues addressed include the nature of the task, the role of the historian, tools for the task, as well as past and contemporary personalities in Historical Jesus research. The seminar will emphasize personal reading, research, and writing.

Student Learning Outcomes

1. Students will demonstrate familiarity with issues related to Jesus research by: (1) reading broadly on the history of Jesus research and (2) writing reports on assigned readings in the field.
2. Students will demonstrate basic familiarity with the variety of methods used in Jesus research by writing reports on assigned readings over sources and methods in Jesus research and leading the seminar in discussion of issues related to their reading.
3. Students will demonstrate basic familiarity with significant personalities involved in previous quests of the historical Jesus.
4. Students will demonstrate basic familiarity with significant personalities involved in contemporary Jesus research by writing a research paper summarizing and critiquing a contemporary Jesus scholar.
5. Students will formalize and express their own conclusions on Jesus research by writing personal perspectives on Jesus research.

Biblical Authority

The instructors of this course operate under the assumption that the Bible is the inspired, totally true and trustworthy Word of God. While history, tradition, and reason play no small role in the theological task, the Bible holds ultimate authority in Christian doctrine and practice. *The Baptist Faith and Message* (2000) provides the confessional framework in which this course is taught.

Course Teaching Methodology

The course will involve the following methodologies: assignments, written reading reports, and a research paper. The primary methodology will be individual research and writing, guided by the professor.

1. Lecture Attendance. Students are required to attend or listen to all lecture sessions related to the Historical Jesus and the reliability of the New Testament at the School of Christian Apologetics, January 2-6, 2017

2. Book Reviews. Each student is required to review 3 of the following books (one per section):

A. Method in Jesus Research

1. Gregory W. Dawes, ed. *The Historical Jesus Quest: Landmarks in the Search for the Jesus of History*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2000.
2. Gregory W. Dawes, ed. *The Historical Jesus Question: The Challenge of History to Religious Authority*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 2001.
3. Mark Allan Powell, *Jesus as a Figure in History: How Modern Historians View the Man from Galilee*. Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1998.
4. Darrel L Bock, *Studying the Historical Jesus: A Guide to Sources and Methods*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic/Apollos, 2002.
5. Robert J. Miller, *The Jesus Seminar and Its Critics*. Santa Rosa: Polebridge, 1999.
6. W. Barnes Tatum, *In Quest of Jesus*, revised and enlarged. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1999.
7. Gerd Theissen and Annette Merz, *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996.
8. Ben Witherington, III, *The Jesus Quest: The Third Search for the Jew of Nazareth*, 2d ed. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1997.

B. Issues or Controversies in Jesus Research

1. Michael J. Wilkins and J. P. Moreland, *Jesus Under Fire*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1995.
2. Robert B. Stewart, ed., *The Resurrection of Jesus: John Dominic Crossan and N. T. Wright in Dialogue*. Minneapolis and London: Fortress and SPCK, 2006.
3. N. T. Wright, *The Resurrection of the Son of God*, Vol. 3, *Christian Origins and the Question of God*. Minneapolis and London: Fortress and SPCK, 1996
4. John Dominic Crossan, *Who Killed Jesus?: Exposing the Roots of Anti-Semitism in the Gospel Story of the Death of Jesus*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1995.

5. Gary R. Habermas, *The Secret of the Talpiot Tomb, Unraveling the Mystery of the Jesus Family Tomb*. Nashville: Holman, 2008.
6. Raymond E. Brown, *The Death of the Messiah: From Gethsemane to the Grave. A Commentary on the Passion Narratives in the Four Gospels*. Anchor Bible Reference Library. New York and London: Doubleday and Geoffrey Chapman, 1994.
7. Amy-Jill Levine, *The Misunderstood Jew: The Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus*. New York: HarperCollins, 2006.

C. Monographs on Jesus

1. N. T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God. Vol. 2, Christian Origins and the Question of God*. Minneapolis and London: Fortress and SPCK, 1996.
2. James D. G. Dunn, *Jesus Remembered*, Vol. 1, Christianity in the Making, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
3. John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1991.
4. John Dominic Crossan, *The Birth of Christianity: Discovering What Happened in the Years Immediately After the Execution of Jesus*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998.
5. Ben Witherington, III, *Jesus the Sage: The Pilgrimage of Jesus*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1994.
6. Ben Witherington, III, *The Christology of Jesus*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1990.
7. Bruce Chilton, *Rabbi Jesus: An Intimate Biography*. New York: Doubleday, 2000.

Reviews should include: (1) some professional biographical data concerning the author; (2) an identification of the major elements of content; (3) an assessment of the author's aim or purpose and of the degree of its fulfillment; and (4) a critical evaluation of the book. The reviews should follow Turabian form. **Due Friday, March 25, 2022**

3. Research Paper. A research paper of not less than 15 pages in length nor more than 20 pages in length is required over a topic related to the historical Jesus. Turabian style guide should be consulted for form and style issues. **Due Friday, April 22, 2022**

Grading

Grades will be assigned on the basis of the NOBTS grading scale.

Evaluation

Book Reviews	35%
Research Paper	35%

Lecture Attendance	30%
	100%

Extra Credit Opportunities

1. Book Review

Students may write one additional critical book review of the recommended review texts above. Students can earn up to **five (5) points** on their final grade with a quality critical book review. ***Students may NOT “double-dip” book reviews by reading the same books for multiple classes. The books being reviewed must be books never before read or reviewed by the student.*** Extra credit book reviews are due ten weeks after the final day of the conference.

2. Greer-Heard

Students attending the Greer-Heard Forum on March 25, 2017—either on-campus or in person—may receive up to five points on their final grade with the submission of a 1,000 word critical analysis of the event. For more details, see greerheard.com.

Class Behavior

As noted above, attendance and class participation are necessary for meeting the requirements of this class. Students are expected to be attentive and prepared for each class session. Students who are engaged in private conversations or doing work for other classes may be asked to leave the class; repeat violations may result in removal from the course. Rude or disruptive behavior is also not permitted.

Laptop Guidelines

Laptops are permitted in class as long as they are used for taking notes or accessing Blackboard materials related to this particular course. *Students using laptops are requested to sit in the front of the classroom for accountability purposes.* Gaming, e-mail, social networking, and web browsing of any kind are strictly prohibited. Failure to heed this policy *will* result in dismissal from the class session; repeat violations may result in removal from the course. *Any student using Facebook during a class meeting may be asked to leave the class, repeat offenders for the remainder of the semester.*

Late Work

Because life and ministry happens, late work will be accepted—but not without penalty. For every day an assignment is late, five points will be taken off. *No assignment over two weeks late will be accepted.* Failure to submit every assignment will result in failure of the course.

Technical Assistance

For assistance regarding technology, consult ITC (504-816-8180) or the following websites:

1. Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)
2. BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System NOBTS.Blackboard.com.
3. ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests.
4. www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

Help for Writing Papers at “The Write Stuff”

NOBTS maintains a Writing Center designed to improve English writing at the graduate level. Students can receive writing guides, tips, and valuable information to help in becoming a better writer.

Plagiarism on Written Assignments

NOBTS has a no tolerance policy for plagiarism. Plagiarism in certain cases may result in expulsion from the seminary. See the NOBTS Student Handbook for definition, penalties, and policies associated with plagiarism.

Remember the words of the proverb: *“Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but he who makes his ways crooked will be found out”* (Prov. 10:19).

Possible Paper Topics

N. T. Wright

John Dominic Crossan

Albert Schweitzer

John P. Meier

Marcus Borg

Dale Allison

Bruce Chilton

Amy-Jill Levine

Bart Ehrman

William Wrede

James D. G. Dunn

Ben Witherington

Elizabeth Schussler Fiorenza

Gerd Theissen

Richard Horsley

E. P. Sanders

Paula Fredriksen

Alan Segal

Robert Funk

Geza Vermes

The Historical Jesus
A Selected Bibliography

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