



Reuben Welch School of Theology & Christian Ministry
BIB 1002: New Testament History and Religion (3 Units)
Spring, 2026

PROFESSOR: DR. MATHEW E. SOUSA	EMAIL: MSOUSA@POINTLOMA.EDU
Meeting Time: Mondays, 2:45-5:45 P.M.	Meeting Location: To be determined
Final Exam: To be determined	Office Hours: By appointment

I. PLNU Mission: *To Teach – To Shape – To Send*

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

II. General Education Mission

PLNU provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In keeping with the Wesleyan tradition, the curriculum equips students with a broad range of knowledge and skills within and across disciplines to enrich major study, lifelong learning, and vocational service as Christ-like participants in the world's diverse societies and culture.

III. Course Description

Catalog Description: "Within the context of Christian origins, an overview of the canonical literature of the New Testament with special attention to its literary history and theological themes." More specifically, this course orients students to the literature of the New Testament in its various literary, historical, and theological contexts and to New Testament interpretation in service of Christian practice.

IV. Course Learning Outcomes

Having successfully completed this course, students will be able:

1. To demonstrate an introductory knowledge of the literature, history, and theology of the New Testament.
2. To identify a range of questions (literary, historical, and theological) relevant to the interpretation of New Testament texts.
3. To read the New Testament in ways that foster faithful Christian practice.

V. Foundational Explorations Learning Outcomes (FELO)

This course fulfills FELO 3: Students will demonstrate an understanding of Christian Scripture, Tradition, and Ethics, including engagement in acts of devotion and works of mercy.

VI. Required Texts

1. *The SBL Study Bible* (New York: HarperCollins, 2023). ISBN: 9780062969439
2. Paul Achtemeier, Joel B. Green, and Marianne Meye Thompson, *Introducing the New Testament: Its Literature and Theology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001). ISBN: 9780802837172

VII. Attendance and Participation

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions (i.e., more than one class session), the student will receive a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

NOTE: Giving false information on the daily roll sheet (i.e., signing someone else in or having someone else sign you in) is an act of cheating that is equal to cheating on an exam. It will subject you to the academic dishonesty penalties of the university, including failure of this course and possible expulsion from the university.

VIII. Assessment and Grading

Assignment Type	Percentage of Course Grade
Reading Logs	10% (total)
Interpretive Labs	20% (total)
Quizzes	20% (total)
Midterm Exam	25%
Final Assignment	25%
Total:	100%

Reading Logs (10%): Students are to report their completion of the assigned reading for each week in the Reading Log located on Canvas (see the course schedule below for due dates). Completing assigned readings in a timely manner will serve to prepare students for class discussions, quizzes, and interpretive assignments. This assignment group relates to learning outcomes #1-3.

Interpretive Labs (20%): An interpretive “lab” is a group assignment that is to consist of collaborative, interpretive work on one or more assigned NT passages. Interpretive labs are to

be completed during class, and over the course of the semester there will be a total of six labs (see the course schedule below for class sessions). Each student will be assigned to a lab group and is to serve (at least once) as the group's "scribe." All interpretive labs will be graded as either "pass" (100%) or "fail" (50% or below). An interpretive lab will receive a passing grade (i.e., 100%) IF the following requirements are met: the lab assignment **(1)** is completed during the class session specified; **(2)** supplies the minimum content required (a number of sentences) for each lab question/section; and **(3)** demonstrates substantive analysis of and thoughtful engagement with the assigned NT text(s). NOTE: *You cannot make up a lab that you miss. However, each student may drop one score from their total lab grade (due to a missed lab or low score).* Each student is to use their *SBL Study Bible* during lab work. This assignment group relates to learning outcomes #1-3.

Quizzes (20%): Quizzes assess familiarity with and understanding of assigned readings and class lectures. Quizzes are timed (twenty minutes) and consist of 10-12 multiple choice and matching questions. During quizzes students may consult (1) *The SBL Study Bible*, (2) *AGT's Introducing the New Testament*, and (3) handwritten notes. No electronic devices of any kind may be used during a quiz. Printed or typed notes (including printed slides) are not permitted. Only notes that are handwritten may be used. There will be a total of five quizzes over the course of the semester (see the course schedule below for class sessions). NOTE: *You cannot make up a quiz that you miss. However, each student may drop one score from their total quiz grade (due to a missed quiz or low score).* This assignment group relates to learning outcomes #1-3.

Midterm Exam (25%): A midterm exam (see the course schedule below) will assess familiarity with and understanding of the content and interpretation of the four canonical Gospels and the book of Acts. The exam will consist of multiple choice, true/false, and matching questions. No books, notes, or electronic devices of any kind may be used during the exam. A study guide will be made available on Canvas one week before the exam date. This assignment relates to learning outcomes #1-3.

Final Exam (25%): The final assignment for this course is a one-page response paper that offers preliminary work toward a close reading of an assigned NT passage. Students will write this paper in class, by hand, during our final class session (see the course schedule below for the date and time). During this assignment students are to use only their *SBL Study Bible*. No electronic devices or notes of any kind may be used during this assignment. This assignment relates to learning outcomes #1-3.

Course Grading Scale:

93-100	A	77-79	C+	60-62	D-
90-92	A-	73-76	C	0-59	F
87-89	B+	70-72	C-		
83-86	B	67-69	D+		
80-82	B-	63-66	D		

IX. Course Policies

Final Exam Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Late Work Policy

An assignment is “late” if it is submitted after the deadline specified. The grade for a Reading Log will drop by one half of a letter grade each day it is late. For example, if a Log merits a 90% (A-) but is a day late, it will earn a grade of 85% (B); if it is two days late, it will earn a grade of 80% (B-); and so on. Interpretive Labs that are submitted late will receive a “fail” grade of 50% or below.

PLNU Academic Honesty Policy

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one’s own when in reality they are the results of another person’s creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

The use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, iA Writer, Marmot, Botowski, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) is prohibited in this course for any aspect of your work, including idea generation, drafting, editing, or final submissions. This course is designed to assess your independent critical thinking, writing, and research skills without the assistance of AI technologies. Violations of this policy will be treated as breaches of academic integrity.

PLNU Academic Accommodations Policy

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2533). Once a student’s eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. Professors are able to view a student’s approved accommodations through Accommodate.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

Language and Belonging

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality. If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination.

State Authorization

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow distance education outside California.

PLNU Copyright Policy

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.

PLNU Recording Notification

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel. Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

X. Course Schedule

Day	Topics	Reading Assignments	Written Assignments
1/12	Course Introduction; Why Study the NT? The Reader in NT Interpretation		
1/19	No class (MLK Jr. Day)	Due Tues. (1/20) by 11:59 pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Achtemeier et al., 1-87	Due Tues. (1/20) by 11:59 pm (Canvas): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading log
1/26	Ancient Contexts of the NT; The Gospel of Matthew	Due before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Achtemeier et al., 89-121• NT: Matthew chs. 1-28	Due before class (Canvas): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading log Due in class: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lab #1
2/2	The Gospel of Mark; The Kingdom of God	Due before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Achtemeier et al., 123-147• NT: Mark chs. 1-16	Due before class (Canvas): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading log Due in class: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quiz #1
2/9	The Gospel of Luke; NT Ethics	Due before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Achtemeier et al., 149-174• NT: Luke chs. 1-24	Due before class (Canvas): <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading log Due in class: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lab #2
2/16	The Gospel of John; The "Historical" Jesus	Due before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Achtemeier et al., 175-244• NT: John chs. 1-21	Due before class on Canvas: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reading log Due in class: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Quiz #2

2/23	The Book of Acts; Midterm Review	Due before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achtemeier et al., 245-269 • NT: Acts chs. 1-28 	Due before class on Canvas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading log Due in class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lab #3
3/2	Midterm Exam		
3/9	Spring Break		
3/16	Paul's Gospel and Theology; Paul's Letters: Romans	Due before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achtemeier et al., 271-326 • NT: Romans chs. 1-16 	Due before class on Canvas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading log Due in class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lab #4
3/23	Paul's Letters: 1-2 Corinthians	Due before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achtemeier et al., 327-354 • NT: 1 Corinthians chs. 1-16 • NT: 2 Corinthians chs. 1-13 	Due before class on Canvas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading log Due in class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz #3
3/30	Paul's Letters: Galatians, Ephesians, and Philippians	Due before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achtemeier et al., 355-75 • NT: Galatians chs. 1-6 • Achtemeier et al., 377-89 • NT: Ephesians chs. 1-6 • Achtemeier et al., 391-405 • NT: Philippians 1-4 	Due before class on Canvas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading log Due in class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lab #5
4/6	Easter Recess	Due Tues. (4/7) by 11:59 pm: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achtemeier et al., 427-46 • NT: 1 Thessalonians chs. 1-5 • NT: 2 Thessalonians chs. 1-3 	Due Tues (4/7) by 11:59 pm (Canvas): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading log
4/13	Catholic Epistles: Hebrews and James	Due before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achtemeier et al., 465-90 • NT: Hebrews chs. 1-13 • Achtemeier et al., 491-512 • NT: James chs. 1-5 	Due before class on Canvas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading log Due in class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz #4

4/20	Catholic Epistles: 1-2 Peter and Jude	Due before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achtemeier et al., 513-34 • NT: 1 Peter chs. 1-5 • NT: 2 Peter chs. 1-3 • NT: Jude vv. 1-25 	Due before class on Canvas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading log Due in class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lab #6
4/27	Revelation; The Formation of the NT Canon	Due before class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achtemeier et al., 555-87 • NT: Revelation chs. 1-12 	Due before class on Canvas: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading log Due in class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz #5
5/4	Final Exam		

This syllabus is subject to change if deemed necessary to enhance student learning and meet course outcomes.