Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago

Course Profile

Course # and Title: RHS 403 - Life and Letters of Paul
Instructor: Barbara Rossing  
Semester/Year: Fall 2016

Course Rationale and Description
(Why do we offer this course? Which of LSTC’s degree program learning outcomes does it address?):

This is a core course in the curriculum designed to introduce students to the letters of Paul. The course will focus on critical examination of the Paul’s letters in the cultural and religious context of the first century. Particular attention will be given to interpreting the distinctive message of each letter as a response to particular issues and circumstances in the Pauline communities of Christ. The focus will be on the distinctive way Paul reiterates the story of Christ in each letter and how that interfaces with the story of the community implied in the letter. Students will learn a variety of exegetical skills and hermeneutical strategies that can be used to interpret Paul’s letters and relate the message of each letter to contemporary life and ministry. This course addresses M. Div. learning outcomes 2, 3, 4 & 5).

Course Learning Outcomes (Learners will be able to):
(What difference will this course make to students’ knowledge, skills, attitudes, and practices?)
Students will be able:

1) To interpret Paul’s letters in relation to their Jewish and Greco-Roman contexts.
2) To identify the distinctive theological issues and themes in Paul’s letters.
3) To interpret the rhetorical strategy of each letter, that is, how it was designed to shape the beliefs and practices of the communities of Christ.
4) To strengthen skills in using exegetical tools for the study of Paul’s letters.
5) To relate Paul’s letters to contemporary preaching, theology, ministry, life and debates within the church.

Strategies for Learning:
(How shall we go about achieving these outcomes?)

1) Regular attendance and class participation.
2) Careful reading of Paul’s letters, required textbooks, and other assigned readings.
3) Students are expected to work through exegetical exercises assigned for each class study guide and be prepared to discuss them in class.
4) One exegesis paper 12-15 pages, on a particular passage or theme from one of Paul’s letters (topic to be approved by the professor).
5) A final exam the last day of class.

Assessment:
(How shall we know if we—students and instructors—have been successful in achieving the outcomes?)
1) Regular attendance and participation in class
2) Completion and discussion of exegetical exercises assignments
3) Exegesis paper of a select passage from one of Paul’s letters that demonstrates the use of interpretive skills and strategies learned and the ability to relate the passage to contemporary contexts
4) Exam that demonstrates the ability to integrate and communicate what was learned over the course of the semester

Bibliography:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Text Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>ISBN# (Required)</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul: Apostle to the Nations: an Introduction</td>
<td>Walter Taylor</td>
<td>978-0800632595</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paul Was Not a Christian</td>
<td>Pamela Eisenbaum</td>
<td>978-0-06-134991-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommended (not required): Greening Paul: Rereading the Apostle in a Time of Ecological Crisis</td>
<td>David Horrell, Cherryl Hunt, Christopher Southgate</td>
<td>978-160258290-3</td>
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Additional information:
One additional book may be assigned.
Other essays and articles will also be assigned
Students will need a Greek New Testament (Nestle-Aland 27th edition or UBS Greek New Testament and a NRSV Study Bible (preferably either the Harper-Collins or Oxford Annotated)