I. Course Description
This course introduces students to a three-fold framework for biblical interpretation involving the investigation of the “world in front of the text” (between the text’s composition and us as readers), the “world within the text” (the close reading of the text itself), and the “world behind the text” (the environment and situation that contributes to the occasion and shaping of the text, and therefore its contextual interpretation). The applicability of this model also to the literature and contexts of other curricular areas will also be demonstrated.

II. Student Learning Outcomes
1a. Demonstrate awareness about what they bring to the text in terms of social location, theological commitments, and community of reading, and how these factors shape their interpretations of a text.
1b. Critically discuss and engage the text’s language, genre, literary forms, and narrative and/or argumentative development.
1c. Access and apply information about the historical and socio-cultural context pertinent to understanding the text.
1d. Explain how the text came to be (from original composition to translation) and the import of this for interpretation.
2.-6. Are not assessed in this course.

III. Course Requirements
A. Textbooks
Required:


Recommended:

B. Attendance
According to the Student Handbook: “attendance at all class sessions is expected, unless the professor has been notified in advance and has approved the absence. Students should be on time and should stay
through the duration of all classes. Any student missing more than six class hours (2 weeks) will be
required to do additional work, receive a lower grade, audit or withdraw from the class, or be penalized
otherwise at the discretion of the professor.”

C. Assignments/Assessment of Student Learning

1. Toward a Theology of Scripture. An integrative paper that brings together your thinking at
this point in the course about the character, authority, and role of the Bible as Christian Scripture.
This paper will place your own ideas in conversation with those of at least four readings and so
will demonstrate your ability to: 1) define an argument and 2) draw on and integrate sources in
support of your ideas and claims. 7-9 pages.

2. Formal Papers. A series of short papers will implement components of the exegetical method
on a selected passage. Details concerning each paper will be provided online during the course of
the semester.
   a. World of the Text. A detailed exposition of the passage that addresses the passage’s
      form, literary context, flow of thought, grammar, imagery, and rhetorical devices.
      5-7 pages
   b. World Behind the Text. A discussion of historical, social, or cultural information
      necessary to understand the content of the passage or the community that produced it.
      5-7 pages
   c. World in front of the Text. A reflection on the assumptions the student brings to the
      task of exegesis and on the social location that shapes his or her interpretation. 3-5
      pages.

3. Quizzes. The ability to grasp and articulate the main ideas of what you read is an essential skill
for success in theological education and ministry. Each week will require you to take a short quiz
quiz based on the main topics of the readings for that week. Quizzes may also cover material
from previous week’s lectures and course materials.

4. Class Participation. Class participation is a vital component of our shared learning
environment. Students are expected to make meaningful contributions to our classroom
discussions when prompted by the professor. Students will be evaluated based upon the frequency
and quality of their contributions to our discussion.

D. Writing and Classroom Guidelines

1. Submissions
   All written work is to be submitted in electronic format (details to follow during the first class of
   the semester).

2. Writing Matters
   Papers are to be descriptive and analytical, exhibit clear organization of thought, and give proper
   attention to style and grammar. Correct and complete documentation of sources must be followed,
   as specified in the ATS Writing Handbook. Papers are to typed and doubled-spaced with one inch
   margins and with font set at 12 point Times New Roman.

   Evaluation of papers will be based on the depth of critical interaction with the topic, coherence
   and organization of ideas, clarity of writing, and informed incorporation of secondary materials.
   Papers will receive a deduction in grade if:
   • The paper is less than or more than the assigned limits (up to one grade deduction per page)
   • The paper is submitted after the due date (one grade deduction after one week).
   • The paper does not follow the correct format for documenting sources (up to one grade
deduction).
3. Classroom Etiquette
We are all participating in a learning community and must act and behave accordingly. The practice of civility and the willingness to be kind and gracious to others - even when we disagree - is central to the process of learning and being in a community that reflects the grace which has been extended to each of us.

Classroom conversations must reflect the principles articulated above. Everyone is welcome to share their perspective and/or opinions with others. However, none of us is the arbiter of ‘theological truth’ or the ‘gatekeeper’ to the Kingdom. Please remember that the seminary has students from a wide range of denominations and theological perspectives. As such, do not expect others to arrive at the same conclusions as do you. Practice grace, patience, and respect towards those with whom you disagree.

E. Calculation of Grade and Connection of Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignments</th>
<th>Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Percent of Final Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Theology of Scripture</td>
<td>1a</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World of the Text</td>
<td>1a,1b,1c,1d</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Behind the Text</td>
<td>1a,1b,1c,1d</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World in Front of the Text</td>
<td>1a,1b,1c,1d</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>1a,1b,1c,1d</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>1a,1b,1c,1d</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

IV. Tentative Course Schedule
Readings listed in “assignments” column are required with the exception of readings that are marked with an asterisk (*). Readings marked with an asterisk are optional but recommended.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Lecture/Topic</th>
<th>Assignments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Aug 27</td>
<td>What is the Bible? Critical Reading</td>
<td>Gorman, Scripture 1-21 Fee (TBD) Brauch (TBD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sept 3</td>
<td>Fully Human: Canon, Transmission, and Translation</td>
<td>Gorman, Scripture 103-130 Brown, 36-44 , 98-105 Fee (TBD) Brauch (TBD) <strong>QUIZ</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Sept 10</td>
<td>Fully Divine: Authority and Revelation</td>
<td>Brown 1-17, 45-52, 62-72 Fee (TBD) Brauch (TBD) <strong>QUIZ</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Reading Material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 4    | Sept 17 | Genre and Form: Narrative | Brown, 73-97  
Tate, 102-28, 138-53  
Fee (TBD)  
Brauch (TBD)  
**QUIZ**  
Toward a Theology of Scripture due |
| 5    | Sep 24 | Genre and Form: Exposition and Exhortation | Fee (TBD)  
Brauch (TBD)  
Tate 133-37, 153-79  
*Gorman, Elements, 69-125  
**QUIZ** |
| 6    | Oct 1 | Genre and Form: Poetry | Fee (TBD)  
Brauch (TBD)  
Tate 21-36, 89-101  
**QUIZ** |
| 7    | Oct 8 | Texts, Contexts, and Intertexts | Fee (TBD)  
Brauch (TBD)  
Brown 90-105  
**QUIZ** |
| 8    | Oct 15 | The World Behind the Text: OT Composition, Geography, History, Society | Fee (TBD)  
Brauch (TBD)  
Tate 11-52  
**QUIZ**  
World of the Text paper due |
| 9    | Oct 22 | The World Behind the Text: NT Geography, History, Society Composition and Translation | Fee (TBD)  
Brauch (TBD)  
Tate 52-72  
Gorman, Scripture, 23-43  
**QUIZ** |
| 10   | Oct 29 | Resources and Research Methods | TBD  
*Gorman, Elements 181-232  
**QUIZ** |
| 11   | Nov 5 | The World in Front of the Text What do we bring to the text? | Fee (TBD)  
Brauch (TBD)  
Tate 219-227  
Gorman, Scripture 177-93  
Brown 27-35  
**QUIZ**  
World Behind the Text paper due |
| 12   | Nov 12 | Interpretative Locations | |
| 13   | Nov 19 | One Bible: Two Testaments Thinking Theologically | Fee (TBD)  
Brauch (TBD)  
Brown 18-26  
Gorman, Scripture 217-27  
**QUIZ** |
V. Recommendations for Lifelong Learning
1. Relevant modules from Logos Bible Software. https://www.logos.com/pastors?gclid=CIja1pTqnL0CFYt9OgodPDEA8g
2. Alumni access to the Ashland University Library Page for journal articles through the ATLA Serials and Academic Search Complete databases.

VI. Seminary Guidelines
A. ATS Academic Integrity Policy
Ashland Theological Seminary expects each student to uphold the Seminary’s core value of academic excellence by contributing to an environment that is both challenging and supportive. In such an environment a student will neither seek nor offer improper assistance. All students have an obligation to be forthright in their academic endeavors and to respect ethical standards. The work that one submits for academic evaluation must be one’s own, unless an instructor expressly permits certain types of collaboration. Academic integrity requires that each student will use one’s own capabilities to achieve one’s fullest potential and will neither offer nor accept aid that is not in keeping with regularly accepted standards of academic integrity. Failure to conform to this conduct shall constitute academic dishonesty. The full Academic Integrity Policy statement may be found in the Student Handbook.

B. Academic Support Services
If you need assistance with writing projects for your coursework, contact the ATS Academic Support Center. The center provides free sessions with a peer consultant who can help you with all of your concerns about academic support including writing, critical thinking, documentation, reading skills, study skills, test taking skills, time management. Contact the center if you have a question about how to complete your assignment, if you have documentation questions, or if you would like to have your paper evaluated for areas needing improvement. The ATS Academic Support Center can be reached at 419-289-5162 or by e-mail at atswc@ashland.edu.

C. Students with Disabilities
Ashland University makes every effort to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students who have a specific physical, psychiatric or learning disability and require accommodations are encouraged to inform their instructors of their needs early in the semester so that learning needs can be appropriately met. It is the student’s responsibility to document the disability with Disability Services in The Center for Academic Support on the 7th floor of the Ashland University Library, 419-289-5904.

D. ATS Grading Scale
Mournet’s Interpretation of the ATS Grading Scale (I am indebted to my colleague Dr. Hawk for this list)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>97-100</td>
<td>Superior achievement of course objectives, diligence and originality, high degree of freedom from error, outstanding evidence of ability to utilize course knowledge, initiative expressed in preparing and completing assignments, positive contributions verbalized in class.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>92-96</td>
<td>Good work submitted, commendable achievement of course objectives, some aspects of the course met with excellence, substantial evidence of ability to utilize course material, positive contributions verbalized in class, consistency and thoroughness of work completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>89-91</td>
<td>Good work submitted, commendable achievement of course objectives, some aspects of the course met with excellence, substantial evidence of ability to utilize course material, positive contributions verbalized in class, consistency and thoroughness of work completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>86-88</td>
<td>Acceptable work completed, satisfactory achievement of course objectives, demonstrating at least some ability to utilize course knowledge, satisfactory class contribution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>83-85</td>
<td>Acceptable work completed, satisfactory achievement of course objectives, demonstrating at least some ability to utilize course knowledge, satisfactory class contribution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>80-82</td>
<td>Passing but minimal work, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of work submitted, inadequate class contributions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>77-79</td>
<td>Good work submitted, commendable achievement of course objectives, some aspects of the course met with excellence, substantial evidence of ability to utilize course material, positive contributions verbalized in class, consistency and thoroughness of work completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>74-76</td>
<td>Good work submitted, commendable achievement of course objectives, some aspects of the course met with excellence, substantial evidence of ability to utilize course material, positive contributions verbalized in class, consistency and thoroughness of work completed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>71-73</td>
<td>Poor work submitted, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of work submitted, inadequate class contributions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>68-70</td>
<td>Poor work submitted, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of work submitted, inadequate class contributions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>65-67</td>
<td>Poor work submitted, marginal achievement of course objectives, poor performance in comprehension of work submitted, inadequate class contributions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Below 65</td>
<td>Unacceptable work resulting in failure to receive class credit, inadequacy of work submitted or of performance and attendance in class.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*A more formal grading rubric will be available online during the semester.

VII. Selected Bibliography
See the annotated bibliography on pages 181-232 in Gorman’s Elements of Biblical Exegesis.