

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary

Advanced Greek Exegesis

NT-611 DS (1, 2, or 3 units)
Spring 2010 @ MBBS: Fresno
Friday 8:30–10:00 AM
January 25–May 14
No class during Module Week (March 15–19)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed as a directed study. It introduces the theory and practice of textual criticism. Selected texts from the New Testament are read paying attention to text critical issues while continuing to master both the Greek language and the techniques of grammatical exegesis. *Prerequisite: NT-510 Elementary Greek 1, NT-511 Elementary Greek 2, and NT-608 Intermediate Greek Exegesis.*

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Through a variety of activities (readings, exercises, assignments), students will build on the foundation of Elementary Greek (morphology) and of Intermediate Greek (syntax), in order to gain greater confidence and competence in exegeting the Greek New Testament. At the completion of the course, the student should be able to:

1. Identify the major periods, text families, and witnesses in manuscript transmission history for the New Testament (*Knowledge Objective*).
2. Articulate the major principles (or assumptions) that guide contemporary textual criticism. (*Knowledge Objective*).
3. Apply the principles of textual criticism to any set of variant readings of a particular NT text and discern what was likely the original text (*Skills Objective*).
4. Recognize the English equivalents of all the Greek words that occur 20 times or more in the NT (*Knowledge Objective*).
5. Appreciate more deeply both the promise and the risk 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, and 1.4 described at <https://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/educational-outcomes>).
2. Engage in 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, 2.2, and 2.4 described at <https://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 diverse cultural contexts of ministry using theological perspectives integrated with social scientific approaches*; specifically outcomes 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 described at <https://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 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, and 4.5 described at <https://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/educational-outcomes>).

TEXTBOOKS AND RESOURCES

There are three required textbooks for this course. They are available for purchase through any bookseller. Be sure to get the most recent editions of all three, as noted below:

Aland, B., B. Metzger, et al., eds. (1993). *Greek New Testament* (with apparatus), 4th edition.

Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft. (Note: You may also use E. Nestle, B. Aland, et al., eds. 1993. *Novum Testamentum Graece*, 27th edition. Stuttgart: Deutsche Bibelgesellschaft).

Metzger, B. M. and Ehrman, B. (2005). *The text of the New Testament: its transmission, corruption, and restoration*, 4th edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

Metzger, B. M. (1994). *A textual commentary on the New Testament*, 2nd edition. Stuttgart: United Bible Society.

In addition to these three, we will also draw on the following resources that will be made available to students:

Aland, K. and Aland, B. (1989). Transmission of the Greek NT, Manuscripts by category, and Twelve rules of textual criticism. Pages 67–71, 159–63, and 280–81 in *The text of the New Testament*, rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Ehrman, B. (1997). Manuscripts of the New Testament. Pages 414–21 in *The New Testament: a historical introduction to the early Christian writings*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Epp, E. J. (1989). Textual criticism. Pages 75–126 in *The New Testament and its modern interpreters*, eds. E. J. Epp and G. W. MacRae. Atlanta: Scholars Press.

External Evidence Pro (ver 1.5); MS Excel program for manuscript assessment.

Fee, G. D. (1993). Textual criticism of the New Testament. Pages 3–16 in *Studies in the theory and method of New Testament textual criticism*, eds. E. J. Epp and G. D. Fee. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

New Testament texts for translating each week along with underlined words to parse and analyze. *Study questions* keyed to textual commentary and Metzger/Ehrman textbook.

Supplements to David Black's *Intermediate grammar* (Baker 1998) on prepositions and on noun cases.

Textual criticism worksheet.

Exegetical-hermeneutical template.

Word list of Greek vocabulary occurring at a frequency of between 50 and 20 times in the NT.

We will also continue to draw on resources from Elementary Greek and Intermediate Greek:

Black, D. A. (1998). *It's still Greek to me: an easy-to-understand guide to intermediate Greek*. Grand Rapids: Baker.

Greek New Testament on CD ROM (*Accordance, Gramcord, Logos, or Bible Works*).

Danker F. W., ed. (2000). *A Greek-English lexicon of the New Testament and other early Christian literature*, 3rd ed. (BDAG). Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Mounce, W. D. (1999). *Basics of biblical Greek: grammar*, with CD Rom. Grand Rapids: Zondervan.

COURSE DESIGN AND EXPECTATIONS

This course is designed as a directed study. During the week students will prepare some or all of the following: 1) textbook readings with study questions, 2) about 20 verses from the Greek NT (parse, analyze, assess variants, and translate), 3) analysis of a significant textual variation in the NT, and 4) vocabulary acquisition.

We will meet for eleven weeks (90 minutes each week) to check progress and to discuss findings/concerns.

In addition to the weekly preparations, there are two take-home exams and a 6,000 word exegetical paper to be completed for 3 units of credit (use *Exegetical-hermeneutical template* and see *Appendix* for my expectations).

Each week the needed handouts will be uploaded to the class home page under *File storage*.

COURSE SCHEDULE (subject to revision)

Meeting #1 Jan. 29

-introduce course syllabus

-situate the discipline of textual criticism

-post-meeting assignment

*read and reflect on Ehrman's brief introduction to the NT manuscript tradition (*File storage*)

*read and respond to Metzger, *Textual commentary*, Introduction, pp. 1*–16* (*Study questions* available in *File storage*)

*translate Mark 8.27—9.8 (parse and analyze the syntax of the underlined words) and explain the variant choices made by the editorial committee—see Metzger’s commentary)

Meeting #2 Feb. 5

-discuss and clarify readings

-post-meeting assignment

*read and respond to Metzger/Ehrman, *Text of the NT*, pp. 3–134 (*Study questions* available in *File storage*)

*translate Colossians 1.1–23 (parse and analyze the syntax of the underlined words) and explain the variant choices made by the editorial committee—see Metzger’s commentary)

Meeting #3 Feb. 12

-discuss and clarify readings

-post-meeting assignment

*read and reflect on Fee’s chapter on Textual Criticism (*File storage*)

*read and reflect on Epp’s chapter on Textual Criticism (*File storage*)

*compare and contrast the contributions of Fee and Epp

*translate Romans 3.21–26 and 8.1–11 (parse and analyze the syntax of the underlined words and explain the variant choices made by the editorial committee—see Metzger’s commentary)

Meeting #4 Feb. 19

-discuss and clarify readings

-post-meeting assignment

*read and respond to Metzger/Ehrman, *Text of the NT*, pp. 137–249 (*Study questions* available in *File storage*)

*translate James 1.1–21 (parse and analyze the syntax of the underlined words) and explain the variant choices made by the editorial committee—see Metzger’s commentary)

Meeting #5 Feb. 26

-discuss and clarify readings

-post-meeting assignment

*read and respond to Metzger/Ehrman, *Text of the NT*, pp. 250–99 (*Study questions* available in *File storage*)

*translate Philippians 1.21—2.13 (parse and analyze the syntax of the underlined words) and explain the variant choices made by the editorial committee—see Metzger’s commentary)

*select a pericope with significant textual variants to be translated and analyzed later for your exegetical paper

Meeting #6 Mar. 5

-share text selections and explain why you are interested in them

-discuss and clarify readings

-post-meeting assignment

*read and respond to Metzger/Ehrman, *Text of the NT*, pp. 300–343 (*Study questions* available in *File storage*)

*translate 1 Peter 1.1–21 (parse and analyze the syntax of the underlined words) and explain the variant choices made by the editorial committee—see Metzger’s commentary)

Meeting #7 Mar. 12

-discuss and clarify readings

-post-meeting assignment

*review vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and *Study questions* in preparation for the Mid-term exam

*do “take-home” Mid-term exam (distributed and due next meeting)

Module Week (no class)

Meeting #8 Mar. 26

-collect “take-home” Mid-term exam

-demonstrate *External evidence pro* (ver 1.5)

-distribute *Textual criticism worksheet*

-assess the major textual variants at Mark 1.1 (was *υἱοῦ θεοῦ* originally there or not?) using *Textual criticism worksheet*; compare with Metzger’s assessment only after we have done ours

-post-meeting assignment

*read Aland, K. and Aland, B. on Transmission of the Greek NT, Manuscripts by category, and Twelve rules of textual criticism (*File storage*).

*compare Aland and Metzger

*assess the major textual variants at Romans 5.1 (was *ἔχομεν* or *ἔχωμεν* the original reading?) using *Textual criticism worksheet* (compare with Metzger’s assessment only after you have done yours)

*translate your identified pericope in preparation for your exegetical paper (parse and analyze the syntax of the main verbs, participles, and nouns; assess the variant readings)

Meeting #9 Apr. 2

-discuss and clarify readings

-share highlights of your text with respect to textual criticism

-post-meeting assignment

*translate Acts 2.22–42 (parse and analyze the syntax of the underlined words) and explain the variant choices made by the editorial committee—see Metzger’s commentary)

*assess the major textual variants at John 1.18 (how was *μονογενής* used in the original text?) using *Textual criticism worksheet* (compare with Metzger’s assessment only after you have done yours)

Meeting #10 Apr. 9

-discuss and clarify readings

-post-meeting assignment

*translate Hebrews 5.11–6.12 (parse and analyze the syntax of the underlined words) and explain the variant choices made by the editorial committee—see Metzger’s commentary)

*assess the major textual variants at 1 Corinthians 2.1 (was *μυστήριον* or *μαρτύριον* the original reading?) using *Textual criticism worksheet* (compare with Metzger’s assessment only after you have done yours)

Meeting #11 Apr. 16

-discuss and clarify readings

-post-meeting assignment

*review vocabulary, grammar, syntax, and textual criticism in preparation for exam

*do “take-home” Final exam (distribute and due in one week)

Apr. 30

-“take-home” Final exam due

-finish exegetical paper (use *Exegetical-hermeneutical template* and see *Appendix* for my expectations)

May 17

-exegetical paper due

SUMMARY OF GRADING SCHEME

Mid-term exam	33%
Final exam	33%
Exegetical paper	34%

	100%

NOTES

1. Academic Policies. MBBS academic policies (as well as other school policies) are described at <https://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.

2. Evaluation. The Exegetical Paper will be assessed according to the expectations noted in the *Appendix*.

Note also 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” (<https://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%) (<https://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” (<https://www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies/grading>).

Note: Students taking the course for 1 unit of credit are to complete the weekly assignments and to participate in the weekly discussion of readings, translations, and variant analysis. A final grade of “pass” (or CR) will be earned for satisfactory work.

3. Due dates. I expect the exams and the exegetical paper to be submitted on or before the due dates posted in the syllabus. Late work will be graded down 2% for each day (or part thereof) after the due date. The late penalty 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 alternative arrangements can be made.

4. Attendance. Students are expected to attend and participate in class. Our meetings together will be devoted largely to discussion of the textual analysis you prepared during the week. Your attendance assumes that you have done the required preparation. 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. Submitting assignments. If you would like to receive handwritten comments on your final paper, submit a hard-copy version. 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 evaluation rubric (*Appendix*).

6. Course evaluations. Course evaluations are to be completed online and are due one week after the conclusion of the course. Official grades will not be posted until your evaluation of the course is completed.

APPENDIX: EVALUATION RUBRIC FOR EXEGETICAL/HERMENEUTICAL PAPER

Category	%	Poor (“C” range)	Satisfactory (“B” range)	Excellent (“A” range)
Statement of purpose (10 points) a) clear question or problem or thesis b) key issues in the text addressed	10	Question not clearly identified Some or all key issues ignored	Question statement is identifiable Paper moves from statement of problem through the exegetical steps to conclusion Key issues identified and treated	Question statement is framed with innovation, creativity, and insight Paper moves from statement of problem through the exegetical steps to conclusion Key issues identified and discussed with awareness of the strength of various arguments
Analysis of the text (20 points) a) demarcation of textual unit b) structural outline shows function of parts in relation to whole c) discussion of key words	20	Demarcation of textual unit, structural outline, and word studies are inadequate Does not discern well the issues to be addressed	Basic ability to demarcate textual unit Good structural outline Appropriate word studies Keeps focus on the textual unit Demonstrates awareness of grammatical issues and possibilities	Above average ability demonstrated in demarcation, structural analysis, word studies, and focus Textual variants/problems assessed, understood, and cogently presented Demonstrates ability to evaluate grammatical possibilities and argue for choices made in context
Assessment of literary issues (20 points) a) genre b) literary context c) rhetorical features d) relation to inner biblical context and place of passage in overarching biblical context: immediate, book, cannon e) statement of text’s theological vision	20	Does not demonstrate awareness of the text’s internal literary structure or of related texts	Aware of related texts Places text in overarching framework of immediate chapter, book, and related writings in the canon Some awareness of text’s rhetorical and persuasive features Understands the legitimate contribution of other passages to interpretation and theological vision	Strong grasp of related texts and ability to evaluation connections Places text in the overarching framework of the canon Understands and makes use of the stylistic and theological tendencies of the writer Superior grasp of text’s internal literary structure, theological vision, and contribution
Concern for historical, cultural, and social context (15 points)	15	Inadequate or no awareness of the historical, cultural, and social contexts in which the text was written	Shows basic awareness of the historical, cultural, and social contexts in which the text was written	Superior awareness of the historical, cultural, and social contexts in which the text was written
Hermeneutical reflection (10 points) a) evaluate the gap between textual and contemporary world b) articulate the ongoing message of the text	10	Little awareness or sensitivity to the temporal and cultural gap Inadequate attempt to articulate the ongoing message of the text	Basic awareness of the temporal and culture differences between then and now Good attempt to bridge the gap in order to hear the text’s message today	Superior sensitivity to the temporal and cultural differences between then and now Exceptionally clear articulation of a way to bridge the gap in order to hear the text’s message today
Application or “so what factor” (10 points) a) identifies concrete ways to embody the text and theological concepts b) solid conclusion	10	Inadequately identifies theological implications of text Few if any concrete suggestions Weak or nonexistent conclusion	Clearly identifies theological implication of the text Makes concrete suggestions for appropriating the text’s message Adequate conclusion	Identifies the theological implications of the text with particular insight and persuasiveness Real insight into concrete ways the significance of the text can shape contemporary life Convincing conclusion
Bibliography (5 points) a) solid academic sources b) adequate number c) critique of sources used in body of paper	5	Meets less than 70% of assignment’s bibliographic expectations Proper citation format not used	Meets 70% or greater of assignment’s bibliographic expectations Good citation format; some errors in form	Meets 90% or greater of assignment’s bibliographic expectations Proper citation format; hardly any errors in form
English Grammar (5 points) a) grammar b) word choice c) punctuation d) spelling	5	Many grammatical, punctuation, and/or spelling errors	Few grammatical, punctuation, and/or spelling errors Proper use of words	None or very few grammatical, punctuation, and/or spelling errors Word choices “sparkle”
Writing Style (5 points) a) evidence of thoughtful logic; moves from introduction, through a main discussion, and to a conclusion b) appropriate summaries c) good “flow” d) appropriate length and citation format e) appropriate use of endnotes or footnotes	5	Meets less than 70% of assignment’s expectations for writing style Introduction, discussion, and conclusion is rambling, disjointed, and poorly worded Style is distracting and confusing	Meets 70% or greater of assignment’s expectations for writing style Use of clear language Clear introduction, developed discussion, and coherent conclusion Style is readable and understandable	Meets 90% or greater of assignment’s expectations for writing style Clear introduction, developed discussion, and coherent conclusion Lively style and exceptional articulation Smooth transitions from section to section Significance made explicit in each section

Sub Total = _____ / 100

Minus 2% for each day late

Total = _____