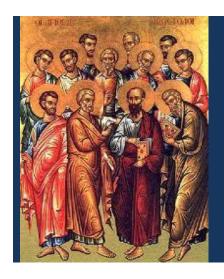
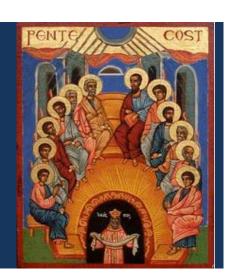
BRIERCREST



BLST 725 THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES WINTER 2019

April 1-5, 2019
Begins 9:00 am April 1
Susan Wendel, Ph.D.
Email: swendel@briercrest.ca
Office tel.: 306-756-3421
3 credit hours



COURSE DESCRIPTION

In recognition of Luke's unique contribution as a literary artist, historian, and theologian, this course provides a forum for study of his vivid account of emergence the nascent Christ-believing community. Special attention will be given to the Jewish heritage and Greco-Roman context out of which this group emerged. The study will include serious engagement with the biblical text, critical evaluation of the methods and views of leading scholars of Luke-Acts, and a consideration of how the book of Acts can inform the beliefs and practices of the contemporary church.

COURSE TEXTS

Required:

Dunn, James D. G. The Acts of the Apostles. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2016.

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Prophetic Jesus, Prophetic Church: The Challenge of Luke-Acts to Contemporary Christians*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011.

Padilla, Osvaldo. *The Acts of the Apostles: Interpretation, History and Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2016.

Recommended:

Gaventa, Beverly Roberts. The Acts of the Apostles. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2003.

Petersen, David G. *The Acts of the Apostles*. Pillar New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009.

Rowe, C. Kavin. World Upside Down: Reading Acts in the Graeco-Roman Age. Oxford: OUP, 2010.

Students are expected to refer to Briercrest Seminary's Format and Style Guides and Guide for Writing Research Papers, available as PDF documents here: https://www.mybriercrest.ca/seminary/documents/.

These texts are available in store and online at the Briercrest Bookstore: http://briercrest.ca/bookstore.

Students are responsible for course materials and communication on Canvas (https://briercrest.instructure.com; cf. https://briercrest.ca/online/canvas) and their myBriercrest.ca email account.

COURSE OUTCOMES

Morning

- discover how the Jewish, Hellenistic, and Roman contexts of Luke illuminate our reading of the book of Acts
- analyze the purpose, structure, and theology of Acts in order to grasp their relevance for understanding Luke's vision of the mission and identity of the church
- discuss different interpretations of key events and themes in Acts
- grapple with the implications of the book of Acts for contemporary Christian beliefs, practices, identity, and mission

COURSE OUTLINE AND CONTENT

Date April 1 Morning	Topic Class Introduction Authorship, Date, and Genre Purpose, Literary Structure, and Theology	Secondary Readings	Assignments Book Summaries: Padilla and Johnson Reading Log: Acts
April 1 Afternoon	Socio-Historical Context of Acts Luke and the Scriptures of Israel Acts 1:1-26		
April 2 Morning	Acts 2:1-3:26 Panel 1: Role of the Holy Spirit in Acts Acts 4-5 (group exercise) Community Life and Sharing Possessions	Dunn, Stronstad, Turner, Fee	Panel Presentation or Article Summary
April 2 Afternoon	Acts 6-7 Stephen's Speech Acts 8 Expansion to Samaria		
April 3 Morning	Acts 9 (cf. chapters 22, 26) Paul's Transformation Acts 10-11 Peter and Cornelius		
April 3 Afternoon	Acts 12-14 Israel and the Nations Acts 15:1-35 Panel 2: Acts 15 and the Mosaic Law	Callan, Hanneken, Arnold, Bockmuehl	Panel Presentation or Article Summary
April 4	Acts 15:36-18:17 –		

Panel 3: Acts 17 – Paul at the Rowe, Jipp, Panel Presentation Areopagus Flemming, Schnabel or Summary

Acts 18:18-19:41

Collision with . . . Rome?

April 4 Acts 20

Afternoon Paul's Farewell to the Ephesians

> Acts 21:1-22:21 Rowe, Minnen, Black, Panel Presentation Paul in Jerusalem Alexander or Summary

> > Panel Presentation

5%

5%

Acts 22:22-26:32

April 5 Panel: Acts and the Roman Empire

Morning Acts 27 or Article Summary

Voyage to Rome

Acts 28

The Ending of Acts

ASSIGNMENTS

Pre-Course Assignments:

- 1. Read and prepare a 2-3 page book summary for each of the following books: 1) Luke Timothy Johnson's, Prophetic Jesus, Prophetic Church and 2) Osvaldo Padilla's The Acts of the Apostles: *Interpretation, History and Theology.* **Due the first day of class**. (15% each) 30% The summary should include the following elements:
 - Begin by noting the author's name and the full title of the book.
 - Describe the book by answering the following questions (1-2 pages)
 - o What type of book is it?
 - What is the purpose of the book?
 - o Who is the main intended audience of the book?
 - What is the particular perspective of the author?
 - What approach does the author take when interpreting and discussing the book of Acts?
 - How does the author organize and present his information?
 - Provide a brief description of the content of each chapter of the book. This section should fill about one page of your summary.
- 2. Read pages ix-xxii of Dunn's commentary and take point-form notes (2 pages) of this introduction to the book of Acts. **Due first day of class**.

3. Read the book of Acts in its entirety and indicate on Canvas that you have completed this assignment prior to the first day of class.

4. Panel article readings: Although the panel article presentations and summaries are listed as midcourse assignments, it is assumed that the preparation for these assignments will be complete before the modular course begins.

Mid-Course Assignments:

1. Panel Preparation and Discussion

30%

Over the course of the week, there will be four discussion panels that address important secondary literature on select topics from the book of Acts. Students will have the



- opportunity to participate orally in one panel (worth 10% each) and to provide three written summaries of articles for panels in which they do not participate (worth 10% each). See panel instructions in Appendix A below.
- Articles for the panel readings are listed in a panel sign-up sheet located in Appendix B
 below. Panel participants need to email the professor at least two weeks prior to the
 beginning of the course to indicate the panel in which they choose to participate orally.

Post-Course Assignments:

- 1. Major Essay 30%
 - The essay will be approximately 10-12 pages (3000-3600 words) in length (not including
 outline and bibliography), should demonstrate thorough and careful study of a passage in
 the book of Acts, and interact thoughtfully with the relevant secondary literature. Further
 instructions for this project will be provided on the first day of class. Due May 31, 2019.

SEMINARY CALENDAR

Students are expected to be aware of the policies that govern course work at Briercrest Seminary, all of which are published in the current Seminary Calendar: https://www.briercrestseminary.ca/academics/calendar/.

Attendance Policy

Students are expected to attend 100% of each modular for which they register. If this is impossible, arrangements must be made with the course professor. A maximum of 1 full day of class can be foregone. Students should request to withdraw from the course or move the course to an audit if additional time is missed.

Course Schedules

Classes begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday morning and run a minimum of 30 hours through the course of the week. The schedule is determined by the course professor. Students should check the syllabus for specifics. When the syllabus does not state class times, students are responsible to check with the professor prior to making travel plans.

Assignment Submission

All assignments must be submitted no later than eight weeks after the last day of class as stated in the syllabus. The correct due dates will be clearly noted in the syllabus and each faculty member will state in their syllabus how assignments should be submitted. Assignments submitted within a week after the due date will be accepted with a 10 per cent penalty. For additional information refer to the late assignment policy or the extension policy in the <u>academic calendar</u>.

Return of Graded Assignments

Professors are expected to return graded assignments within six weeks of the due date. If they fail to do so, students may submit an inquiry to the <u>Seminary</u>. If an extension is granted, the professor is no longer obligated to meet this deadline.

Academic Honesty

Students are accountable to perform each task according to principles of academic honesty. Please refer to pages 24-25 in the <u>academic calendar</u> for more information.



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Academic Accommodations

Any student with a disability, injury, or illness who may need academic accommodations should discuss them with the course instructor after contacting the Student Success Centre in person (Room #215), by telephone (1-306-756-3230) or by email (<u>studentsuccesscentre@briercrest.ca</u>).

Appendix A

1. Panel Presentations

Each person in the class will have the opportunity to participate in one panel discussion. During these discussion panels, three or four panellists will each give a 5-6 minute presentation on an article that discusses a particular theme in Acts. The presentation will involve a 2-3 minute summary and a 2-3 minute critical evaluation of the article. After each panellist has discussed his or her particular article, panellists will together take 10 minutes to discuss all of the articles. This will be followed by a general class discussion. Panellists are encouraged to explain their own point of view and raise questions of interest during their presentations. They also need to submit a one-page outline of their presentation at the end of class.

- 2-3 minute summary of the article:
 - This part of the presentation should include an articulation of a) the main thesis of the article, and b) the logic and primary evidence used to prove the thesis.
- 2-3 minute evaluation of the article:
 - In this section, each panelist needs to discuss the extent to which s/he thinks the author successfully supported his or her thesis. This will involve an evaluation of the overall logic of the argument in the article.
- Ten-minute panel discussion of the articles:
 - This part of the presentation need not follow a rigid structure. Panelists may want to compare different articles and explain why they preferred one (or two) over others.
 Please note that this part of the exercise can only be completed successfully by panelists who have read and are prepared to discuss all of the articles in the panel.
- Class participation:
 - o After the panel discussion, the rest of the class will have an opportunity to ask the panel questions or to offer further comments.

2. Instructions for article summaries for non-panelists:

Although each panel will have only three-four panelists, the rest of the class will need to prepare a written response to the panel articles. The written responses require a 2-3 page evaluation of panel articles with the following components:

- After reading three of the panel articles, choose one article to evaluate and summarize in greater detail:
 - Write a one-page response to this article that includes a) the thesis of the article; b) the logic and primary evidence the author uses to prove the thesis; and c) an evaluation of the extent to which the author successfully supported the thesis. This will involve an evaluation of the logic of the argument in the article, and the overall approach and evidence the author uses to support the argument.
- Discussion of two other articles:
 - In an additional 1-2 page discussion, compare two of the other panel articles with the main article that you chose to evaluate and summarize.
 - o Briefly outline the main thesis of the two other articles and the primary evidence the authors use to support their arguments.
 - Identify which article you preferred and explain why this article was superior to, or more convincing than, the other articles.
- Note that you do not need to write a full introduction and conclusion for this exercise.



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• If a student participates orally in one panel, s/he will only need to provide three written summaries of another set of panel articles (3 panels x 3 articles = 9 articles in total). If student does not participate orally on any of the panels, s/he will need to provide written summaries of four sets of panel articles (4 panels x 3 articles = 12 articles in total).

Appendix B

Panel Sign-Up Sheet

Date and Topic: Readings: Presenter:

April 2: Dunn, "Baptism in the Holy

The Role of the Holy Spirit Spirit"

in Acts Stronstad, "Appreciation and

Assessment"

Turner, "Work of the Holy Spirit" Fee, "Baptism in the Holy Spirit"

April 3:

Acts 15 and the Mosaic Law Bockmuehl, "Noachide

Commandments"

Callan, "Apostolic Decree" Arnold, "Lessons of the Jerusalem Council"

Hanneken, "Moses Has His

Interpreters"

April 4:

Acts 17 – Paul at the Flemming, "Contextualizing the

Areopagus Gospel"

Schnabel, "Contextualising Paul

in Athens"

Rowe, "The Grammar of Life" Jipp, "Areopagus Speech"

April 5:

Acts and the Roman Empire Rowe, "Luke-Acts and the

Imperial Cult"

van Minnen, "Paul the Roman

Citizen"

Black, "Paul and Roman Law" Alexander, "Luke's Political

Vision"

Bibliography for Panel Articles:

Panel 1: The Role of the Holy Spirit in Acts

Dunn, J. D. G. "Baptism in the Spirit: A Response to Pentecostal Scholarship on Luke-Acts." *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 3 (1993): 3-27. On Canvas

Fee, Gordon D. "Baptism in the Holy Spirit: The Issue of Separability and Subsequence." *Pneuma* 7 (1985): 87-99. Available through ATLA



- Stronstad, Roger. "Forty Years On: An Appreciation and Assessment of *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* by James D. G. Dunn." *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 19 (2010): 3-11. Available through ATLA
- Turner, Max. "The Work of the Holy Spirit in Luke-Acts." Word and World. 23 (2003): 146-153. Available through ATLA

Panel 2:

- Arnold, Bill T. "Lessons of the Jerusalem Council for the Church's Debate over Sexuality." *The Asbury Journal* 69 (2014): 63-83. Available at https://place.asburyseminary.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=https://www.google.ca/&https:redir=1&article=1271&context=asburyjournal
- Bockmuehl, Markus. "The Noachide Commandments and New Testament Ethics." *Jewish Law in Gentile Churches: Halakhah and the Beginning of Christian Public Ethics.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003.
- Callan, Terrance. "The Background of the Apostolic Decree (Acts 15:20, 29; 21:25)." *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 55 (1993): 284-297. Available through ATLA
- Hanneken, Todd R. "Moses Has His Interpreters: Understanding the Legal Exegesis in Acts 15 from the Precedent in *Jubilees." Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 77 (2015): 686-706. Available through ATLA

Panel 3:

- Flemming, Dean. "Contextualizing the Gospel in Athens: Paul's Areopagus Address as a Paradigm for Missionary Communication." *Missiology* 30 (2002): 199-214. Available through ATLA
- Jipp, Joshua. "Paul's Areopagus Speech of Acts 17:16-34 As Both Critique and Propaganda." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 131 (2012): 567-588. On Canvas
- Rowe, C. Kavin. "The Grammar of Life: The Areopagus Speech and Pagan Tradition." *New Testament Studies* 57 (2010): 31-50. On Canvas
- Schnabel, Eckhard J. "Contextualising Paul in Athens: The Proclamation of the Gospel Before Pagan Audiences in the Graeco-Roman World." *Religion and Theology* 12 (2005): 172-190. Available through ATLA

Panel 4:

- Alexander, Loveday. "Luke's Political Vision." *Interpretation* 66(3): 283-293. Available through ATLA Black, Mark. "Paul and Roman Law in Acts." *Restoration Quarterly* 24 (1981):209-218. Available through ATLA
- Rowe, C. Kavin. "Luke-Acts and the Imperial Cult: A Way Through the Conundrum?" *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 27 (2005): 279-300. Available through ATLA
- van Minnen, Peter. "Paul the Roman Citizen." *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 56 (1994): 43-52. Available through ATLA

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Note: Commentaries and other books marked with an asterisk (*) are especially important.

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