

## **NT/SR-736 – Paul, Jews, and Gentiles** **Methodist Theological School in Ohio**

January 2018  
Tuesdays (Jan. 9, 16, 23)  
8:30am–4:30pm  
Gault Hall 140

Ryan Schellenberg  
rschellenberg@mtso.edu  
Gault Hall 231  
(740) 362-3125

### **Course Description**

Focusing primarily upon Paul's letters to the Galatians and the Romans, this course examines Paul's view of the law and Jewish beliefs of the time to develop a better understanding of his arguments about Christ and gentiles. Attention will be given to the manner in which these questions are intertwined with the issue of anti-Judaism in their treatment by Pauline scholars. Prerequisites: NT-510, HB-510, and NT/HB-6xx.

### **Office Hours**

I'll be in my office much of January, but I imagine many of you are only on campus on Tuesdays. I'll try to be available to address your questions during the latter part of the lunch break each week. Otherwise, if you can't stop by my office at another time in the week, please be in touch with me about the class by email or phone—see contact info above.

### **Texts**

Paula Fredriksen. *Paul: The Pagans' Apostle*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2017.  
John G. Gager. *Who Made Early Christianity? The Jewish Lives of the Apostle Paul*. American Lectures on the History of Religions 18. New York: Columbia University Press, 2015.  
Caroline Johnson Hodge. *If Sons, Then Heirs*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.  
(Available online via Dickhaut Library—find the link on Populi)  
A modern English translation of the Bible, in hard copy.

Please consult the course bibliography on Populi to get you started as you seek additional resources.

### **Summary of Assignments and Due Dates**

- 1) Preparation, participation, and online work – 30%
- 2) Gager book review (Jan. 16) – 15%
- 3) Exegetical presentation (Jan. 23) – 15%
- 4) Final paper (Jan. 30) – 40%

### **Assignment Details**

- 1) Preparation, participation, and online work – 30%  
Since this is a hybrid course, you will be expected to work your way thoroughly through three online "lessons," one prior to each class meeting. (See Course Schedule below.) You should expect to spend about 6.5 hours on each lesson—the same amount of time we spend in class on each of our three days together. (Note that this does not include time spent reading textbooks or writing papers, which, as in any course, is additional to time spent in class.) Completing these lessons will involve producing a variety of different kinds of written material—some submitted to me online, some posted to discussion forums, some brought to class as preparation for our discussions. You'll find specific instructions on Populi. I will track the consistency and quality of your work on these tasks (20% of course grade), as well as your participation in class discussions (10% of course grade).

## 2) Gager book review (Jan. 16) – 15%

With the exception of its first chapter, John Gager's *Who Made Early Christianity* is about Paul only indirectly. What Gager explores in the rest of the book is not Paul himself, but Paul's legacy—and, more specifically, the legacy of Pauline interpretation among Jews and among Christians who were thinking about Jews. Write a four- to five-page review of Gager's book that does the following:

- describes the thesis of Gager's book
- summarizes Gager's view of the historical Paul
- summarizes each of Gager's chapters on the legacy of Paul, *and* explains what contribution each makes to his thesis
- evaluates Gager's argument—What stands out to you? What do you make of his argument? How does/should his book affect how you read Paul?

Your paper will be graded on how accurately it communicates Gager's argument, and how perceptively it articulates the implications of his work.

## 3) Exegetical presentation (Jan. 23) – 15%

The bulk of our work in the course will focus on Paul's letters to the Romans and the Galatians, since these are the letters in which questions of Judean practice and identity are most prominent. But Paul writes about (his) Jewish identity in other letters too, as do later authors writing in his name. Your task in this assignment is to select one from a list of passages that will be distributed, and, in consultation with commentaries and other academic treatments of the passage, describe to your classmates how it is relevant to the issues we are addressing in this course: What do we learn from this text about how Paul views (his) Jewish identity? What do we learn about his understanding of gentiles? What bearing does this passage have on related questions about Paul's work and writing—his audience, his rivals, his view of the Law, his understanding of the covenant(s), etc.?

Prepare a ten- to twelve-minute presentation that introduces your classmates to the text and the exegetical issues it raises, and also summarizes your conclusions about its significance to our discussion. *Submit to me* your presentation notes—these need not be written up formally; whatever you use to prompt your memory in class is fine. *Provide both me and your classmates* with a brief handout that lays out the key points of your presentation and includes a bibliography indicating the sources on which your exegetical work relies.

Your presentation will be graded on its clarity, on its engagement with recent scholarship on your selected text, and on its insight in drawing out the relevance of your selected text to the topic of the course.

## 4) Final paper (Jan. 30) – 40%

A research paper, 10–12 pages, double-spaced, plus bibliography. Either:

- 1) A study of a specific question in Paul's conception of (his) Jewish identity or the place of gentiles in Israel's worship—e.g. circumcision; food laws; genealogy and identity; the role of Abraham; “flesh” and “spirit” (as it pertains to this specific question); the demographics of Paul's addressees; law observance for Jews; law observance for gentiles; Paul as promoter of “Judaizing”; universalizing rhetoric; scriptural background for Paul's view of nations/gentiles, etc.
- 2) An exegetical study of a passage selected from Romans or Galatians, focused on describing how it contributes to an understanding of the key topics of the course.

In either case, your paper should demonstrate substantive engagement with recent Pauline scholarship, as well as mastery of ideas and paradigms discussed in the course—in other words, it should show that you've done good research and that you've been paying attention in class.

Formatting and citations should follow the *SBL Handbook of Style*.

**Course Schedule** (subject to change at my discretion)

Populi Lesson One (before Jan. 9)

- Jews and Judaism in interpretation of Romans
- Paul, anti-Judaism, and the Holocaust
- Paul's ethnic vocabulary

*Pre-class reading*

- Fredriksen, Intro and chs. 1–3
- Johnson Hodge, Intro and chs. 1–2

Week One (Jan. 9)

- Perspectives old, new, and newer
- Ethnicity and religion—ancient and modern
- Ancient Jews on gentiles; gentiles on Jews and Judaizers
- Introducing Galatians—Abraham, circumcision, and Torah

Populi Lesson Two (between Jan. 9 and Jan. 16)

- The “parting of the ways”
- Annotated bibliography on exegetical questions
- Gentiles in Israel's Scriptures

*Pre-class reading*

- Johnson Hodge, chs. 3–6
- Gager (whole book)

Week Two (Jan. 16)

- Universalism and particularity in Pauline interpretation
- Key exegetical questions
- Introducing Romans—Abraham, adoption, covenant
- **Gager book review due**

Populi Lessons Three (between Jan. 16 and Jan. 23)

- What did gentiles think about Abraham and Moses?
- Genealogy, identity, and cultural authenticity

*Pre-class reading*

- Johnson Hodge, chs. 7–8 and conclusion
- Fredriksen, chs. 4–5 and postscript

Week Three (Jan. 23)

- Paul and Torah
- **Exegetical presentations**
- Paul, the body, and the Protestant imagination

**Final paper due Jan. 30**

### Late Assignments

Assignments should be submitted, in hard copy, at the beginning of class on the day they are due. Late assignments will be subject to a 10% penalty, plus 5% for each additional week that passes without my having received them, to a maximum of 20%. Extended due dates may be granted in exceptional cases (e.g., medical or family emergencies).

**Please see Student Handbook for sections providing policy details on the following:**

**ADA**—MTSO seeks to remove barriers to inclusion in its learning communities. Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs at the beginning of the semester. Please contact the Director of Student Services to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Any accommodation must be agreed upon prior to the due date of the affected course requirement.

**Class attendance**—Regular attendance is expected in all classes. During unavoidable absences, students are responsible for missed work. An excessive number of absences may result in grade reduction or course failure, despite successful completion of all assigned work. In most cases, a student will fail a course if he or she is absent for 25% of the class sessions.

As it relates to blended courses, students may fail the course if they are absent for 25% of class meetings, including online meetings. Use of Skype or similar technology is not a substitute for attendance.

Course credits	1	1.5	2	3
25%	3 hours	4.4 hours	5.8 hours	8.8 hours

**Electronic Devices**—Turn mobile devices off or “vibrate only” during class. Browsing the Internet or engaging in email or social network conversations during class is discouraged. Instructors have the right to impose grading penalties for disruptions due to electronic devices.

**Human Subjects Research**—Research by MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel that collects non-public information from and/or about living individuals or contemporary organizations/groups for purposes of publication or public presentation (including class assignments) must be approved by the Human Subjects Research Committee. MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel should err on the side of caution and apply for committee approval of any activity that may fit this description.

**Inclusive Language**—In accordance with MTSO’s policy on inclusive language, all students are expected to use gender inclusive or gender neutral language in their writing and in the classroom discussions when referring to human beings.

**Incompletes**—To receive a course grade of Incomplete, students must submit the petition form from the Registrar with all signatures to the Dean’s Office before the last day of regularly scheduled classes. See Student Handbook for intensive term deadlines. Any petition submitted without a due date for outstanding work will be denied. If work is not complete by the due date the Registrar will record the grade of F for the course.

**Pass/Fail**—The decision to exercise this option must be made before the end of the second week of the course by completing the appropriate form available through the Registrar. To receive a grade of “pass” the student must do at least the equivalent of C minus work in the course.

**Plagiarism**—Plagiarism is a serious matter of academic, professional, and personal integrity. All students at the masters level are expected to understand the requirement to provide attribution when the work of others is used. Students are also expected to be familiar with and understand the school's policy on Academic Misconduct found in the Student Handbook. If students have questions about attribution, citation, and how to avoid plagiarism they should consult the course instructor, the school's writing instructor, or library staff. When in doubt it is better to provide attribution even if one is uncertain about the proper citation form. Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct that results in disciplinary actions per the Student Handbook that may range from failing an assignment or course to expulsion.