

## Colonnade Program Course Proposal: Explorations Category

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1. What course does the department plan to offer in Explorations? Which subcategory are you proposing for this course? (Arts and Humanities; Social and Behavioral Sciences; Natural and Physical Sciences)

RELS 100: The New Testament

2. How will this course meet the specific learning objectives of the appropriate subcategory. Please address **all** of the learning outcomes listed for the appropriate subcategory.

1. Lectures, readings, and assignments will introduce students to the basic formal elements, techniques, concepts, and vocabulary of the discipline of New Testament Studies.
2. Lectures, readings, and assignments will introduce students to the various ancient literary genres that are found among the books of the New Testament (e.g., “Gospel”/narrative, “Epistle”/letter, and “Revelation”/apocalyptic), as well as subgenres (e.g., poetry, miracle story, creedal statements), and to diverse and appropriate strategies for reading these genres in their historical setting.
3. Lectures, readings, and assignments will introduce students to the social, cultural, and historical contexts of the New Testament books and how these contexts have influenced these books.
4. Lectures, readings, and assignments will introduce students to the notion of a “canon” of Scripture – i.e., “the New Testament” – and to the ways in which the New Testament books (or portions of them) have, both individually and collectively, served as one important factor in shaping larger social, cultural, and historical contexts.
5. Lectures, readings, and assignments will introduce students to the ways in which the New Testament books have contributed to the understanding of enduring and contemporary issues of human experience – questions such as the existence of God, what it means to be human, and how one should live.

3. Syllabus statement of learning outcomes for course. NOTE: In multi-section courses, the same statement of learning outcomes must appear on every section’s syllabus.

General Education Learning Outcomes in **bold**:

1. **Utilize basic formal elements, techniques, concepts and vocabulary of specific disciplines within the Arts and Humanities.** This course will utilize the basic formal elements, techniques, concepts, and vocabulary of the discipline of New Testament Studies.
2. **Distinguish between various kinds of evidence by identifying reliable sources and valid arguments.** This course will distinguish the various ancient literary genres and subgenres that are found among the books of the New Testament and utilize diverse and appropriate strategies for reading these genres in their historical setting.
3. **Demonstrate how social, cultural, and historical contexts influence creative expression in the arts and humanities.** This course will demonstrate how the social, cultural, and historical contexts of the New Testament books have influenced these books.

4. **Evaluate the significance of human expression and experience in shaping larger social, cultural, and historical contexts.** This course will evaluate how the New Testament books have served as one important factor in shaping larger social, cultural, and historical contexts.
5. **Evaluate enduring and contemporary issues of human experience.** This course will evaluate how the New Testament books have contributed to the understanding of enduring and contemporary issues of human experience.

**4. Brief description of how the department will assess the course for these learning objectives.**

- A. An essay question will be added to the final exam in the course. The question will require students to
  1. Demonstrate familiarity with the basic formal elements, techniques, concepts, and vocabulary of the discipline of New Testament Studies.
  2. Demonstrate familiarity with at least one ancient literary genre and/or subgenre that is found among the books of the New Testament, and with at least one strategy for reading this genre in its historical setting, and to be able to use this knowledge to distinguish between various kinds of evidence by identifying reliable sources and valid arguments.
  3. Demonstrate how social, cultural, and historical contexts of at least one portion of the New Testament have influenced it.
  4. Demonstrate, through the notion of a “canon” of Scripture, how at least one portion of the New Testament has served as an important factor in shaping larger social, cultural, and historical contexts.
  5. Demonstrate how at least one portion of the New Testament has served as an important factor in contributing to the understanding at least one enduring and contemporary issue of human experience.
- B. At the end of the semester to be assessed, the answers of 30% of the students in each section of the course will be selected at random for assessment.
- C. At least two faculty members will assess each answer. The names of the students and of the instructors for the sections will be eliminated before the assessment takes place.
- D. Answers will be given one of four designations.
  1. Excellent – The student has demonstrated proficiency in all outcomes.
  2. Good – The student has demonstrated proficiency in most outcomes.
  3. Fair – The students has demonstrated proficiency in some outcomes.
  4. Poor – The students has demonstrated proficiency in no outcomes.
- E. The results will be tabulated and given to the Department Head.
- F. The Department Head will convene the relevant faculty to review the results and to determine what steps, if any, need to be taken in order to improve the instruction in course.

**5. How many sections of this course will your department offer each semester?**

**3-4 sections**

**6. Please attach sample syllabus for the course.**

## RELS 100: THE NEW TESTAMENT

### Sample Syllabus

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to introduce students

- to the basic formal elements, techniques, concepts, and vocabulary of the discipline of New Testament studies;
- to the various ancient literary genres that are found among the books of the New Testament and to diverse and appropriate strategies for reading these genres in their historical setting;
- to the social, cultural, and historical contexts of the New Testament books and how these contexts have influenced these books;
- to the notion of a “canon” of Scripture – i.e., “the New Testament” – and to the ways in which the New Testament has served as one important factor in shaping larger social, cultural, and historical contexts;
- to the ways in which the New Testament books have contributed to the understanding of enduring and contemporary issues of human experience.

#### GENERAL EDUCATION LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. **Utilize basic formal elements, techniques, concepts and vocabulary of specific disciplines within the Arts and Humanities.** This course will utilize the basic formal elements, techniques, concepts, and vocabulary of the discipline of New Testament Studies.
2. **Distinguish between various kinds of evidence by identifying reliable sources and valid arguments.** This course will distinguish the various ancient literary genres and subgenres that are found among the books of the New Testament and utilize diverse and appropriate strategies for reading these genres in their historical setting.
3. **Demonstrate how social, cultural, and historical contexts influence creative expression in the arts and humanities.** This course will demonstrate how the social, cultural, and historical contexts of the New Testament books have influenced these books.
4. **Evaluate the significance of human expression and experience in shaping larger social, cultural, and historical contexts.** This course will evaluate how the New Testament books have served as one important factor in shaping larger social, cultural, and historical contexts.
5. **Evaluate enduring and contemporary issues of human experience.** This course will evaluate how the New Testament books have contributed to the understanding of enduring and contemporary issues of human experience.

#### TEXTBOOKS

- *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version, College Edition* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.; Oxford: University Press, 2010)
- Ben Witherington III, *Invitation to the New Testament: First Things* (Oxford: University Press, 2012)

#### REQUIREMENTS

- Four tests, each worth 100 points.
- One writing assignment, worth 50 points.

## **GRADING SCALE**

- A – 315- 350 points
- B – 280-314 points
- C – 245-279 points
- D – 210-244 points
- F – below 210 points

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

- Week 1 Introduction; The New Testament as literature
- Week 2 The social, cultural, and historical settings of the New Testament
- Week 3 The Gospels of Matthew and Mark
- Week 4 The Gospels of Luke and John
- Week 5 Test #1; Jesus of Nazareth
- Week 6 The Book of Acts
- Week 7 The letters to the Thessalonians and the Corinthians
- Week 8 Test # 2; The letters to the Galatians and the Romans
- Week 9 The Prison letters
- Week 10 The Pastoral letters; Test #3
- Week 11 The letters to Hebrews and James
- Week 12 The letters to Peter, John, and Jude
- Week 13 The Book of Revelation
- Week 14 The New Testament as canon of Scripture; Writing assignment due
- Finals Week Test #4