

BBL310 Biblical Hermeneutics



For the Acadeum Course Sharing Consortium



We're delighted to have you study at RMC! Please note the following policies:

We try our best to ensure you get the most from the courses in which you are enrolled and welcome your feedback!

Online Courtesy

As beings created in the image of God, we all deserve to be treated with the utmost respect whether we are a facilitator or a student. Online courses give us the opportunity to encourage social interaction, relationship building and trust between participants which befits our status as image-bearers. Failure to show respect in course interchange, through emails, announcements, discussion forums or instant chat, whether in the form of racism, chauvinism or simple unkindness is ungracious and inappropriate for the health of Christian community. Where mutual respect exists, the possibility of learning is enhanced for all.

Therefore, please remember that there is a person behind every comment on the course website – when you respond, be gracious, give the benefit of the doubt and ask for clarification. Review your comments in the discussion forums for tone before submitting them – sarcasm and jokes often do not translate well in the online environment. Be sure your messages are clear – it is tempting to quickly write a response and submit it but this can lead to confusion if your thoughts are a bit jumbled – take time to polish your remarks. Remember that your comments, whether in emails or discussion forums can become public so act accordingly.

RMC Grading Policy

Grade GradePoint

A+	4.0	
A	4.0	A = Excellent - superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.
A-	3.7	
B+	3.3	
B	3.0	B = Good - clearly above average performance with knowledge of the subject matter generally complete.
B-	2.7	
C+	2.3	
C	2.0	C = Satisfactory — basic understanding of subject matter.
C-	1.7	
D+	1.3	
D	1.0	D = Inferior work which falls below the expectations of the course but which is of passing quality.
D-	0.7	
F	0.0	F = Failure to meet the minimum standards required for a passing grade.
P	Pass	P = Represents satisfactory work. Given only in courses specially designated for Pass /Fail grading.
IN		Incomplete
VW		Voluntary Withdrawal from a course before the course withdrawal deadline.

Grading Scale

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

Plagiarism & Academic Misconduct at Rocky Mountain College

A. Plagiarism Defined

Plagiarism - involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Plagiarism exists when:

1. the work submitted was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting the work,
2. parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
3. the whole work is copied from another source, and/or
4. a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted. Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence.

B. Penalties

1. **Failing Grade** - a student may be given a failing grade in either the assignment or course in which that student is found guilty of plagiarism. Except in circumstances in which leniency is warranted, this penalty will be applied in conjunction with one or other of the other penalties mentioned below.
2. **Disciplinary Probation** - when a student is placed on disciplinary probation, he or she is entitled to proceed with their academic program. If the student is found guilty of a further academic offence the student will be suspended or expelled.
3. **Suspension** - suspension takes place when a student is denied continuance at the college for a specified period of time. A student who has been placed under suspension is eligible to reapply for admission after the end of that specified period of time. Suspension does not imply automatic readmission; a student must satisfy the dean of his/her eligibility for readmission.
4. **Expulsion** - a student who is expelled is dismissed permanently from the college with no right to apply for readmission.

C. Penalties and Their Application

1. In cases in which the dean is satisfied that a student is guilty of a clear intention to deceive, the normal penalty will be either suspension or expulsion from the college.
2. In cases in which the dean is satisfied that an offence has been committed, but doubt is left as to the existence of a clear intention to deceive, the normal penalty will be disciplinary probation.
3. In cases where a student is found guilty of more than a single offence, the normal penalty will be expulsion from the college.

Copies of the official policy regarding Plagiarism and other academic offenses can be found on the RMC website. If charged with plagiarism, it would be wise for a student to familiarize themselves with the RMC policy, "Plagiarism, Cheating & Academic Misconduct."

This policy is based on the University of Calgary policy "Plagiarism, Cheating & Academic Misconduct - 1996-97" Copyright © 1998 University of Calgary

BBL310 Biblical Hermeneutics
Rocky Mountain College
Credits: 3

Course Description

An introduction to the history and practice of biblical interpretation. Attention will be given to the history of biblical interpretation, to basic hermeneutical principles, and to appropriate interpretive strategies for various biblical genres.

Course Objectives

The aim of this course is to assist students to gain expertise in appropriate and fruitful methods of scriptural interpretation. By the end of this course students will be able to:

1. identify common deficiencies in the use of the Bible.
2. identify basic principles of biblical interpretation.
3. Explain, in general, the history of biblical interpretation.
4. utilize practical methods and skills in biblical interpretation and application, especially with regard to genre.
5. identify the hermeneutical issues involved in using the Bible to address contemporary ethical issues in the church and society.

Along with these considerations, this course is designed to provide a basis for students who plan to take a course in homiletics or who wish to gain foundational skills for preparing sermons or Bible studies.

Required Textbooks

Duvall, J. Scott, and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word: A Hands-On Approach to Reading, Interpreting, and Applying the Bible*, 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.

Duvall, J. Scott, and J. Daniel Hays. *Grasping God's Word: Workbook*, 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2012.

Recommended Resource

McKim, Donald K., editor. *Dictionary of Major Biblical Interpreters*. Downers Grove, ILL.: InterVarsity Press, 2007.

Course Requirements

1. Reading the textbook and other assigned readings (See course schedule below)
2. Discussion Posts
3. Written Assignments
4. Mid-term exam
5. Final exam

6. An 8-10 page (2000 – 2500 words) hermeneutical study of a passage from Ephesians (See list of texts from Ephesians in Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God's Word: Workbook*, 3rd ed., page 180).

Grades

1. Discussion Posts	15%
2. Written Assignments	15%
3. Mid-term exam	20%
4. Final exam	20%
5. Hermeneutical study:	<u>30%</u>
	100%

Course Overview

This course is divided into two main sections. The first section (Modules 1-5) consists of the study of the principles and history of biblical interpretation. These modules apply generally to the interpretation of the Bible. In the first section of the course—that related to the principles and history of interpretation—there will not be an exact correspondence between the topics of the textbook readings and the video lectures. In particular, lectures from this part of the course (Modules 1-5) will give primary attention to this history of biblical interpretation, while the textbook readings and workbook assignments will focus attention on basic principles of biblical interpretation and will give almost no information regarding history.

The second section of the course (Modules 6-10) is devoted to the interpretation of the various genres of biblical literature. In the second half of the course (Modules 6-10) there will be a much closer correspondence between video lectures and the assigned readings from the textbook (*Grasping God's Word*). Each module in this section will define two genres (except module 9), and will present interpretive challenges and appropriate hermeneutical approaches for each.

Module	Time	Textbook Reading	Assignments/Discussions
1: Principles of Interpretation	5	D&H 1-3	Discussion: Vocation and Hermeneutics
2: History of Interpretation (Jewish interpretation of the Hebrew Bible)	5.5	D&H 4-5	Assignment: How to Read the Book
3: History of Interpretation (Allegory and Typology; Lectio Divina)	5.5	D&H 6-8	Discussion: Presuppositions and Interpretation
4: History of Interpretation (Reformation, Orthodoxy,	6.5	D&H 9-11	Essay: Word Studies

and Pietism)			
5: History of Interpretation Duvall & Hays, ch 12 – “The Role of the Holy Spirit (Modernism and Postmodernism)	6.5	D&H 12-13	Mid-term exam Discussion: Modernism and Interpretation
6: Genre – New Testament (Letters, Gospels)		D&H 14-15	Discussion: Lectio Divina
7: Genre – New Testament (Acts, Revelation)		D&H 16-17	Essay: Revelation
8: Genre – Old Testament (Narrative, Poetry)		D&H 18, 20	Essay: Narrative
9: Genre – Old Testament (Law, Biblical injunctions)		D&H 19	Discussion: Biblical Injunctions
10: Genre – Old Testament (Prophets, Wisdom)		D&H 21-22	Essay: Old Testament Prophets Final Exam Hermeneutic Paper

Discussion Posts and Written Exercises

Students are invited to respond to a discussion question or to complete a written exercise in each of the ten course modules. The responses to the discussion posts will be open to other students in the course and students should respond to what other students have written and to questions posed by other students or the facilitator.

The written exercises will be seen only by the instructor of the course. These exercises are taken from Duvall and Hays, *Grasping God’s Word: Workbook*, 3rd ed.

Bibliography

The following bibliography represents many of the sources that Dr. Knudtson has made use of in creating this course on biblical hermeneutics.

Adam, A. K. M., editor. *Postmodern Interpretations of the Bible: A Reader*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2001.

Alter, Robert. *The Art of Biblical Narrative*. New York: Basic Books, 1981.

Anderson, Janice Capel, and Stephen D. Moore, eds. *Mark & Method: New Approaches in Biblical Studies*.

Second Edition. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2008.

Berkhof, L. *Principles of Biblical Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1950.

Blue, Scott A. “The Hermeneutic of E. D. Hirsch, Jr. and its Impact on Expository Preaching: Friend or Foe?” in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society*, 44/2 (June 2001), 253-69.

Brauch, Manfred T. *Abusing Scripture: The Consequences of Misreading the Bible*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2009.

Bray, Gerald. *Biblical Interpretation: Past & Present*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996.

Brueggemann, Walter. *The Vitality of Old Testament Traditions, Second Edition*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982.

- Bultmann, R. *Kerygma and Myth*. Translated by Reginald Fuller. Edited by Hans Werner Bartsch. New York: Harper & Row, 1961.
- Callen, Barry L., and Richard P. Thompson, eds. *Reading the Bible in Wesleyan Ways: Some Constructive Proposals*. Kansas City: Beacon Hill Press of Kansas City, 2004.
- Conzelmann, H., and A. Lindemann. *Interpreting the New Testament: An Introduction to the Principles and Methods of N.T. Exegesis*. Translated by Siegfried S. Schatzmann. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 1988.
- Culpepper, R. Alan. *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983.
- Dockery, David S. Dockery. *Biblical Interpretation Then and Now: Contemporary Hermeneutics in the Light of the Early Church*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1992.
- Dodd, C. H. *The Parables of the Kingdom*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1961.
- Doty, William G. *Letters in Primitive Christianity*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973.
- Ellis, E. Earle. *Prophecy and Hermeneutic in Early Christianity*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993.
- Fackre, Gabriel. "Evangelical Hermeneutics: Commonality and Diversity." *Interpretation* 43 (April 1989): 117-129.
- Fee, Gordon D. *Gospel and Spirit: Issues in New Testament Hermeneutics*. Peabody, MT: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991.
- _____. *New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983.
- Fee, Gordon, and Douglas Stuart. *How to Read the Bible for all its Worth*, 3rd edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003.
- Fiorenza, Francis Schuessler. "The Crisis of Scriptural Authority: Interpretation and Reception." *Interpretation* 44 (October 1990): 353-368.
- Frei, Hans W. *The Eclipse of Biblical Narrative: A Study in Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Hermeneutics*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1974.
- Fretheim, Terence. "The Old Testament in Christian Proclamation." *Word & World* 3 (Summer 1983): 223-230.
- Froelich, Karlfried. *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.
- Green, Joel B., ed. *Hearing the New Testament: Strategies for Interpretation*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010.
- Grobel, K. "History and Principals Of Interpretation," in *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* 2: 718-724.
- Gudorf, Christine. "Liberation Theology's Use of Scripture." *Interpretation* 41 (January 1987): 5-18.
- Harrisville, Roy A., and Walter Sundberg. *The Bible in Modern Culture: Theology and Historical-Critical Method from Spinoza to Käsemann*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995.
- Hayes, John H. and Carl R. Holladay. *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner's Handbook*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982.
- Hirsch, E. D. *Validity in Interpretation*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1967.
- Jeremias, Joachim. *The Parables of Jesus, Second Revised Edition*. Translated by S. H. Hooke, 1972.
- Juel, Donald. *Messianic Exegesis: Christological Interpretation of the Old Testament in Early Christianity*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988.

- _____. "The Old Testament in Christian Proclamation: A New Testament Perspective." *Word & World* 3 (Summer 1983): 231-237.
- Klein, William W., Craig L. Blomberg, and Robert L. Hubbard. *Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1993.
- Krentz, Edgar. *The Historical-Critical Method*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975.
- Kümmel, Werner Georg. *The New Testament: The History of the Investigation of Its Problems*. Translated by S. Mclean Gilmour and Howard C. Kee. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1972.
- Kysar, Robert. *Opening the Bible: What It Is, Where It Came From, What It Means for You*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999.
- Louth, Andrew. *Discerning the Mystery: An Essay on the Nature of Theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983. (This is, in part, an argument in support of allegorical exegesis.)
- McKnight, Edgar V. *What is Form Criticism?* Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969.
- Mickelsen, A. Berkeley. *Interpreting the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1963.
- Neill, Stephen. *The Interpretation of the New Testament 1861-1961*. Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1964.
- Nickelsburg, George W. E. "Reading the Hebrew Scriptures in the First Century: Christian Interpretations in Their Jewish Context." *Word & World* 3 (Summer 1983): 238-250.
- Osborne, Grant R. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1991.
- Padgett, Alan. "Wealthy Women at Ephesus: 1 Timothy 2:8-15 in Social Context." *Interpretation* 41 (January 1987): 19-31.
- Palmer, Richard E. *Hermeneutics: Interpretation Theory in Schliermacher, Dilthey, Heidegger, and Gadamer*. Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1969.
- Perrin, Norman. *What is Redaction Criticism?* Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969.
- Pinnock, Clark. "Climbing Out of a Swamp: The Evangelical Struggle to Understand the Creation Texts." *Interpretation* 43 (April 1989): 143-155.
- Porter, Stanley E. ed. *Hearing the Old Testament in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2006.
- Porter, Stanley E., and Beth M. Stovell, eds. *Biblical Hermeneutics: Five Views*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2012.
- Porter, Stanley E., and Jason C. Robinson, *Hermeneutics: An Introduction to Interpretive Theory*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011.
- Rhoads, David., and Donald Michie. *Mark as Story: An Introduction to the Narrative of a Gospel*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982.
- Richardson, Alan. *The Miracle Stories of the Gospels*. London: SCM Press, 1941.
- Sanders, James A. *Canon and Community: A Guide to Canonical Criticism*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984.
- Schneiders, Sandra M. *The Revelatory Text: Interpreting the New Testament as Sacred Scripture*, 2nd ed. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999.
- Scorgie, Glen A. "Hermeneutics and the Meditative Use of Scripture: The Case for a Baptized Imagination," in *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 44/2 (June 2001), 271-84.
- Smith, Christian. *The Bible Made Impossible: Why Biblicalism is Not a Truly Evangelical Reading of Scripture*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2011.
- Smith, Timothy L. "John Wesley and the Wholeness of Scripture." *Interpretation* 39 (July 1985): 246-262.

- Soulen, Richard. *Handbook of Biblical Criticism*, new expanded second edition. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1981.
- Stein, Robert H. *An Introduction to the Parables of Jesus*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1981.
- Stein, Robert H. *Playing by the Rules: A Basic Guide to Interpreting the Bible*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1994.
- Stendahl, Krister. *The Bible and the Role of Women*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966.
- Stuart, Douglas. *Old Testament Exegesis: A Primer for Students and Pastors*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1980.
- Thiselton, Anthony. *New Horizons in Hermeneutics: The Theory and Practice of Transforming Biblical Reading*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1992.
- _____. *The Two Horizons: New Testament Hermeneutics and Philosophical Description with Special Reference to Heidegger, Bultmann, Gadamer, and Wittgenstein*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980.
- Thompson, John L. *Reading the Bible with the Dead: What You Can Learn from the History of Exegesis That You Can't Learn from Exegesis Alone*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2007.
- Trier, Daniel J. *Introducing Theological Interpretation of Scripture: Recovering a Christian Practice*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.
- Webb, William. *Slaves, Women & Homosexuals: Exploring the Hermeneutics of Cultural Analysis*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2001.
- Wilder, Amos N. *The Bible and the Literary Critic*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.
- Wingren, J., G. Vermes, D. Hay, K. P. Bland, and V. Paul Furnish. "History of Interpretation," in *Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Supp.*: 436-456.
- Zimmermann, Jens. *Recovering Theological Hermeneutics: An Incarnational-Trinitarian Theory of Interpretation*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2004.