

St. Mary's Ecumenical Institute
Fall 2017

Thursday

6:00-8:30 pm

BS600 Orientation to Biblical Studies

Drs. Drew Strait and Jennifer McNeel

Course Description: The goal of this course is to introduce students to the academic tools and methods used to study the Bible, thus preparing students both for future Bible courses and for other theological study at the Ecumenical Institute. The course will focus on topics related to biblical study including: 1) the development of the biblical canon; 2) methods and tools for Biblical study; 3) the exegetical process; 4) the transmission and growth of biblical literature; 5) in-class exegetical discussion of passages from the Old and New Testaments.

Course Requirements:

- Students should expect to read ~800 pages from the **required texts** listed below.
- Students should expect to write at most 24 double-spaced pages for written assignments. Written assignments will be comprised of the following: a 250-word extended definition of the Bible (8% of final grade); an oral report on one non-canonical gospel (8% of final grade); one cartoon exegesis assignment (8% of final grade); Exercise 1, 2 or 3 from Gorman, *Elements*, p. 100 (8% of final grade); completion of the Exegetical Tools handout (8% of final grade); and a final 12 page exegesis paper (20% of final grade).
- In addition to the reading, writing, and class participation, students should expect to participate in a midterm exam (20% of final grade). Thus, your final grade will be computed based on the following assignments: completion of several brief written assignments—see point b above (40%); mid-term exam (20%); final exegesis paper (20%); and regular attendance and appropriate participation in class discussions preceded by careful study of the assigned readings (20%).

Required Texts:

1. One of the following translations of the Bible, preferably in a study edition recommended by the instructor: NRSV, RSV, NAB, NIV, TNIV
2. Michael J. Gorman, ed. *Scripture and Its Interpretation: A Global, Ecumenical Introduction to the Bible* (Baker Academic, 2017). 978-0801098390.
3. Michael J. Gorman, *Elements of Biblical Exegesis: A Basic Guide for Students and Ministers*, rev. and exp. ed. (Baker Academic, 2017). 978-0801046407.
4. John Bowker, ed. *Complete Bible Handbook: An Illustrated Companion* (DK, 2001). 978-0789481542