



*Remains of a 4<sup>th</sup> century C.E. synagogue believed to have been built on the ruins of a 1<sup>st</sup> century C.E. synagogue where Jesus might have preached (in the ruins of the presumed village of Capernaum by the Sea of Galilee).*



*The Greek Acropolis in Athens, seen from the Aeropagus, where the Apostle Paul addressed the Athenians in one of his evangelistic speeches (Acts 17:16-34)*

**COURSE:** Rel 204 SURVEY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT  
010 MC (SECTION # 1) and 020 MC (SECTION # 2)

**TERM AND YEAR:** SPRING Semester, 2024

**SESSION:**

**SCHEDULE, SECTION, AND LOCATION:** Tuesdays and Thursdays  
SECTION # 1: 12:00 – 1:15 PM, GRDYC 201  
SECTION # 2: 2:00 – 3:15 PM, GRDYC 201

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Aquiles Ernesto Martínez  
Professor of Religion  
Religion Program Coordinator

**OFFICE HOURS:** You may call or email me to make an appointment on  
TEAMS or at my office.  
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**CATALOG COURSE DESCRIPTION.** A panoramic view of the content, main characteristics, and message(s) of all the books of the New Testament, in light of their social context and as literary expressions of the faith and life of the first followers of Jesus and the faith communities they created.

**RELIGION PROGRAM OBJETIVES (RPO).**

1. To enable students to understand the various major religions of the world **(RPO 1)**.
2. To enable students to clarify their vocation **(RPO 2)**.
3. To assist students to understand the Christian tradition **(RPO 3)**.
4. To enable students to think critically and be able to express those ideas in writing, speech, and visual media **(RPO 4)**.
5. To help students become familiar with a variety of research methods appropriate to the field of religion, particularly those relevant to the study of primary sources **(RPO 5)**.
6. To help students develop their own understanding of moral and spiritual issues **(RPO 6)**.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES AND COURSE OBJECTIVES.** In light of the general objectives of the Religion Program, the main purpose of this course is to introduce you to the basic elements that define a collection of ancient, Christian documents called “the New Testament” or “New Covenant” (which is foundational for understanding the Early Christian Movement and its Jewish and Greco-Roman roots). More specifically, after completing this course, you will be able

1. To **DEFINE** the NT and describe some of its major characteristics (RPO 1 and 3).
2. To discuss the significant **IMPACT** the NT, as part of the Bible, has had in the history of Judaism, Christianity, and Western Civilization (RPO 1, 3, 4 and 5).
3. To briefly describe **THE SOCIAL CONTEXT** in which Jesus and the Early Church lived and out of which the NT. emerged (i.e., the Greco-Roman world and Judaism) and use this knowledge to understand the NT better (RPO 1 and 3).
4. To draw a profile if the lives and ministries of **JESUS** and **PAUL** (RPO 1 and 3).
5. To describe some of the main **CHALLENGES** that the Early Church faced and what **MESSAGES** its leaders proclaimed and lived up to in response (RPO 1 and 3).
6. To identify the main factors that helped the Jesus Movement **GROW AND SPREAD OUT THROUGHOUT** the Greco-Roman world.
6. To explain the origin and formation of **THE CANON** of the N.T. (RPO 1, 3, and 4).
7. To use some **METHODOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES AND STRATEGIES** for reading and applying the NT more effectively (RPO 1 and 5).
8. To **EVALUATE** the NT critically and **APPLY** its messages. (RPO 4-6).

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING SYSTEM.** Your academic performance will be evaluated based on a **100 point-scale**. All the points you earn for every assignment need to be added to your accumulated total, not averaged out. At the end of the course, the points you accumulate will give you the corresponding letter-grade according to the following scale: **F (0 -59); D (60-69); C (70-79); B (80-89); A (90-100)**. **Grades will NOT be rounded up** (for example, 79.5 accumulated points is not a B- but a C+). The assignments with their corresponding percentages will be distributed as follows:

**1. OPEN-BOOK TESTS (RPO 1, 3 AND 4) (80 POINTS)**. In light of the learning objectives for this course, there will be **4 tests (20 points each)** that will measure your knowledge of some facts about the NT from a literary, cultural, social, religious, and historical perspective. These tests will also evaluate your ability to think critically and apply a few lessons to your own lives. To this twofold end, these tests will have **two sections**: the first section will evaluate your knowledge of some of the fundamentals that describe the NT (as a whole as well as some specific parts) through True or False, Filling the Blanks, Matching and/or Multiple-Choice questions. The second section will have questions to be answered in the form of “very short essays” that students will work on before the day of the tests. Later in the semester, I will provide you with some preparatory guidelines before the dates of the tests.

The material to be studied for these tests consists of my lectures, some handouts, articles, and the basic content of selected biblical passages, which will cover all the basic thematic units or topics covered in class (see the outline of themes under the section “Calendar of Topics and Assignments” below).

Finally, you must take these tests on the dates designated. No exceptions! In cases of emergencies, I must be notified immediately. **LATE TESTS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED**. For the dates of these tests, please check “The Calendar of Topics and Assignments” below.

**2. PAPER: CAPSTONE PAPER ABOUT THE MEANING AND RELEVANCE OF THE NT (RPO 1, 3, 4, 5 AND 6) (2 FULL PAGES) (10 POINTS)**. Based on all the topics we have studied this semester, my presentations, and all the supporting materials used, you will write a brief essay in which you will describe 2 of the most important lessons you have learned about the New Testament and 2 of the most important methodological principles you should use to better understand this section of the Bible. To back up your ideas, make sure you cite the handouts we studied this semester. This paper must be your own reflection and analysis. This paper must NOT be a description of the issues indicated above. No secondary literature must be consulted.

**REQUIRED FORMAT FOR THE PAPER.** No MLA, Turabian, or any other official format required. You may use person pronouns in writing your papers. Also, since all students have the capabilities and potential to contribute to a scholarly culture of teaching and learning, it is expected that all the papers will be your own work. These papers must be double-spaced, typed, and written using a 12 character-font (Times New Roman). If by any chance you use secondary sources, you must make a clear distinction between “your own words” and “the words of the sources” you used. Credit must be given to the materials used and/or consulted (only author, name of the source, and page number). All these papers must be your own work. Plagiarism will be penalized.

More specifically, your paper must be evaluated based on the following additional criteria: (a) style and grammar; (b) faithfulness to the subject matter; (c) critical-thinking skills; and (c) engagement, creativity, and relevance to today's world. Points will be taken off if the above guidelines are not followed literally and faithfully. Outstanding papers will be considered for extra credit.

This paper must be turned in on **CANVAS** on the designated date **by 12 AT NIGHT AT THE LATEST**. Please check the "Calendar of Topics and Assignments" below. **LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED** unless there was a real emergency or powerful justification shared with the professor before the due date and time.

**3. PARTICIPATION IN CLASS (RPO 1, AND 3-6) (10 POINTS).** Since all of us are part of a course that seeks to create a culture of teaching and learning, you are expected to intentionally participate in class with your insights, good observations, arguments from other perspectives, words of clarification, and meaningful questions, in order to contribute to an environment that is conducive to the personal understanding and the growth of all your classmates. Thus, you must be willing and open to engage in conversations with the professor and others to be successful and get credit for it.

Taking notes, being silent in class, trying to participate (without actually participating), paying attention, and coming to class DO NOT literally count as participation. Depending on the quantity and quality of your pro-active participation, and at my discretion, I will assign you a 0, 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 or 10 points for this part of the course. A good rule of thumb is one participation per class.

Any violations of the code of ethics as explained in "Course Policies and Expectations" below (please read above again) will result in an automatic 0/10 for the present evaluation category.

**AN IMPORTANT NOTE REGARDING ALL ASSIGNMENTS.** No academic work can be **RESUBMITTED** or **RETAKEN**. However, **DRAFTS OF ANSWERS OF YOUR ESSAYS** can be sent ahead of time for review so you can do well.

**TUTORING AND TIME FOR STUDING.** As you can tell from "the Calendar of Topics and Assignments" below, I have set apart some THURSDAYS as formal times for studying during our regular class schedule and for you to make appointments with me when necessary so we can make sure you understand the themes to be covered in class, the materials, and the assignments. There will be NO formal classes on those designated dates. It is your responsibility to take advantage of this provision so you can do well.

**AN IMPORTANT NOTE FOR ATHLETES.** Those of who play sports for Reinhardt must contact me and let me know ahead on time when you will be missing class because of games, injuries and/or emergencies so I could make the corresponding adjustments. You must **NOT** rely on your coaches' notifications sent to me. You must contact me individually about these issues.

**CREDIT HOUR STATEMENT.** Over 15 weeks, students will spend 150 minutes per week in lectures, class discussions, and examinations (37.5 hours for the semester).

Instructional time includes a 3-hour final exam. Out-of-class work includes papers, reports, service as volunteers, visits to religious places, and preparation for exams, and is estimated at around 300 minutes per week (75 hours for the semester).

**CENTER FOR STUDENT SUCCESS.** The Center for Student Success (CSS) is located in Hill Freeman Library Room 313. **CSS offers free peer and faculty tutoring to support Biology courses, Math, Spanish, and writing across the university curriculum, as well as other subjects with peer tutors for a variety of subjects depending on current peer tutor staffing such as Chemistry, Accounting, French, and more.**

This service is free of charge to Reinhardt students. Appointments are preferred and are the best way to connect to the CSS, but there are walk-in hours that vary and are posted each semester. Students may request a tutoring appointment or request an update of current programming, please complete a tutoring request for specific tutors or a general inquiry at <https://www.reinhardt.edu/academic-resources/center-for-student-success/>, or email [css@reinhardt.edu](mailto:css@reinhardt.edu). Students receive an email from the CSS/Pharos that is their record of their meeting with a CSS tutor.



Faculty may refer students for tutoring or other academic success workshops through Pharos 360. From the Pharos screen, instructors would type in the student name/ID number in the search bar, select *Student Updates* from under the student photo icon, and then select *CSS referral*.

There is also the availability of online tutoring through brainfuse, through the specific to Reinhardt link [https://www.brainfuse.com/highed/helpNow.asp?a\\_id=68F429E2&ss=&r=](https://www.brainfuse.com/highed/helpNow.asp?a_id=68F429E2&ss=&r=)



Brainfuse is an online platform where students can receive specific subject area tutoring or access other study supports. Please contact [css@reinhardt.edu](mailto:css@reinhardt.edu) or schedule a general request appointment in the CSS for more information on how to register for and use Brainfuse.

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES.** Students with learning disabilities must read and comply with the following statements: “*The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a*



*federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a documented disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Academic Support Office (ASO). Reinhardt University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for all persons with disabilities. Therefore, if you are seeking classroom accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act, you are required to register with the Academic Support Office (ASO). ASO is in the basement of Lawson Building. Phone is 770-720-5567. To receive academic accommodations for this class, please obtain the proper ASO letters/forms."*

**COURSE FORMAL POLICIES AND EXPECTATIONS.** Having in mind that education is about equipping students with the values, skills, knowledge, and experiences to interact with the world in relevant and transformative ways, it is expected that student will honor a set of ethical, professional, and civil principles that will guide their actions in this course. We hereby outline some of the most important ones:

**1. ATTENDANCE GUIDELINES.** To create a culture of learning, professionalism, and civility, all students are expected **to attend class faithfully and on time**. Although the Reinhardt Catalog states that attendance is an "obligation," please remember that attending class is also a privilege. Formal education is a blessing not too many people enjoy. **Missing too many classes (without any legitimate justifications) will have negative implications on your final grade.** In the case of an emergency or justified absences, please contact me via email ahead of time to indicate the reasons why you were not or will not be in class.

**2. INTEGRITY AND PROFESSIONALISM.** Throughout this course the following ethical principles are assumed as norms of conduct:

- a. **ANY FORM OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY WILL NOT BE ACCEPTABLE AND WILL BE SERIOUSLY PENALIZED. PLAGIARISM or CHEATING will make you fail this course!!!!**
- b. Good-in-class behavior is assumed as a norm. Any form of disrupting behavior is not acceptable. It is assumed that each student will follow the Reinhardt's code of conduct as explained in the student handbook.
- c. This class is a **FREE-CELL-PHONE ZONE**. Cell phones must be turned off and put in your pockets or back packs. Failure to comply with this requirement will have negative implications on your grade.
- d. **LAPTOP COMPUTERS/TABLETS may only be used for TAKING NOTES and you must formally ask for permission to do so.** During class time, you are **NOT ALLOWED TO DO HOMEWORK FOR OTHER COURSES or USE SOCIAL MEDIA**. You must be fully present! Failure to comply with this requirement will have negative implications on your grade.
- e. The conditions of this syllabus are binding and must be followed faithfully. I assume you all know its content. By deciding to take this course, you **ALL AGREE** to follow the norms ruling this course.
- f. Any comment or suggestion that contributes to your growth as students, the improvement of this class, and a learning environment is welcome. I am here to help you learn, succeed and be a better human being. Please do not wait until the end of the semester to ask for help. Feel free to contact him at any time.

**3. COMMUNICATION MODE.** All of you are responsible for **constantly checking CANVAS (Files, Announcements, etc.)** and your **Reinhardt email accounts** regarding issues pertaining to this course (materials, lectures, announcements, class schedule changes, grades, etc.). When you communicate with me, you must follow a **formal, respectful protocol**. You must be **polite and/or use manners**. **Do NOT use your personal emails!**

#### **4. IMPORTANT REINHARDT ACADEMIC DATES**

**January 9**, Tuesday, Final day to add P-designated online courses.

**January 16**, Tuesday, Final day to change schedule, end of drop/add.

**January 16**, Tuesday, Last day to submit a graduation application for May 2024 degree completion without a late fee.

**March 12**, Tuesday Final date to withdraw with grade of W, full semester classes.

**March 18-28 Advising/Registration** summer and fall semesters 2024.

**April 1**, Monday, Final day to submit a graduation application for participation in Spring 2024 Commencement Ceremony

**THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF STUDENT SUCCESS.** Your job is to do well in this class, be responsible, take initiative, follow my instructions carefully, listen, and be open to new understandings, skills, knowledge, and methodologies. My job is to make sure that these goals are achieved by giving my best to all of you. It is a relational undertaking. To this end, the following principles may help us get there:

- I. HIGH EXPECTATIONS AND CHALLENGES
- II. YOU CAN AND WILL RISE TO THE OCCASION
- III. THE QUALITY OF YOUR EFFORT IS THE KEY
- IV. YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE WITH YOUR IDEAS, QUESTISM KNOWLEDGE, AND EXPERIENCES
- V. LISTEN TO OTHER VOICES AND CONSIDER OTHER PERSPECTIVES
- VI. MAKE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCES RELEVANT
- VII. BE ATTENTIVE, RESPONSIBLE, TAKE NOTES, AND PARTICIPATE
- VIII. REVIEW THE MATERIAL DAILY
- IX. DEVELOP FRIENDLY RELATIONSHIPS
- X. PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

#### **REQUIRED READINGS.**

1. Selected NT texts to be read in class and at home. Any version of the Bible is acceptable, but I strongly recommend The Harper/Collins Study Bible.

2. Lectures, handouts, world trip pictures, web videos, articles provided by me as needed, and his religion blog <http://blogs.reinhardt.edu/ich/>.

**RECOMMENDED READINGS** (For those of you interested in deepening your understanding of the NT).

- Aune, David. The New Testament in its Literary Environment. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987.
- Barr, David L. New Testament Story: An Introduction. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 2002.
- Fee, Gordon F. New Testament Exegesis: A Handbook for Students and Pastors. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1983.
- Ferguson, Everett. Backgrounds of Early Christianity. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1987.
- Fiorenza, Elizabeth Schussler. In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins. New York: Crossroads, 1985.
- Harris, Stephen L. The New Testament: A Student's Introduction. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. Boston: McGraw Hill, 2002.
- Koester, Helmut. Introduction to the New Testament. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1982.
- Meeks, Wayne. The Moral World of the First Christians. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1987.
- Newsome, Carol A and Sharon H. Ringe, eds. The Women's Bible Commentary. Westminster/John Knox Press, 1992.
- Perkins, Pheme. Reading the New Testament. NY: Paulist Press, 1988. Pages 51-77.
- Stambaugh, John E., and David L. Balch. The New Testament in its Social Environment. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1986.

## **CALENDAR OF TOPICS AND ASSIGNMENTS.**

### **IF NEDEED SOME CLASSES WILL BE TAUGHT LIVE ON TEAMS**

### **YOU MUST STUDY THE HANDOUTS AND PRESENTATIONS BEFORE COMING TO CLASS!**

### **SOME DAYS HIGHLITED IN "BLUE" BELOW, WE WILL HAVE NO FORMAL CLASS AND HAVE BEEN SET APART FOR STUDYING AT HOME AND TUTORING.**

<b>WEEK # 1</b>		
<b>Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
January 9	<b><i>Welcome and Introduction to the Course</i></b>	Read syllabus
January 11	<b><i>What is the NT? A Panoramic View</i></b> <b><u>CLASS ON TEAMS</u></b>	Study handout and presentation Participation in class



WEEK # 2		
Date	Topic	Assignment
January 16		
January 18		Study handout and presentation Participation in class

WEEK # 3		
Date	Topic	Assignment
January 23		Study handout and presentation Participation in class
January 25		Study handout and presentation Participation in class

WEEK # 4		
Date	Topic	Assignment
January 30		Study handout and presentation Participation in class
February 1	-----	<b>OPEN-BOOK- TEST # 1 (TO BE TAKEN ONLINE ON CANVAS)</b>

WEEK # 5		
DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
February 6	<b><i>What Was the NT Social World Like? Footprints, Wounds, and Scars</i></b>	Study handout and presentation Participation in class
February 8		Study handout and presentation Participation in class

WEEK # 6		
DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
February 13		Study handout and presentation Participation in class
February 15		Study handout and presentation Participation in class

WEEK # 7		
DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
February 20		Study handout and presentation Participation in class
February 22	-----	<b>OPEN-BOOK- TEST # 2 (TO BE TAKEN ONLINE VIA CANVAS)</b>

WEEK # 8		
DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
February 27	<i>The Main Characters of the NT</i> <i>Jesus of Nazareth: The Christ</i>	Study handout and presentation Participation in class
February 29		Study handout and presentation

WEEK # 9		
DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
March 4-8	<b>SPRING BREAK – NO CLASSES</b>	-----

WEEK # 10		
DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
March 12		Study handout and presentation Participation in class

March 14	-----	<b>OPEN-BOOK- TEST # 3 (TO BE TAKEN ONLINE VIA CANVAS)</b>
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<b>WEEK # 11</b>		
<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT</b>
March 19	<i>Saul/Paul of Tarsus: Apostle to The Gentiles</i>	Study handout and presentation Participation in class
March 21		Study handout and presentation Participation in class

<b>WEEK # 12</b>		
<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT</b>
March 26	<b><i>Why did the Early Christian Movement Grow? Some Reasons</i></b>	Study handout and presentation Participation in class
March 28		Study handout and presentation Participation in class

<b>WEEK # 13</b>		
<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT</b>
April 2	<b><i>“Followers of the Way:” A New Religious Movement, its Challenges, and Messages</i></b>	Study handout and presentation Participation in class
April 4	<b>SPRING DAY – NO CLASS</b>	Study handout and presentation

<b>WEEK # 14</b>		
<b>DATE</b>	<b>TOPIC</b>	<b>ASSIGNMENT</b>
April 9	<b><i>An Example of NT Analysis</i></b>  <i>Paul’s Good News and Rome:</i>	Study handout and presentation Participation in class

	<i>An Appraisal of the Letter to the Philippians from a Diasporic Margin</i>	
April 11		Study handout and presentation Participation in class

WEEK # 15		
DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
April 16		Study handout and presentation Participation in class
April 18	<i>What's In and What's Out? The Rise and Formation of the Canon of the NT</i>	Study handout and presentation Participation in class

WEEK # 16		
DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
April 23	-----	<b>OPEN-BOOK- TEST # 4 (TO BE TAKEN ONLINE ON CANVAS)</b>

WEEK OF FINALS		
DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNMENT
<b>SECTION 1 MONDAY, APRIL 29, 2:30 PM</b>	-----	<b>CAPSTONE PAPER (TO BE SUBMITTED ON CANVAS)</b>
<b>SECTION 2 WEDNESDAY, MAY 1 2:30 PM</b>	-----	<b>CAPSTONE PAPER (TO BE SUBMITTED ON CANVAS)</b>