

#2306 New Testament Textual Criticism
Western Reformed Seminary (www.wrs.edu)
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Spring 2009

COURSE INFORMATION

Course goals

In this course the student will review the main sources for the textual criticism of the New Testament, the main causes of textual variants, and the procedures for seeking to recover the original text. He will study the characteristics and family relations of many important NT MSS. He will practice reading and working from reproductions of the main kinds of original MSS. He will become familiar with the format and uses of the primary current printed NT texts, and will make a thorough study of several disputed readings for presentation to the class.

Required reading

- Bruce M. Metzger, *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament* (2nd ed.), Introduction (pp. 1*-16*), Introduction to the Acts of the Apostles (pp. 222-241)
- Kurt Aland and Barbara Aland, *The Text of the New Testament* (2nd ed.)

Review quizzes

There will be several quizzes near the beginning of the semester to review basic facts related to NT textual criticism. These quizzes will be based on information in Bruce M. Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament: Its Transmission, Corruption, and Restoration*.

1. Symbols or abbreviations for major NT MSS and versions
2. Manuscript families
3. Categories of scribal changes to the NT text
4. Procedures of textual criticism

Transcription exercises

The student will provide five of his own transcriptions of selected portions of various kinds of NT Greek MSS, including papyrus (2 transcriptions), uncial (2 transcriptions), and miniscule (1 transcription) MSS. Copies of your transcription should be distributed to each class member. The sheet for each transcription should have four parts:

1. The original text
2. Your transcription with the same word and letter arrangement
3. Your transcription in normal position as in a printed text
4. Your translation of the portion.

Disputed reading reports

During the semester you will present to the class three different reports, each one on a disputed reading in the NT text. Explain what the variant or variants are and how it affects the translation of the passage. Summarize the MS evidence. Explain how the external and internal evidence weighs on the question. Offer your preferred reading, with reasons.

Grading

- Required reading 20%
- Review quizzes 20%
- Transcription exercises 25%
- Disputed reading reports 25%
- Attendance and participation 10%

Class schedule

Jan.	26		
Feb.	2	Quiz #1	
	9	Quiz #2	
	16	(Presidents' Day Recess)	
	23	Quiz #3	Metzger reading due
Mar.	2	Quiz #4	
	9	Papyrus transcription #1	
	16	Papyrus transcription #2 (Midterm Examinations)	
	23	Uncial transcription #3	
	30	(Spring Recess)	
Apr.	6	Uncial transcription #4	
	13	Miniscule transcription #5	
	20	Disputed reading report #1	
	27	Disputed reading report #2	
May	4	Disputed reading report #3	Aland reading due
	11	(Final Examinations)	