



The New Testament in the Eternal City

PC Course Code: THL 363

Subject Areas: Theology, Biblical Studies, Religious Studies, History

Level: 300

Prerequisites: None

Language of Instruction: English. When other languages are used in meetings with representatives of Catholic churches, Christian communities and other religions from different countries, the content of the discussion will be translated into English.

Contact Hours: 45

Recommended Credits: 3

Course Description

This course is a survey of the literature and theology of the New Testament within the context of the Roman world. As part of the core experience of the semester in Rome, this course will introduce students to the modern scholarly methods of biblical studies to foster a comprehensive understanding of the origins and spread of Christianity in the Roman world. This includes attention to the historical and social contexts of ancient Rome, and to the archaeological finds that have expanded our knowledge of the ancient capital. At the same time, students will be exposed to the major theological ideas of the New Testament texts and their development in the Roman Catholic tradition.

The course consists of classroom lectures and discussions, and onsite visits. These onsite visits include the major archaeological sites of ancient Rome, early Christian cemeteries, shrines, and basilicas, and the Renaissance churches of Rome. These visits have a twofold purpose: 1.) to introduce students to the topography of the ancient city; and 2.) to expose students to the rich artistic heritage of the city through the ages, concentrating on the New Testament in art.

Learning Objectives

Knowledge Skills (Textual & Historical)

- to recognize and appreciate the Jewish and Greco-Roman contexts of the New Testament period
- to delineate the contents of the books of the New Testament
- to identify the oral and written transmission of traditions that resulted in the final form of the books of the New Testament
- to identify the representation of biblical themes in the sacred art of Rome

Critical Thinking Skills (Oral & Written)

- to find, consult and assess reference works in a library
- to identify reputable, scholarly resources online
- to compose formal written documents with up-to-date computer software
- to follow a standard style manual (e.g., *MLA Handbook*) for the preparation of formal written documents
- to analyze texts of the New Testament by means of various interpretive methods
- to discuss the elements of the culture of Ancient Rome discernable in New Testament texts
- to discuss works of art depicting narrative scenes and themes of the New Testament

- to summarize information in a concise way and evaluate the opinions of other scholars
- to organize a group presentation that incorporates onsite and library research

Attitudinal Skills (Affective & Behavioral)

- to value building the skills needed for lifelong learning
- to appreciate the cultural, social, and material challenges facing the first two generations of Christians
- to appreciate the artistic beauty of works of art that depict scenes from the New Testament

Instructional Format

Class will meet twice a week for 75 minutes. Course work is comprised of in-class lectures and discussions, group exercises, student *exposés*, documentary films, extensive outside readings, independent group and individual onsite study, a research project, and a number of instructor-led onsite research excursions to relevant course-related sites and institutions in the city. Some onsite study will be integrated into class-time while others will be assigned as out-of-class independent learning. *If you require any special accommodations, please contact your instructor.*

Form of Assessment

The instructor will use numerous and differentiated forms of assessment to calculate the final grade you receive for this course. For the record, these are listed and weighted below. The content, criteria and specific requirements for each assessment category will be explained in greater detail in class. However, you must complete all grading assessment categories to receive a grade for this course. In addition, your work and behavior in this course must fully conform to the regulations of the [CEA Academic Integrity Policy](#) to which you are subject. Finally, all formal written work you carry out in this course (research papers, projects, studies, etc.) must be submitted in electronic format. Your instructor may also require that you hand in a hard copy of such work.

Class Participation	15%
Short Tests	25%
Exegesis Paper	20%
Group Presentation	15%
Final Examination	25%

Class Participation (15%): This grade will be calculated to reflect your participation in class discussions, your capacity to introduce ideas and thoughts dealing with the texts, your ability to interpret different uses of literary language and to express your analysis in intellectual, constructive argumentation. When determining your class participation grades, traditional criteria such as material preparation, completed reading before class, and collaborative group work are all evaluated. But it is the active, meaningful and informed verbal and written contribution that you make that is most important to your overall participation grade. Indeed, willingness to share views in classroom discussions and the insightfulness of your comments and questions about assigned readings will all be taken into account when evaluating your participation. Additionally, it is important to demonstrate a positive and supportive attitude to the instructor and your classmates, and give full attention to class activities (i.e., cell-phones off, laptop for notes only, etc.). Whereas attendance and punctuality are expected and will not count positively towards the grade, laxity in these areas will have a negative effect. The instructor will use the following specific criteria when calculating your class participation grade:

Criteria for Assessing Class Participation	Grade
You make major and original contributions that spark discussion, offering both critical and analytical comments clearly based on readings and research and displaying a working knowledge of theoretical issues.	A+ (9.70–10.00)

You make significant contributions that demonstrate insight as well as knowledge of required readings and independent research.	A-/A (9.00–9.69)
You participate voluntarily and make useful contributions that are usually based upon some reflection and familiarity with required readings.	B/B+ (8.40–89.90)
You make voluntary but infrequent comments that generally reiterate the basic points of the required readings.	C+/B- (7.70–8.39)
You make limited comments only when prompted and do not initiate debate or show a clear awareness of the importance of the readings.	C (7.00–7.69)
You very rarely make comments and resist engagement with the subject, attending class having manifestly done little if any preparation.	D (6.00–6.69)
You make irrelevant and tangential comments disruptive to class discussion, a result of frequent absence and complete un-preparedness.	F (0–5.90)

Short Tests (25%): These short tests will assess your basic knowledge of New Testament texts. They are comprised of questions and exercises that test your abilities in three important areas of competency: the amount of information you master; the accuracy of the information you present; and the significance you ascribe to the facts and ideas you have integrated across your study in this course.

Exegesis Paper (20%): This will assess your ability to analyze a select portion of a New Testament text by paying attention to all levels of context and by evaluating scholarly opinions.

Group Presentation (15%): Working in small groups, you will prepare a presentation on an archaeological site, artifact, or other work of art relevant to the themes of the course. Groups will determine their major piece in consultation with the instructor. Through independent onsite visits and research of scholarly resources, groups will prepare a presentation to be delivered in class and a short paper that discusses their thesis and research.

Final Exam (25%): This will assess your integration of New Testament texts with artistic representations of them. It will consist of one long essay that will require you to make connections between New Testament texts and works of art viewed in the course.

GRADE AND QUALITY POINT CHART

Letter Grade	Percentage Range	Standard Quality Points
A Superior	94.0 - 100%	4.00
A-	90.0 – 93.9%	3.67
B+ Very Good	87.0 – 89.9%	3.33
B Good	84.0 – 86.9%	3.00
B-	80.0 – 83.9%	2.67
C+ Above Average	77.0 – 79.9%	2.33
C Average	74.0 – 76.9%	2.00
C-	70.0 – 73.9%	1.67
D+ Passing	67.0 – 69.9%	1.33
D Low Passing	64.0 – 66.9%	1.00
D-	60.0 – 63.9%	0.67
F Failure	0 – 59.9%	0.00
WD	Withdrawal	
I	Incomplete	

CEA Attendance Policy

Every student is expected to attend all scheduled class sessions on time and be thoroughly prepared for the day's class activities. In compliance with NEASC accreditation requirements, CEA instructors compile regular attendance records for every course and take these records into account when evaluating student participation and performance.

- In each three-credit 15-week course, a maximum of the equivalent of two weeks of accumulated absences due to sickness, personal emergency, inevitable transport delay and other related impediments will be tolerated.
- Your final course grade will drop one full letter grade (e.g. A- to B-) for each additional class missed beyond this two week period, regardless of the reason for your absence.
- You will automatically fail a course if your absences exceed the equivalent of three weeks of class.

Furthermore, to comply with immigration and financial regulations, you must maintain full-time student status and attend at least 12 hours of class every week. Consequently, the Dean and Program Director will dismiss from all CEA courses, programs, activities and housing any student who fails to maintain full-time status.

Academic Integrity

Both Providence College and CEA expect from its students the utmost commitment to academic honesty and integrity. Suspected acts of dishonesty in the fulfillment of course requirements will be investigated and, in the case that a violation of academic integrity has occurred, will be referred to the Faculty Resident Director for further action. In the case of Providence College students, incidents will also be reported to the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies. Violations of academic integrity include:

1. **Plagiarism:** copying or stealing the thoughts, ideas, descriptions, or arguments of another person and presenting them as one's own or attributing them to oneself.
2. **Cheating:** practicing deception or fraud by obtaining information in ways contrary to rules or instructions.
3. **Forgery:** creating a false document or altering a real one to be used as if genuine. This practice includes signing another's name without permission.
4. **Lying:** knowingly telling an untruth verbally or in writing, including knowingly telling instructors, deans, or other officials untruths.
5. **Collusion:** assisting or attempting to assist another student in an act of academic misconduct; working together on an assignment meant to be completed independently.

(From the website of the Providence College Office of the Dean of Undergraduate and Graduate Studies)

Required Readings

Listed below are the required course textbooks and additional readings. Whether you buy your books from our locally affiliated merchants or whether you acquire these before arrival, you must have constant access to these resources for reading, highlighting and marginal note-taking. It is required that you have unrestricted access to each. Additional copies will be placed on reserve in the Academic Affairs office for short-term loans. Access to additional sources required for certain class sessions will be provided in paper or electronic format consistent with applicable copyright legislation. In addition, the Academic Affairs Office compiles a bank of detailed information about the many libraries, documentation centers, research institutes and archival materials located in the host city and accessible to CEA students. You will be required to use these resources throughout your studies.

Macadam, Alta, ed. *Blue Guide: Rome*. 9th Ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 2006. 623pp.

Powell, Mark Allan. *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2009. 560pp.

Reed, Jonathan L. *The Harper Collins Visual Guide to the New Testament*. New York: Harper Collins, 2007. 169pp.

Ignatius Catholic Study Bible. 2nd edition. Ignatius Press, 2010. 726pp.

Recommended Readings

The following works are available for consultation at the CEA Resource Center:

Brown, Raymond. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. New York: Doubleday, 1997. 928pp.

Ehrman, Bart. *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*. 4th Ed. New York: Oxford UP, 2008. 560pp.

Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 3rd Ed. Grand Rapids MI: Eerdmans, 2003. 648pp.

Hibbert, Christopher. *Rome: The Biography of a City*. New York: Penguin, 1985. 400pp.

Masson, Georgina and John Fort. *The Companion Guide to Rome*. Companion Guides. Rochester NY: Boydell and Brewer, 2007. 698pp.

Murphy, Frederick J. *Early Judaism: The Exile to the Time of Jesus*. Peabody MA: Hendrickson, 2002. 474pp.

Novak, Ralph Martin. *Christianity and the Roman Empire: Background Texts*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 2001. 340pp.

Tylenda, Joseph N. *The Pilgrim's Guide to Rome's Principal Churches*. Collegeville MN: Liturgical Press, 1993. 272pp.

Zuffi, Stefano. *Gospel Figures in Art*. Trans. Thomas Michael Hartmann. Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 2003. 384pp.

Online Reference & Research Tools

Churches of Rome: <http://www.romeartlover.it/Churches.html>

The New Testament Gateway: <http://ntgateway.com>

Guide to the Station Churches of Rome: http://www.pnac.org/station_churches/station_index.htm

Aids for History:

Frances Condron, Grazyna Cooper, *Welcome to Internet for Historians*, <http://www.vts.rdn.ac.uk/tutorial/history>

Jo Bell Whitlatch, *Library Research in History*, <http://www.library.sjsu.edu/leaphist.htm>

Cornell University Library, *Research Guide for History*, <http://www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/history.html#toc>

Schedule of Lectures, Site Visits, and Assignments

Session	Topic	Activity	Assignments
1	Introduction to Rome	Site visit to San Clemente and Roman Forum	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reed, 2-33 • <i>Blue Guide</i>, 61-84; 347-353
2	Introduction to the New Testament	Lecture and Discussion	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation</i> • Powell, 47-61
3	The Jewish Context of the New Testament	Onsite Study and Discussion: Jewish Catacombs	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powell, 15-31 • Reed, 54-77
4	The Greco-Roman Context of the New Testament: The Beginnings of Empire	Lecture and Discussion	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reed, 34-53; 78-99
5	The Greco-Roman Context of the New Testament: Roman Religion and the Imperial Cult	Onsite Study and Discussion: Capitoline Museum and the Imperial Fora	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Powell, 31-45 • Reed, 100-109 • <i>Blue Guide</i>, 35-54; 112-124
6	The Journeys of the Apostles	Lecture and Discussion	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Acts of the Apostles</i>, 1-10 • Powell, 191-213 TEST 1
7	St. Paul: Apostle to the Gentiles	Onsite Study and Discussion: S. Maria del Popolo	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Acts of the Apostles</i>, 13-17 • Powell, 231-253 • Reed, 109-114; 117-119 • <i>Blue Guide</i>, 160-165
8	St. Paul's First Letter to the Thessalonians	Lecture and Discussion	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>1 Thessalonians</i> • Powell, 215-229; 371-385 • Reed, 122-128
9	St. Paul's Letter to the Galatians	Lecture and Discussion	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Galatians</i> • Powell, 307-321
10	St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians	Onsite Study and Discussion: S. Sabina	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Philippians</i> • Powell, 343-355 • <i>Blue Guide</i>, 326-329
11	St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians	Lecture and Discussion	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>1 Corinthians</i> 1-7 • Powell, 273-291 • Reed, 120-121
12	St. Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians	Onsite Study and Discussion: Pantheon	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>1 Corinthians</i> 8-16 • Powell, 293-305

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Blue Guide</i>, 259-263
13	St. Paul's Letter to the Romans	Lecture and Discussion	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Romans</i> 1-8 • Powell, 255-271 TEST 2
14	St. Paul's Letter to the Romans	Lecture and Discussion	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Romans</i> 9-16 • <i>Acts of the Apostles</i> 27-28
15	The Legacy of St. Paul	Onsite Study and Discussion: S. Paolo fuori le Mura and Abbazia delle Tre Fontane	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>1 & 2 Timothy</i> • <i>Acts of Paul</i> (selections) • Powell, 397-413 • <i>Blue Guide</i>, 475-480
16	The Gospel of Mark	Lecture and Discussion	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mark</i> 1-7 • Powell, 63-101 • Reed, 128-134
17	The Gospel of Mark	Onsite Study and Discussion: Scavi di S. Pietro and S. Giovanni dei Fiorentini	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Mark</i> 8-16 • Powell, 125-145
18	The Gospel of Matthew	Lecture and Discussion	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Matthew</i> 1-13 • Powell, 103-123
19	The Gospel of Matthew	Onsite Study and Discussion: S. Luigi dei Francesi	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Matthew</i> 14-28 • <i>Blue Guide</i>, 286-288
20	The Gospel of Luke	Onsite Study and Discussion: S. Maria Maggiore; S. Maria in Trastevere	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Luke</i> • Powell, 147-167 • <i>Blue Guide</i>, 245-250; 372-375
21	The Gospel of John	Lecture and Discussion	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>John</i> 1-12 • Powell, 169-189 TEST 3
22	The Gospel of John	Onsite study and Discussion: S. Giovanni in Laterano; S. Croce in Gerusalemme	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>John</i> 13-21 • <i>Blue Guide</i>, 356-366
23	Visit to Vatican Museums and Sistine Chapel	Onsite Study and Discussion	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reed, 144-148 • <i>Blue Guide</i>, 427-448; 450-458; 462-466
24	1 Peter	Lecture and Discussion	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>1 Peter</i> • Powell, 463-479 EXEGESIS PAPER DUE

25	The Legacy of Peter in Rome	Onsite Study and Discussion: S. Pietro in Vaticano	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Acts of Peter</i> • <i>Blue Guide</i>, 403-426
26	Revelation	Lecture and Discussion	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Revelation</i> 1-11 • Powell, 519-537 TEST 4
27	Revelation	Onsite Study and Discussion: Colosseum, Ss. Cosmas e Damiano; S. Prassede; S. Pudenziana	Readings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Revelation</i> 12-22 • Reed, 134-139 • <i>Blue Guide</i>, 99-106; 125; 250-254
28	Group Presentations		
29	Group Presentations	Onsite Study and Discussion: Catacombs on Via Appia	
30	Final Exam		