

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary

Elementary Greek 1 and 2

NT-510 (3 Units)

Fall 2009 @ MBBS: Fresno
Wednesday 1:30–4:30 PM

Aug. 26 to Dec. 9

No class Oct. 14 (Mod. Wk.)

NT-511 (3 Units)

Spring 2010 @ MBBS: Fresno
Wednesday 1:30–4:30 PM

Jan. 27 to May 12

No class Mar. 17 (Mod. Wk.)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is a two-term course in Koine Greek emphasizing the acquisition of a working vocabulary and the mastery of forms and fundamental principles of Greek grammar.

COURSE DESIGN AND LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Through a variety of activities, weekly assignments, quizzes, and exams, students will be introduced to the language of the New Testament following the “Mounce” system. William Mounce is the author of the textbook and workbook that we will be using. The aim of such language acquisition is to understand more deeply and communicate more effectively the message of the NT.

At the completion of both courses, students should be able to:

1. Identify the morphology of a given Greek noun, verb, adjective, pronoun, etc. (i.e., parse). Morphology is that aspect of grammar that deals with word formation and inflection. This involves the declension of nouns and the conjugation of verbs (*Knowledge Objective*).
2. Determine the basic syntax of a given Greek word in the context of a sentence and the resulting implications for meaning. Syntax is that aspect of grammar dealing with relationship between individual words and larger elements within a sentence. This involves determining the function of particular nouns, verbs, adjectives, pronouns, etc. in the context of a sentence (*Knowledge Objective*).
3. Recognize the English equivalents of all the Greek words that occur fifty times or more in the NT, plus six others. There are 320 such words which account for almost 80% of the total word count in the NT (*Knowledge Objective*).
4. Use exegetical tools that refer to Greek words, like technical commentaries, lexicons, and theological wordbooks (*Skills Objective*).
5. Read the Greek text of the NT with the aid of a lexicon (*Skills Objective*).
6. Appreciate the philosophical and hermeneutical challenges of translating the NT Greek into English (*Values Objective*).

MBBS PROGRAM GOALS

This course contributes to the larger goals of the Seminary program in that it will help the student to:

1. Discern with greater precision the subject matter to which the biblical text gives witness, both its foreignness as well as its power to draw, to claim, and to transform life (MBBS desired outcome #1: *Demonstrate commitment to live as a disciple of Jesus in Christian community*; specifically outcomes 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4 described at <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/educational-outcomes>).
2. Engage the hermeneutical task of exploring ways that the symbolic world of the ancient text can inform, form, and reform the cultural norms which shape our faith communities (MBBS desired outcome #2: *Articulate commitment to a biblical theological Christian perspective*; specifically outcomes 2.1 and 2.4 described at <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/educational-outcomes>).
3. Nurture healthy interpersonal relationships and effective communication patterns in the context of the learning community (MBBS desired outcome #3: *Interpret one's own and other cultural contexts of ministry using theological perspectives integrated with social scientific approaches*; specifically outcomes 3.3 and 3.5 described at <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/educational-outcomes>).
4. Develop and practice skills in sound biblical exegesis and interpretation for preaching, teaching, social advocacy, personal enrichment, and our life together (MBBS desired outcome #4: *Practice skills in pastoral and educational leadership*; specifically outcomes 4.2 and 4.5 described at <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/educational-outcomes>).

TEXTBOOKS

There are two textbooks needed for this course:

- Mounce, William D. *Basics of Biblical Greek: Grammar*. Second Edition, with CD Rom. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993, 2003.
- Mounce, William D. *Basics of Biblical Greek: Workbook*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993, 2003.

Note #1: On the class website there are pdf versions of the slides I use in class presentations, as well as other NT Greek resources for student use.

Note #2: By the end of the second semester, I recommend that students purchase a Greek-based Bible software program (e.g., *Bible Works*, *Gramcord*, *Accordance*, *Logos*, etc.) for assistance in their ongoing translation of the Greek NT.

LEARNING ACTIVITIES/ASSIGNMENTS/EXPECTATIONS

The assignments are designed to promote the course and degree objectives listed above. There are four main learning activities for each semester. The assignments are designed to promote the course and degree objectives listed above. The expectations for each assignment are listed below as well as what students can expect from me.

I expect that each student will:

1. Prepare for, attend, and participate in the classroom learning experience. Class time will be spent working through grammatical patterns and syntactical categories using review, clarification, instruction, practice, and testing. Mounce's step-by-step approach will be followed closely. The last month of Greek 2 is reserved for reading and translating First John. See *Course Outline* (below) for the chapters and topics to be studied each week.

2. Do the homework assigned. Each week there will be translation exercises to reinforce the new vocabulary and grammar. You can correct your own homework exercises by consulting the answer key in the *Assignments* folder on the class website.

While some of you may need more, try to spend at least an hour a day on Greek. Resist the temptation to try to do all your homework on Tuesday before our Wednesday class! It is far better to do a little review each day. Also, because we meet only once a week, you may email questions to me during the week and I'll respond, copying to the other members of the class, if it is appropriate.

Experiment with different study methods to find what works best for you. Try working with Mounce's *FlashWorks* on the CD that comes with his Grammar book. It is a great way to review vocabulary. Alternatively, you may want to make your own vocabulary cards. Try working in study groups.

3. Do ten quizzes. Almost every week there will be a quiz on specific chapter(s) and/or topic(s). The lowest two scores will be dropped from the calculations. Normally, quizzes are only taken during class time. However, if there is a documented emergency or some legitimate reason for missing a class, please check with me to see if alternate arrangements can be made for taking the quiz at another time and making up the absence (30% of semester grade).

4. Prepare a Word-Study of a key Greek NT word. Select a word that is potentially significant for understanding the thrust of a particular textual unit (e.g., a word that is repeated, translated differently in various English versions, theologically important, ambiguous, or debated). You may need to begin researching several words before settling on the most promising one. Consult a concordance that identifies every occurrence of the Greek word in the NT (e.g., *The Word Study Concordance* 1978 [BS 2305.W53 REF] or a Computer Bible Software program with search engine (e.g., *WordSearch*, *Scholar's Library*, *PC Study Bible*, *QuickVerse*, *Gramcord*, *Accordance*, or *BibleWorks*). Carefully examine and classify every occurrence of the Greek word in the NT. Write up your findings following the template given in the *Appendix A*. Suggested length is 2 pages. See sample Word Study in the *Handouts* folder on the class website (10% of semester grade; due Oct. 19 and Mar. 22).

5. Do the final exam. Due to the cumulative nature of the course, the final exam is weighted more heavily. The aim is to master the content by the end of the course. Given this goal, "later" grades override "earlier" grades. This means that if your final exam is better than the average of your best 8 quizzes, the final exam score will count 90% and combine with your word study score to make your final grade. By the same reasoning, if your final grade in Greek 2 is higher

than your final grade in Greek 1, the Greek 1 final grade will be changed and made the same as your Greek 2 final grade (60% or 90% of semester grade, depending on quiz average).

It is only fair and right that you have equally high expectations of me as well. My commitment to you is that I will endeavor to:

1. Join you in our mutual aim of encountering more deeply the disturbing and inspiring presence of God to which Scripture gives witness. While I function as “coach” and “cheerleader” in guiding your acquisition of Greek grammar and syntax, I am committed to participate with you as a “co-journeyer” in our common quest to see this whole enterprise, not as an “end in itself,” but as a “means to the end” of bringing/nourishing life and healing in a broken world—which is the mission of God.

2. Foster a learning community atmosphere during our sessions where ideas can be discussed and explored freely without fear of ridicule or attack. There will likely be times when your reading of a text (and decisions regarding syntax or semantics) differs from that of someone else in the class. This is okay. While each of our interpretative decisions may not be equally valid or defensible, each one deserves to be heard and respected within the evaluative process.

3. Provide careful and helpful feedback. I believe that it is pedagogically most helpful to have constructive criticism throughout the learning process. Therefore, I am open to visiting with you about your translation projects while you are working on them so that you can test, clarify, and expand your ideas. You may also have questions or concerns about a point of grammar discussed in class. Stop by my office and let’s talk. I also aim to give useful feedback on your work and to do so in a timely fashion.

COURSE OUTLINE (subject to revision)

Fall 2009

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|-------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Aug. 26 | Ch 1–4 |
| 2. Sept. 2 | Qz 1; Ch 5–6 |
| 3. Sept. 9 | Qz 2; Ch 7–8 |
| 4. Sept. 16 | Qz 3; Ch 9 |
| 5. Sept. 23 | Qz 4; Ch 10–11 |
| 6. Sept. 30 | Qz 5; Ch 12 |
| 7. Oct. 7 | Qz 6; Ch 13–14 |
| Oct. 14 | no class, module week |
| Oct. 19 | Word Study due |
| 8. Oct. 21 | Qz 7; Ch 15–16 |
| 9. Oct. 28 | Ch 17 |

Spring 2010

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|-------------|-----------------------|
| 16. Jan. 27 | Ch 23-24 |
| 17. Feb. 3 | Qz 11; Ch 25 |
| 18. Feb. 10 | Qz 12; Ch 26–27 |
| 19. Feb. 17 | Ch 28 |
| 20. Feb. 24 | Qz 13; Ch 29 |
| 21. Mar. 3 | Qz 14; Ch 30 |
| 22. Mar. 10 | Ch 31 |
| Mar. 17 | no class, module week |
| Mar. 22 | Word Study due |
| 23. Mar. 24 | Qz 15; Ch 32 |
| 24. Mar. 31 | Qz 16; Ch 33 |

10. Nov. 4	Qz 8; Ch 18	25. Apr. 7	Qz 17; Ch 34–35
11. Nov. 11	Ch 19	26. Apr. 14	Qz 18; First John 1:1–2:17
12. Nov. 18	Qz 9; Ch 20	27. Apr. 21	Qz 19; First John 2:18–3:10
13. Nov. 25	Qz 10; Ch 21	28. Apr. 28	Qz 20; First John 3:11–4:16
14. Dec. 2	Ch. 22	29. May 5	First John 4:17–5:21
15. Dec. 9	Exam (Ch 1–22)	30. May 12	Exam (Ch 1–35)

SUMMARY OF GRADING SCHEME (for each semester)

Word Study	10%
Best 8 quizzes	30%
Final Exam (up to 90%, if exam score is better than quiz average)	60%

	100%

NOTES

1. Pace. The course moves very quickly. It is normal to feel overwhelmed and frustrated. However, please talk with me if your stress level is becoming unmanageable. My experience is that students generally have one of two problems depending on their basic approach to life—some are overly anxious and others are overly confident. Determine which of these two (or some combination) best describes you and take the corresponding remedial action:

a) *Overly Anxious?* **Don't panic too much**. If you haven't fully understood a point of grammar, resist the temptation to stew over it and not move ahead. Due to the cumulative nature of the course, previously studied material that was fuzzy often becomes clearer later!

b) *Overly Confident?* **Don't let things slide too much**. If you have a problem with a point of grammar, ask me about it the next class (or sooner—I don't mind if you call or email me during the week). Due to the cumulative nature of the course, little problems often get bigger!

2. Commitment. The best way to succeed and enjoy the course is to block off the time necessary for adequate daily preparation and review. It is important to do this consistently every day. My commitment to you is to guide you through the exercises and provide support, encouragement, and instruction. However, your commitment to invest the required effort is essential to ensure success.

3. Academic Policies. MBBS academic policies (as well as other school policies) are described at <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies>. These policies provide guidance on academic integrity and plagiarism, incomplete course work, extensions, dates for changing registration, non-discriminatory and inclusive language, appeals, accommodations for disabilities, grading, etc. Students are expected to be familiar with these policies and will be held responsible for adhering to them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to you or to a situation that you face in your studies, please speak to me or consult the Registrar.

4. Attendance. Students are expected to attend and participate in class. Our meetings together will be devoted largely to review of homework, presentation of new material, practice exercises, and quizzes. If an absence becomes necessary, students may propose various ways to “make it up.” Please see me about your proposal for how to “make up” an absence.

No “un-made-up” absences are permitted in order to earn a passing grade.

5. Evaluation. Each of the assignments has specific grading criteria (see descriptions above).

Please note that “student work will be evaluated by two standards: a) by what is considered the appropriate level of graduate performance, and b) by comparison with work submitted in a given class” (see <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/grading>).

The letter grade conversions follow the MBBS Grading Template: A (100-94%), A- (93-90%), B+ (89-87%), B (86-83%), B- (82-80%), C+ (79-77%), C (76-73%), C- (72-70%), and F (69-0%) (see <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/grading>).

The performance expectations are as follows: “A ‘B’ grade is the baseline. A ‘B’ grade means the student is doing satisfactory work. The ‘B+’ or higher grade indicates that the student has exceeded the baseline performance standard. The ‘C’ grade indicates that the student has not achieved the baseline level” (see <http://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/grading>).

6. Credit/No Credit. Students may petition to take this course for “credit/no credit.” If granted, the student must earn an overall grade greater than 70% and have no “un-made-up” absences, in order to earn a “pass.”

7. Due dates. Students are expected to submit assignments on time. Late submissions of the Word Study will be penalized at ½ point per day, as outlined on the grading rubric (*Appendix B*). However, penalties may not apply to students who have a documented emergency that prevents them from submitting the assignment on the due date. Check with me to see if an alternative due date can be made for you.

8. Submitting Word Studies. If you would like to receive handwritten comments on your turned in assignments, submit a hard-copy version of your paper. You may send me an electronic version of your paper (i.e., an email attachment); however, I will not print your paper. I will read your work online and email you my assessment along with the appropriate evaluation rubric (*Appendix B*).

9. Course evaluations. Course evaluations are to be completed online and are due one week after the completion of the course. Official grades will not be posted until the student’s evaluation of the course is completed.

APPENDIX A: Word Study template

1. WORD IDENTIFICATION

a) *Give the English transliteration of the Greek word and cite the textual unit in which it is found.*

b) *Parse the word (as completely as you can) giving its grammatical characteristics (e.g., part of speech, root, tense/aspect, voice, mood, person, number, etc.).*

c) *Note implications (if any) for the meaning in this context drawn from the parsing data.*

2. FREQUENCY AND DISTRIBUTION

a) *Indicate the number of times the word occurs in the NT. Count all the occurrences of the root word, including all of its cognate forms (i.e., as a verb, noun, or adjective). Are there any patterns? Comment.*

b) *Note the distribution of the word in the NT. Are there specific genres where the word appears more/less often? Comment.*

3. MEANING

a) *Prepare a “working draft” listing each occurrence along with its meaning. Work your way through the list by reading each occurrence in its biblical context. Infer the meaning of the word as it is used in each particular context. Do not automatically copy the translation from one English version. Compare various translations and decide on the word or phrase that best captures the meaning of the Greek word in English. Are there distinct groupings of meaning emerging?*

b) *Rearrange your working draft list by grouping the meanings into similar usage categories. Select several representative examples for each category from your exhaustive list.*

c) *Organize the meaning categories with representative examples for presentation in the final draft form of your word-study. Sometimes the semantic field of a word can be arranged using categories that can be plotted at various points on a continuum from literal to figurative. Sometimes other arrangements are more suitable. Determine which presentation form is best for your semantic analysis.*

d) *Summarize in a few sentences various meanings of the word within the NT.*

4. MEANING IN CONTEXT

a) *Select the most appropriate meaning for the textual unit you are studying. Be careful to consider both the immediate and larger literary contexts.*

b) *Justify your decision using the contextual clues (literary and historical) as well as the grammatical clues noted above in the parsing of the word.*

5. VERIFICATION

a) *Compare your decision with the one taken in other translations. Check those that are more literal as well as those that are more paraphrastic. Note agreements and disagreements. Comment*

b) *Compare your decision with the one taken by the standard lexicons (e.g., *Greek-English Lexicon of the NT and other Early Christian Literature* 2000 [PA 881.D27 REF]) and theological wordbooks (e.g., *Theological Dictionary of the NT* 1964 [PA 881.K513 REF] or *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament--Abridged in One Volume*, ed. G. W. Bromiley [PA 881.T4713 REF]). Note agreements and disagreements. Comment.*

APPENDIX B: Rubric for grading Word Study

EVALUATION of *Word Study* for _____ (student)

1. Clarity of presentation:	inadequate _____	good _____	excellent _____
2. Accuracy of word calculations:	inadequate _____	good _____	excellent _____
3. Comprehensiveness of semantic range:	inadequate _____	good _____	excellent _____
4. Depth of theological engagement:	inadequate _____	good _____	excellent _____
5. Attention to assignment criteria:	inadequate _____	good _____	excellent _____
6. Formatting skills:	inadequate _____	good _____	excellent _____
7. Grammatical considerations:	inadequate _____	good _____	excellent _____

Late penalty is $\frac{1}{2}$ point per day. Score = _____ / 10 _____ (reader)