Big Sandy Community and Technical College

Course Syllabus

PS Number: 82018  Semester: SPRING  Year: 2017

Faculty Name: Dr. Alan David Profitt  Title: Professor

Course Prefix and Number: REL 121  Course Credit Hours: 3

Course Prerequisites: none

Course Title: Introduction to the New Testament

Catalog Course Description: REL 121 (3) Course ID: 005283
Introduction to the New Testament
Introduces New Testament using knowledge of literary forms as well as historical and cultural backgrounds to aid in the interpretation of the religious and philosophical meanings of the text. Lecture: 3 credits (45 contact hours).

Components: Lecture
Attributes: AH - Arts and Humanities

Instructor Contact Information:

Campus Location: Prestonsburg  Building & Room: Pike 112A
Office Hours: MW 8 AM – 10 AM; TR 8 – 11 AM

Office Phone Number: 606-889-4812 Alternate Number: Prater, Peggy F.
Department: Academic Services
Location: Prestonsburg Campus, Pike 107
Phone: 606/886-7349 Office Ext.: 67349
peggy.prater@kctcs.edu

Best Times to Call: During office hours

KCTCS Email: David.profitt@kctcs.edu

Special Instructions: none

Supervisor Contact Information:

Name: Fields, Michelle
Department: Transitional/Developmental Studies
Location: Prestonsburg Campus, Pike 215B
Phone: 606/886-7394 Office Ext.: 67394
mfields0030@kctcs.edu

Campus Location: Prestonsburg Building & Room: Pike 215B
Office Phone Number:   Phone: 606/886-7394 Office Ext.: 67394

KCTCS Email:  Michelle.fields@kctcs.edu

Text and Supplies:

There are two required textbooks for this course:


KCTCS General Education Competencies

Students should prepare for twenty-first century challenges by gaining:

A. Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural worlds through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages, and the arts.
   Method to Achieve Competency:
   This competency will be addressed by studying the New Testament in its original cultural context

B. Intellectual and practical skills, including
   • inquiry and analysis
   • critical and creative thinking
   • written and oral communication
   • quantitative literacy
   • information literacy
   • teamwork and problem solving
   Method to Achieve Competency:

   This competency will be addressed by constructing critical response papers each week
C. Personal and social responsibility, including

- civic knowledge and engagement (local and global)
- intercultural knowledge and competence
- ethical reasoning and action
- foundations and skills for lifelong learning

Method to Achieve Competency:

This competency will be addressed by turning in assignments in a timely and proper fashion.

D. Integrative and applied learning, including synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialized skills.

Method to Achieve Competency:

This competency will be addressed by composition of a scholarly, researched semester paper.

Course Specific Competencies (Student Outcomes):

Academic Objectives:

1. Facility with New Testament literature, ideas, culture, and history.
2. Thinking critically about the truths in the New Testament and how they relate to today’s culture.
4. Understanding of the historical background and setting into which Jesus Christ came and in which Christianity began.
5. Understanding the major divisions of the New Testament and God’s moving in and through individuals.

Lab Competencies (Student Outcomes): (Enter N/A if this does not apply.)

n/a

Course Outline:

Each week, students in REL 121 will

1. Read one or more primary and secondary readings
2. Take part in In-Class Group Work working with others in groups to complete weekly assignments
3. Make group presentations and lead discussions
A Convocation combining philosophy and religion will be held in the Gearheart Auditorium on Wednesday, March 1 from Noon to 1 PM. The topic for the convocation will be *Capitalism and the Culture of Wealth in America: Philosophy, Religion, and the Economy*. Attendance at this spring convocation is mandatory for this class. Normal classes for that day are cancelled in lieu of the convocation. Attendance at the convocation is worth 100 points toward your semester grade.

In addition to the weekly assignments, students will write one 6 – 8 page semester paper. Students will choose an area of interest and then choose a topic and a title for their study. The semester paper is due in my office on or before Dec 4, 2015.

**A list of possible semester paper topics along with very good bibliographies are located under the “Taking the Next Step – Topics for Special Studies” heading at the end of each chapter in Barr. You should be well able to find a suitable semester topic there that will be in your area of interest.**

**Important dates you need to adhere to for the semester paper are listed below:**

*The topic for your semester paper is due before 11:59 PM on Sunday, September 20 and is worth 20 points.*

**Research Paper Topics: Find A Broad Subject First Then Narrow It Down**

*An excellent list of topics for your paper is found at the end of each chapter in Barr under the “Taking the Next Step – Topics for Special Studies” heading.*

One thing that works when finding the right research paper topic is to think of several subjects that interest you. Try writing down these subjects on a sheet of paper. Choose the one that interests you the most and then break down the general subject into smaller chunks of topics that are related to it.

**Narrow down your topics to the most interesting one.** If it is a controversial topic, choose a particular perspective that you will develop in your research paper. Read different
points of view related to your topic as this expands your knowledge and makes writing your paper easier.

Make Sure You Have Enough Resources For Your Topic

A primary source of material for your paper is found at the end of each chapter in Barr under the “Taking the Next Step – Topics for Special Studies” heading.

Do a quick computer search on the topics on your list to see which one is widely researched. This means finding a topic that is discussed not just on websites or blogs, but more so in books, articles and even encyclopedia references. Find a topic that is both interesting and has plenty of published material. Check magazine articles, because these are usually shorter and more updated than those found in books.

Check References From The Library

Once you have chosen your topic, check the internet for references and also try using your school’s library database, which may also be available online. Don’t hesitate to ask your librarian for assistance. Other resources beyond the library include research paper websites. One site to get research paper help on is domyresearchpaper.com, which provides research paper samples for students. A primary source of material for your paper is found at the end of each chapter in Barr under the “Taking the Next Step – Topics for Special Studies” heading.

The thesis statement for your semester paper is due before 11:59 PM Sunday, October 11, 2015 and is worth 30 points toward your semester grade. Instructions on how to prepare a thesis statement are given below:

A Thesis Statement for your Semester Paper is Due by 11:59 PM on Sunday, October 11, 2015. This thesis statement is worth 20 points on your semester grade (see instructions on how to construct a thesis statement below):

What is a thesis statement?

A thesis statement:

- Tells the reader how you will interpret the significance of the subject matter under discussion.
- Is a road map for the paper; in other words, it tells the reader what to expect from the rest of the paper.
• Directly answers the question asked of you. A thesis is an interpretation of a question or subject, not the subject itself. The subject, or topic, of an essay might be World War II or Moby Dick; a thesis must then offer a way to understand the war or the novel.
• Makes a claim that others might dispute.
• Is usually a single sentence somewhere in your first paragraph that presents your argument to the reader. The rest of the paper, the body of the essay, gathers and organizes evidence that will persuade the reader of the logic of your interpretation.

If your assignment asks you to take a position or develop a claim about a subject, you may need to convey that position or claim in a thesis statement near the beginning of your draft. The assignment may not explicitly state that you need a thesis statement because your instructor may assume you will include one. When in doubt, ask your instructor if the assignment requires a thesis statement. When an assignment asks you to analyze, to interpret, to compare and contrast, to demonstrate cause and effect, or to take a stand on an issue, it is likely that you are being asked to develop a thesis and to support it persuasively. (Check out our handout on understanding assignments for more information.)

How do I get a thesis?

A thesis is the result of a lengthy thinking process. Formulating a thesis is not the first thing you do after reading an essay assignment. Before you develop an argument on any topic, you have to collect and organize evidence, look for possible relationships between known facts (such as surprising contrasts or similarities), and think about the significance of these relationships. Once you do this thinking, you will probably have a “working thesis,” a basic or main idea, an argument that you think you can support with evidence but that may need adjustment along the way.

Writers use all kinds of techniques to stimulate their thinking and to help them clarify relationships or comprehend the broader significance of a topic and arrive at a thesis statement.

EXAMPLES OF THESIS STATEMENTS TO HELP YOU GET STARTED FOLLOW BELOW:

#1. Why Vaccinations Should Be Mandatory

Inspired by this sample essay on vaccinations.

Today, nearly 40% of American parents refuse to vaccinate their children due to a variety of unfounded fears. Vaccinations against diseases such as polio, rubella, and mumps, should be mandatory, without exception, for all children of the U.S. who wish to attend school. These vaccinations are critical to the control and eradication of deadly infectious diseases.

#2. Government Surveillance Is Harmful
Inspired by this sample essay on government surveillance.

Government surveillance programs do more harm than good because they invade civil liberties, lead innocent people to suffer unfair punishments, and ultimately fail to protect the citizens that they are designed to safeguard. For these reasons, programs such as PRISM operated by the NSA should be discontinued.

#3 Financial Compensation for Organ Donors

Inspired by this sample essay on organ donation.

People who sign up for organ donation freely give their hearts and other organs, but this free system limits the number of available donors and makes it difficult for recipients to access lifesaving transplants. Thus, organ donors should be financially compensated to produce more available organs and, at the same time, to decrease profitable, illegal organ harvesting activities in the black market.

#4. Our School Is Too Dependent on Technology

Inspired by this sample essay on technology dependence.

Our school’s dependence on technology has caused students to lose the ability to think independently. This dependence has caused a greater prevalence of mood disorders, memory loss, and loneliness. Educators should combat these issues by requiring students to participate in regular technology detoxes.

#5 School Officials’ Should Fight Cyberbullying

Inspired by this sample essay on cyberbullying.

Bullying has extended far beyond school and into cyberspace. Even though these acts of aggression take place outside of school boundaries, school officials should have the authority to discipline students who engage in cyberbullying without fear of reprisal. Doing so will help improve the online behavior of students and decrease incidences of cyberbully-related suicide attempts.

#6 The U.S. Media Should Update the Depiction of Traditional Families

Inspired by this sample essay on families.

The U.S. media depicts the traditional family as being comprised of a mother, father, and children; however, this notion of the traditional family is outdated and can be harmful to children who look to this as the gold standard. The U.S. media should, therefore, expand and redefine the definition of the traditional American family to include divorced and remarried parents, extended
families living together, and families with same-gender parents. This will increase the overall sense of happiness and well-being among children whose families don’t necessarily fit the mold.

#7 Student Loans Should Be Forgiven

Inspired by this sample essay on student loans.

Crippling student debt is stifling the growth of the U.S. economy because it inhibits graduates from being able to spend money on consumer goods and home purchases. To alleviate this, lenders should be required to forgive student loans in cases where students are unable to repay their debts. Doing so would benefit the growth of the economy by increasing tax revenues, unfreezing credit markets, and creating jobs.

#8 Marijuana Should Be Legalized

Inspired by this sample essay on legalizing marijuana.

Marijuana has numerous medical applications, such as treating symptoms of epilepsy, cancer, and glaucoma. Legalizing the use of marijuana in the U.S. will greatly benefit the medical sector by giving physicians access to this lifesaving drug.

#9 Foreign Aid to Africa Does Not Work

Inspired by this sample essay on foreign aid to Africa.

Sending foreign aid to African countries is doing more harm than good, and it should be discontinued; the practice has caused African countries to become vulnerable to inflation, currency fluctuations, corruption, and civil unrest.

#10 China’s One-Child Policy Should Be Reversed

Inspired by this sample essay on China’s one-child policy.

China’s one-child policy was intended to help control population growth. Instead, it has led to unintended and negative consequences, such as a diminishing labor force, an aging population, the neglect of basic human rights, and an unbalanced gender population. To improve China’s situation, the policy should be reversed.

Your approved list of sources to be used in crafting your paper is due week 11, March 26 and is worth 20 points toward your semester grade.

Your completed 6 – 8 page semester paper with bibliography is due by 11:59 PM Friday, December 4, 2015. This paper is worth 250 points toward your semester grade.
This course is tied to David Barr’s fine introduction to the New Testament. We will consider the text in four parts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>READINGS IN BARR</th>
<th>CORRESPONDING READING IN THE OXF.ANN. BIBLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. Ch 1 – 2: pp 1 – 77 Introduction to the NT</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Ch 8 - 12: pp 251 – 428 The Gospels</td>
<td>Mark, Matthew, Luke, John</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Ch 3 – 7: pp78 – 250 The Writings</td>
<td>Writings of Paul, Peter, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Ch 13 – 14: pp 429 – 498 Bringing it All Together</td>
<td>Revelation</td>
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**Course Structure:**

REL 121 is an online course in the scholarly, academic study of the New Testament in cultural, historical, and religious context. Students will study the New Testament using modern hermeneutical methods including both higher and lower criticism. Authorship, canonical legitimacy, and historical context as well as the ideas presented in the New Testament will be important areas of study in this course. Students will read the entire New Testament, one additional textbook, and other, outside readings during the semester.

**Technology/Media Component:**

Blackboard, general computer skills

**Service-Learning:**

n/a

**Course Requirements and Evaluation:**

Students must take one NT Books Quiz................................................................. 27 points

Students must take one Hermeneutics Quiz...................................................... 10 points

Students must read and answer a set of questions over one or more reading per week........... 1440 points

*Students must work together in groups responding to the New Testament text..............1500 points

Students must write one major semester paper................................................ 310 points

Total points for semester.................................................................................. 3287 points
*Not reflected on the Bb course gradebook. Reflected in the manually kept attendance/grade book.

**Grading Policy:**

90 – 100% = A  
80 – 89% = B  
70 – 79% = C  
60 – 69% = D  
Below 60% = E

**Attendance Policy:**

The instructor for this course expects all students to attend all classes all the time. Although there is no “set number” of classes that can be missed without penalty, a general rule of thumb is that more than 3 unexcused absences will result in a mandatory grade reduction. Excused absences will be dealt with on a per capita basis. All missed class work will have to be made up before an absence is considered excused.

**Missed Exam Policy:**

n/a

**Late Assignment Policy:**

Late assignments are strongly discouraged and will be penalized

**Withdrawal Policy:**

Students may withdraw without permission before mid – term and with instructor’s permission after mid – term.

Additional information can be found at the following site:

[http://www.bigsandy.kctcs.edu/en/Academics/Office_Hours_Schedules_and_Syllabi.aspx](http://www.bigsandy.kctcs.edu/en/Academics/Office_Hours_Schedules_and_Syllabi.aspx)