

Department of Theology

GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: **Spring 2016**
Instructor: [Dr. Julian Hills](#)
Course #: THEO 6120
Course Title: **New Testament Method**

Content:

In 1973, a young Walter Wink wrote, "Historical biblical criticism is bankrupt" (The Bible in Human Transformation, p. 1). More recently a new young firebrand, Hector Avalos, has published a book announcing The End of Biblical Studies (2007) as an academic discipline with any sort of integrity — suggesting that scholars employ "a variety of flawed and specious techniques that are aimed at maintaining the illusion that the Bible is still relevant in today's world" (cover blurb).

This course will be, I hope, a vigorous re-affirmation of the necessity and the rich fruit of appropriate method, or methods, in biblical studies. Of course, we shall want to hear what Wink and Avalos have to say; but not in a purely defensive posture. Instead, we shall examine a host of first-rate examples of biblical criticism well employed, and each student will write several exegetical papers that will correspond to the best canons of scholarly research and writing. In addition, we shall discuss the role of biblical studies in the academy (say, in a religious or secular university setting) and in the service of the Church.

Format:

Online lectures and class discussion; readings; "topic projects"; book reports; brief research papers / presentations and critiques of others' papers / presentations.

Assignments and/or Examinations:

- Content quizzes — multiple choice: not graded, but students "test out" of them
- Discussion posts, brief reports, "topic projects" — combined total 00% TBD
- Two short essays, to be read and critiqued by the whole class — 00% TBD
- A final 2-hour examination; the questions will be available in advance — 00% TBD
- A final essay, which will be an exegesis (interpretation) of a NT passage — 00% TBD

Language Pre-requisites:

- All students will be expected, minimally, to learn the Greek alphabet, so as to "follow along" in a Greek NT (or an interlinear Greek-English NT) and use a lexicon. French and / or German can of course be used with profit, but are not required.