



# PRAIRIE COLLEGE

**Online Education Course Syllabus for  
NT 221 READING PAUL'S LETTERS  
Edition 1, 2018  
3 Credit Hours**

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## **I. COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course is an introduction to all of Paul's Epistles. We will explore key themes in the Pauline Epistles, wrestle with living out its teaching in a contemporary context. Sound interpretive skills will be practiced to better discern what the text meant to the first century recipients and how it applies for the Christian and the church community in the 21st century.

*Prerequisite: NT 112 Reading the Gospels and Acts*

## **II. COURSE RATIONALE**

The apostle Paul preached the gospel and established churches throughout the Roman world. Because his ministry covered such a large area, he used letters (epistles) to instruct new believers in the essentials of the Christian faith, to deal with problems in the local church and encourage leaders to remain true to their calling. The purpose of this course is to understand the original context of Paul's letters, determine timeless principles from the text and discover ways to apply its message in our lives today.

## **III. COURSE OBJECTIVES**

1. Demonstrate proficiency interpreting and exegeting passages in the Pauline Epistles and draw out their contemporary application
2. Identify key theological themes in Paul's letters and explain the sense of their content
3. Discover solutions to significant problems and issues facing the church today
4. Apply themes and principles of Paul's Letter in your leadership and ministry
5. Experience the grace of God in your own life and recognize how His grace was worked out in the 1<sup>st</sup> century church

## **IV. REQUIRED COURSE TEXT**

*The Bible.* A standard translation of the Bible must be used, not a paraphrase. The instructor prefers the use of NASB or ESV.

## V. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### 1. Reading Paul's Letters (5%)

Throughout the course you will read all of Paul's Letters, from Romans to Philemon. To stay on track you should follow the Bible reading sequence laid out in the course schedule. At the end of the course, you will be asked to verify what percentage of the Bible reading you have completed in a written statement, submitted near the end of Unit 6.

### 2. Quizzes (5 x 5% = 25%)

There will be five quizzes based on the content of lecture videos. There are 30 video lectures to view, each between 20 – 30 minutes long, and the quizzes will consist of short answer questions related to the main ideas covered in the lectures.

### 3. Theological Reflection Papers - Credos (4 x 5% = 20%)

In these assignments you will develop written credos of your understanding and belief with respect to Paul's writings as it relates to key doctrines of the Christian faith. You may choose to write on any four of the following topics (resulting in 4 separate credos):

1. *Theology Proper*: What does Paul say about God as Father, as Triune, as Creator?
2. *Anthropology*: What is Paul's view on humanity's origin, uniqueness, fall and sinfulness?
3. *Hamartiology*: What do the Pauline Epistles say about sin, its origin, its effects and consequences?
4. *Bibliology*: What is Paul's view of Scripture especially in terms of Scripture as revelation, its authority, infallibility/inerrancy and inspiration?
5. *Christology*: How does Paul describe the person and work of Christ Jesus in relation to His humanity, deity and work of atonement?
6. *Pneumatology*: What does Paul say in regard to the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Who is He and what does He accomplish in the life of the believer?
7. *Soteriology*: What does Paul teach with respect to salvation in its various nuances such as justification, regeneration, redemption and reconciliation?
8. *Ecclesiology*: What does Paul teach in regard to the nature and work of the Church?
9. *Eschatology*: Paul's letters often deal with issues relating to *last things*. What does Paul have to say about such topics as death, judgment, eternity, resurrection, second coming?

As you write your views on various topics of Paul's theology, consult the whole body of his writings. Some of his letters may not deal with your chosen topic (e.g. Philemon) and some topics may only be addressed in a few of Paul's letters. The key is to address passages from as wide a range of his letters as far as possible. Books could be written on each of these topics, however in your credos just give enough evidence so your instructor can get a sense of your understanding with respect to Paul's doctrines. The primary focus of these assignments is *your understanding*, so I do not expect you to include academic sources in your credos. Paul's letters should be your only source.

**Length:** 250 – 500 words for each of the four credos (Bible quotations will not be included in the word count)

**Format:** Times New Roman 12-point double-spaced.

#### **4. Discussion Forums (5%)**

You will be given opportunity to respond to specific contemporary issues that are found within the content of Paul's letters. I have created six forum questions and you are to answer at least four in a minimum of 350 words each.

#### **5. Exegetical Paper (25%)**

You are asked to write a paper on a passage from any of the Pauline letters. You can choose any passage you want. It should, of course, be of interest to you, and should be around 6-12 verses long. (You will be asked to propose your passage in Unit 3 and to submit a topic and general outline for your paper in Unit 4.) Please follow this basic process:

*A. Study:* Read the passage carefully, if possible in several different English versions. Look at the context—what is going on before and after the passage? Look at the structure of the passage—what are its stages of argument? Look at words and phrases—are there any that are hard to understand? Do the different English translations suggest any places where there might be difficulty about the meaning? Use an English Concordance to look up any especially interesting or difficult words.

*B. Learn from Others:* Use a Bible Dictionary or Encyclopedia to look up any especially interesting or difficult concepts. Read at least four commentaries on the passage to see what other scholars are saying. Recommended commentaries are listed in Appendix A at the end of the syllabus.

*C. Decide:* Make up your own mind about what the passage is saying. Seek to combine respect for others who have studied the passage with your own independent judgment.

*D. Write:* On the basis of the notes you have taken, write an initial draft. Write as well as you can, paying attention to spelling, grammar, and style. Be sure to include reference to any source you have used. Include an introduction of a page or so in length in which you situate the passage in its context and deal with any necessary preliminary matters. The body of the paper should contain a verse-by-verse explanation of what you think the passage means and be around 8-10 pages in length. As you comment on the text, be sure to indicate other views of significant points that you have uncovered in your study. And explain why you have chosen the view you have and have rejected other views. Include a ¾ page to one page conclusion. The conclusion should briefly summarize what you think the key idea of the passage is and spell out its significance for 1) your thinking about the issue or about the faith in general; and 2) what action you may need to take as a result of your study. A bibliography of all the books and articles you consulted should conclude the paper.

**Length:** 12 - 14 pages (excluding title page and bibliography)

**Format:** Essay with footnotes, Times New Roman 12-point double-spaced.

**Resources:** Minimum of four different commentaries/sources.

#### **6. Final Exam (20%)**

The first part of the exam will be dedicated to key terms, people and places and will consist of multiple choice, matching and short answer questions. The last part of the exam will provide opportunity to exegete a particular passage from Paul's Letters (this part of the exam will be

open-Bible). In your exegetical answer, you will highlight the flow of thought, the main idea(s) of the passage, provide an outline of the passage, the original meaning and context of the passage and develop timeless principles and a contemporary application. You will have three hours to complete the exam.

The exam must be completed in the presence of a **proctor**, i.e. an exam supervisor. The proctor must be a responsible adult with a position such as a pastor, chaplain, church leader, administrator, school teacher, or college professor. The proctor cannot be another student, your spouse or related to you. Send the name, position, and email address of your proposed proctor to the Online Education office (online.ed@prairie.edu) **one week** before you wish to write your quiz or exam. After your proctor is approved, he or she will be sent instructions and the quiz/exam password. Your graded exam will not be available for review; only your grade will be available to you. However, if you have specific questions about your grade you are welcome to contact your instructor or the Online Education office.

## VI. ACADEMIC POLICIES

**1. Plagiarism:** Plagiarism is a form of intellectual theft and is a serious offence. At its most basic, plagiarism is passing off someone else’s work (a fellow student or a written resource) as your own, and thus a form of cheating. Normally, a discovered instance of plagiarism will result in a zero grade for the work in question, and possibly a report on the student’s official academic record. If the case is deemed serious enough, the student may also have his/her case reviewed by a college disciplinary committee. **Each student must do his/her own work unless an assignment is clearly stated otherwise.** For more information please refer to the PC Academic Guide available on the following webpage: <https://prairie.edu/current-students/registrars-office/>

**2. Grading and Feedback:** My timeline for grading and assignment feedback is 7-10 days. I will respond to student communications within 2 days, excluding weekends, holidays, and vacation time. The following Prairie College grading scale applies to all written assignments:

Letter Grade	Number Grade	Rating	Point Value
A+	90 – 100		4.0
A	85 – 89	Excellent	4.0
A-	80 – 84		3.7
B+	77 – 79		3.3
B	73 – 76	Good	3.0
B-	70 – 72		2.7
C+	67 – 69		2.3
C	63 – 66	Satisfactory	2.0
C-	60 – 62		1.7
D+	55 – 59		1.3
D	50 – 54	Poor	1.0
F	0 – 49	Failure	0.0
P	-----	Pass	
AU	-----	Audit	
I	-----	Incomplete	
W	-----	Withdrew	

Numerical course grades are not rounded.

## VII. COURSE SCHEDULE

Session	Video Lessons	Bible Readings	Assignments Due
	Course Introduction	Galatians 1 – 3	
	Homiletical Process	Galatians 4 – 6	
<b>Unit 1 - Galatians</b>			
1.1	Introduction to Galatians	1 Thessalonians 1 – 3	Forum 1
1.2	Galatians 1 – 3	1 Thessalonians 4 – 5	
1.3	Galatians 4 – 6	2 Thessalonians	
<b>Unit 2 - Thessalonians</b>			
2.1	1 Thessalonians 1 – 3	Romans 1 – 4	Quiz 1
2.2	1 Thessalonians 4 – 5	Romans 5 – 8	
2.3	2 Thessalonians	Romans 9 – 11	<b>Credo 1</b> Forum 2
<b>Unit 3 - Romans</b>			
3.1	Romans (1:1-3:20)	Romans 12 – 16	
3.2	Romans (3:20 – 5)	1 Corinthians 1 – 4	Quiz 2
3.3	Romans (6 – 8)	1 Corinthians 5 – 9	
3.4	Romans (9 – 11)	1 Corinthians 10 – 13	Forum 3
3.5	Romans (12 – 16)	1 Corinthians 14 – 16	
<b>Unit 4 - 1 &amp; 2 Corinthians</b>			
4.1	1 Corinthians	2 Corinthians	<b>Credo 2</b> Forum 4
4.2	2 Corinthians	Philippians 1– 4	<b>Topic Proposal &amp; General Outline</b>
<b>Unit 5 - Paul's Prison Letters</b>			
5.1	Philippians 1 – 2	Ephesians 1– 3	Quiz 3
5.2	Philippians 3 – 4	Ephesians 4 – 6	
5.3	Ephesians 1 – 3	Colossians 1 – 3	
5.4	Ephesians 4 – 6	Colossians 4 & Philemon	<b>Credo 3</b> Forum 5
5.5	Colossians & Philemon	1 Timothy	
<b>Unit 6 - Paul's Pastoral Letters: 1 Timothy, Titus, 2 Timothy</b>			
6.1	1 Timothy 1 – 3	Titus	Quiz 4
6.2	1 Timothy 4 – 6	2 Timothy 1 – 2	
6.3	Titus	2 Timothy 3 – 4	
6.4	2 Timothy 1 – 2		Forum 6 <b>Reading Verification</b>
6.5	2 Timothy 3 – 4		Quiz 5 <b>Credo 4</b>
<b>Unit 7 - Exegetical Paper, Final Exam, and Course Evaluation</b>			
			<b>Exegetical Paper</b> Final Exam Course Evaluation

## APPENDIX A: COMMENTARIES FOR THE EXEGETICAL PAPER

NOTE: Greek commentaries are marked with an asterisk. Entries below are not in correct bibliographic format.

### Romans

- Bruce, F. F. *Romans*. TNTC. InterVarsity, 1985.  
\*Cranfield, C. E. B. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*. 2 vols. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1975-79.  
----. *Romans: A Shorter Commentary*. Eerdmans, 1985.  
\*Dunn, James D. G. *Romans*. 2 vols. WBC. Waco, TX: Word, 1988.  
\*Moo, Douglas J. *The Epistle to the Romans*. NICNT. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.  
----. *Romans*. NIVAC. Zondervan, 2000.  
\*Morris, Leon. *The Epistle to the Romans*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988.  
\*Schreiner, Thomas R. *Romans*. BECNT. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1998.  
Stott, John R. W. *The Message of Romans*. BST. InterVarsity, 1995.  
Ziesler, John. *Paul's Letter to the Romans*. Trinity, 1989.

### 1 Corinthians

- Bailey, Kenneth E. *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011.  
Blomberg, Craig. *1 Corinthians*. NIVAC. Zondervan, 1995.  
\*Ciampa, Roy E., and Brian S. Rosner. *The First Letter to the Corinthians*. Pillar. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.  
\*Fee, Gordon D. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. NICNT. Eerdmans, 1987.  
\*Garland, David E. *1 Corinthians*. BECNT. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003.  
Hays, Richard B. *First Corinthians*. Westminster John Knox, 1997.  
Morris, Leon. *1 Corinthians*. TNTC, InterVarsity, 1983.  
Prior, David. *The Message of 1 Corinthians*. BST. InterVarsity, 1985.  
Soards, Marion L. *1 Corinthians*. NIBCNT. Hendrickson, 1999.  
\*Thiselton, Anthony C. *The First Epistle to the Corinthians*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.  
Witherington, Ben, III. *Conflict and Community in Corinth*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.

### 2 Corinthians

- \*Barnett, Paul. *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.  
Belleville, Linda L. *2 Corinthians*. IVPNTC. InterVarsity, 1995.  
\*Garland, David E. *2 Corinthians*. NAC. Nashville: Broadman, 1999.  
Hafemann, Scott. *2 Corinthians*. NIVAC. Zondervan, 2000.  
\*Harris, Murray J. *The Second Epistle to the Corinthians*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.  
Kruse, Colin. *2 Corinthians*. TNTC. InterVarsity, 1987.  
\*Martin, Ralph P. *2 Corinthians*. WBC. Waco, TX: Word, 1986.

### Galatians

- \*Bruce, F. F. *Commentary on Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982.  
\*Burton, Ernest De Witt. *Galatians*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1920.

Fung, Ronald Y. K. *The Epistle to the Galatians*. NICNT. Eerdmans, 1988.  
George, Timothy. *Galatians*. NAC. Broadman, 1994.  
Hansen, G. Walter. *Galatians*. IVPNTC. InterVarsity, 1994.  
\*Lightfoot, J. B. *The Epistle of St. Paul to the Galatians*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1865.  
\*Longenecker, Richard N. *Galatians*. Dallas: Word, 1990.  
Stott, John R. W. *The Message of Galatians*. BST. InterVarsity, 1968.  
Witherington III, Ben. *Grace in Galatia*. Eerdmans, 1998.

### **Ephesians**

\*Bruce, F. F. *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*. NICNT, Eerdmans, 1984.  
Foulkes, Francis. *Ephesians*. TNTC. InterVarsity, 1989.  
Liefeld, Walter L. *Ephesians*. IVPNTC. InterVarsity, 1997.  
\*Lincoln, A. T. *Ephesians*. Dallas, TX: Word, 1990.  
Melick, Richard R., Jr. See Colossians.  
\*O'Brien, Peter T. *The Letter to the Ephesians*. Pillar. Eerdmans, 1999.  
Patzia, Arthur G. *Ephesians, Colossians, Philemon*. NIBCNT. Hendrickson, 1990.  
Robinson, J. Armitage. *Commentary on Ephesians*. Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1979.  
Snodgrass, Klyne. *Ephesians*. NIVAC. Zondervan, 1996.  
Stott, John R. W. *The Message of Ephesians*. BST. InterVarsity, 1979.  
\*Thielman, Frank. *Ephesians*. BECNT. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2010.

### **Philippians**

Bockmuehl, Markus. *The Epistle to the Philippians*. Hendrickson, 1997.  
Bruce, F. F. *Philippians*. NIBCNT. Hendrickson, 1989.  
Fee, Gordon D. *Philippians*. IVPNTC. InterVarsity, 1999.  
\*---. *Paul's Letter to the Philippians*. NICNT. Eerdmans, 1995.  
Martin, Ralph P. *Philippians*. TNTC. InterVarsity, 1987.  
Motyer, J. Alec. *The Message of Philippians*. BST. InterVarsity, 1984.  
\*O'Brien, Peter T. *Commentary on Philippians*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991.  
Silva, Moisés. *Philippians*. Chicago: Moody, 1988.  
\*---. *Philippians*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. BECNT. Baker Academic, 2005.  
Thielman, Frank. *Philippians*. NIVAC. Zondervan, 1995.  
Witherington, Ben, III. *Friendship and Finances in Philippi*. Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1994.

### **Colossians and Philemon**

Bruce, F. F. See Ephesians.  
\*Dunn, James D. G. *The Epistles to the Colossians and to Philemon*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.  
Garland, David E. *Colossians/Philemon*. NIVAC. Zondervan, 1997.  
Lucas, R. C. *The Message of Colossians and Philemon*. BST. InterVarsity, 1980.  
Martin, Ernest. *Colossians and Philemon*. BCBC. Herald, 1993.  
Melick, Richard R., Jr. *Philippians, Colossians, & Philemon*. NAC. Broadman, 1991.  
\*Moo, Douglas J. *The Letters to the Colossians and to Philemon*. PNTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.  
Moule, C. F. D. *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Colossians and to Philemon*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1977.

\*O'Brien, Peter T. *Colossians, Philemon*. Waco, TX: Word, 1982.  
Thompson, Marianne Meye. *Colossians and Philemon*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.  
Wall, Robert W. *Colossians & Philemon*. IVPNTC. InterVarsity, 1993.  
Wright, N. T. *Colossians & Philemon*. TNTC, InterVarsity, 1987.

### **1-2 Thessalonians**

Best, Earnest. *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, in Black's New Testament Commentary. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1995.  
Bruce, F.F. *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, vol. 45 in the Word Biblical Commentary. Waco: Word Books, 1982.  
Elias, Jacob W. *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, Herald Press, 1995  
Frame, J.E. *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, in the New International Critical Commentary. London: T&T Clark, n.d.  
Gaventa, Beverly Roberts. *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, in Interpretation Commentary. Westminster/John Knox Press, 1998.  
Jensen, Irving L. *1 and 2 Thessalonians: A Self-Study Guide*. Chicago: Moody Press, 1999.  
Martin, D. Michael. *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, in the New American Commentary. Nashville: Broadman/Holman, 1995.  
Morris, Leon. *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, in the New International Commentary on the New Testament. Rev. ed. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1994.  
Richard, Earl. *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, vol. 11 in Sacra Pagina series. np: Michael Glazier, 1997.  
Stott, John R. *1 and 2 Thessalonians: Living in the End Times*, InterVarsity Press, 1999.  
Wanamaker, Charles A. *The Epistles to the Thessalonians*, in the New International Greek Text Commentary. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1994.  
Williams, David J., and Gasque, Ward. *1 & 2 Thessalonians*, in the New International Biblical Commentary. Hendrickson, 1995.

### **1-2 Timothy & Titus**

Fee, Gordon D. *1 and 2 Timothy, Titus*. NIBCNT. Hendrickson, 1989,  
Kelly, J. N. D. *A Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*. [1963]. Hendrickson, 1993.\_  
\*Knight, George W., III. *The Pastoral Epistles*. NIGTC. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1992.  
Lea, Thomas D., and Hayne P Griffin, Jr. *1 & 2 Timothy, Titus*. NAC. Broadman, 1992.  
Liefeld, Walter L. *1-2 Timothy/Titus*. NIVAC, Zondervan, 1999.  
\*Marshall, I. Howard. *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Pastoral Epistles*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999.  
\*Mounce, William D. WBC. *Pastoral Epistles*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2000.  
Oden, Thomas C. *First and Second Timothy & Titus*. Westminster John Knox, 1989.  
Stott, John R. W. *The Message of 1 Timothy & Titus*. BST. InterVarsity, 1997.  
---. *The Message of 2 Timothy*. BST. InterVarsity, 1973.  
\*Towner, Philip H. *The Letters to Timothy and Titus*. NICNT. Eerdmans, 2006.

### **Online Resources**

<http://www.preceptaustin.org/>  
<http://www.ntgateway.com>  
<http://biblehub.com/>  
<https://bible.org/>