Mississippi Course of Study

**COS 121: Bible 1**

**Course:** September 19 – October 29, 2022

**Online** via Millsaps Course Connect

In-Person Class sessions:

September 30, 2022 – 6:00 p.m.--7:00 p.m. Worship

7:00 p.m.– 9:00 p.m. Class

October 1, 2022 – 9:00 a.m.-- 3:00 p.m. Class

October 15, 2022 - 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Class

Additional hours will take place via Class Connect

**Rev. Lynn B. Mote**

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**About your Instructor:**

Rev. Lynn B. Mote is an ordained elder in the Mississippi Conference of The United Methodist Church. She currently serves a new appointment at Bruce/Shady Grove United Methodist Church. She received a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration from the University of Southern Mississippi and her Master of Divinity from Duke Divinity School. Her husband is Ansel Mote and they have one adult daughter, Emily Mote of Tupelo, MS. Ansel is the cook in the family, so Lynn enjoys time to read or walk out-doors as a hobby.

**SYLLABUS**

COS 121: Bible 1: The Bible is read in the twenty-first century, yet the words of Holy Scripture were written throughout the centuries, in different cultures and even in ancient languages. Our task is to interpret the Bible in a way that most faithfully reveals the word of God to modern day readers. We will give special attention to the context in which the scripture was written, to the historical period that gave birth to the sacred text, and the literary structure that gives shape to the Biblical narrative. We will explore the importance of the Bible as a witness to the life and faith of ancient Israel and the earliest Christians. Upon completion of the class, pastors should be able to:

* Preach and teach on how the scriptures give shape to the life of the congregation.
* Understand the role of the pastor in interpretation of scripture.
* Comprehend how the Biblical canon was formed, as well as its authority within the community of faith.
* Understand and apply historical, literary and theological approaches to various types of scripture.
* Utilize a method of exegesis that is faithful to the nature and authority of the Bible.

The texts required by the United Methodist General Board of Higher Education and Ministry are *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginners Handbook*by John Hayes and Carl Holladay;  and *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible* by Bernhard Anderson. Reference books are required and are to help our bivocational pastors build their own libraries.  Assignments assure the use of the reference books. Reference books for COS 121 are: *The Interpreters One-Volume Commentary*, the *Harper Collins Bible Dictionary*, and *NRSV New Interpreter’s Study Bible*. Teachers will also assign online materials to supplement required resources.

Also suggested: *Merriam-Webster’s Guide to Punctuation and Style,* 2nd Edition

**GRADING**

40% - Pre-Class Assignments

10% - Class participation

50% - Exegesis paper – Mid-Term Draft and Final paper

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100%

**Pre-Class Assignments: 40% of Final Grade**

**Assignment Format**

All written assignments should be in the following format:

* 12 point, Times New Roman or equivalent
* Double Spaced
* 1 inch margins
* Heading that includes: Name, Course Number, Date
* Include your name in the filename
* Citations can be MLA or Chicago/Turabian, whichever you prefer. Citation Guides can be found here:
* MLA - <https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_in_text_citations_the_basics.html>
* Chicago/Turabian – <https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/turabian/turabian-notes-and-bibliography-citation-quick-guide.html>
* *You will find an online lecture about citations on Course Connect.*

***\*\*\* When in doubt, cite your work! See policy on plagiarism below. This is VERY IMPORTANT!***

**Honor Code:**

The Honor Code refers to our commitment as a Christian community to maintain academic honesty and integrity.  The Honor Code of MSCOS requires that all material submitted by a student must be the student’s own work.  Violations include cheating, turning in someone else's work as one's own, copying and pasting information directly from the internet into one's own work without citation, and plagiarism, which is to knowingly claim the work of another person as one’s own (including the lack of proper citation in a paper or other assignment). Any person found guilty of violating the Honor Code may be subject to one or more of the following actions: receiving a warning, failing the assignment, being removed from the course, failing the course, being placed on probation, and being expelled from MSCOS.  Regardless of what the action is, communication about the incident will be sent to the student’s district superintendent and local pastor registrar. All MSCOS students are required to abide by the MSCOS Honor Code, and to seek to uphold the highest standards of academic and pastoral integrity.

**Plagiarism:**

It is important to include a few words about plagiarism here since so much of the grade for this course depends on writing. Papers must reflect your own thoughts, words, sentence structure, and ideas. Any use made of another author’s material must be acknowledged in the form of a citation (a footnote or parenthetical reference, appropriately formatted; if you have questions about this, please email your instructor), whether or not the material was included in the form of a direct quotation. This applies equally to information from online sources like Wikipedia and other websites. Importing online material – or any other material, whether written and published, or from a podcast, video, etc. –without formal written acknowledgement is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious offense, and a violation of the Honor Code. *Err on the side of caution and cite anything and everything you use to complete your assignments.*

Pre-Class Assignment due by September 15th  includes a written response to the following:

* Begin by reading the chapter “Introducing Exegesis”, pages 1-33 in the *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner’s Handbook* by John H. Hayes and Carl R. Holladay
* The author of the book states that exegesis is a normal activity in our day to day lives. Based on your reading of this first chapter, **write a summary of what exegesis in everyday life includes.** Include in this summary the kinds of communication we find ourselves engaged with and the tools that we use to help us understand the meaning of whatever is being communicated. What difficulties do we face when interpreting communication? (1 page)
* Biblical exegesis is a specialized discipline. How does the process that we use in everyday life relate to Biblical exegesis? How did Biblical interpretation develop throughout the different periods of time in history? (1 page)
* The author states, “Exegesis does not allow us to master the text so much as it enables us to enter it.” (page 22) We enter into a text by asking questions of the text. Therefore, describe in your own words the meaning of the word “criticism.” The author lists nine (9) types of criticism used in Biblical interpretation. What are the nine (9) criticisms and give a very brief definition of each. (1 page)

Pre-Class Due by September 21st at 5:00 p.m. a written response to the following:

Begin by reading “Reading the Bible in the Twenty-First Century”, pg. 99 of *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible* by Bernhard W. Anderson. Submit in writing (double space, 12 point font) the following:

* A brief summary of this chapter in your own words, no more than 1 page.
* John Wesley believed that devotion to the teaching of Scripture is absolutely essential for the task of keeping and renewing the Christian faith. From the “Preface” of the Standard *Sermons* he said, “At any price, give me the book of God! I have it; here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be “homo unis libri” (a “man of one book”).” **Find one of John Wesley’s quotes on the authority of Scripture. Write Wesley’s quote and expound on Wesley’s thought in your own words.**  Note: you may find quotes in Wesley’s sermons, his *Explanatory Notes on the New Testament*, or from one of his Journal entries. Note: You will need to properly cite Wesley’s work in footnote form.
* Describe your own relationship with the Bible. Include how you were first introduced to the Holy Scriptures; how your understanding of Scripture has changed over time; how the Bible influences your life today. (1-2 pages)

Read *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible* by Bernahard W. Anderson

Pre-Class Assignment Due by September 28th at 5:00 p.m.

* Write a summary of *The Unfolding Drama of the Bible* by answering the following:
* Based on your reading of Study 1, “Prologue: In the Beginning”, pgs 18-27
  + Read Genesis 1-3. The beginning of Genesis gives us 2 creation stories. Describe what it means that humans are made in the image of God and what this means to their relationship with each other and with nature. (1 page)
  + Genesis 2-3 gives us the unfolding story of the fall of humanity. While the word “sin” does not appear in this story, use this passage to paraphrase the meaning of sin and how sin impacts humanity’s relationship with God and with each other. (1 page)
* From Study II, “A Way Into the Future, pages 28-37
  + Read Exodus 3. God enters the human struggle. Tell the well-known call story from Exodus 3 in your own words. Be sure to include the promise that God makes to Moses that God will go with Moses as he leads God’s people from slavery. How does this help us understand in the New Testament that Jesus is called “Immanuel”? (1-2 pages)
  + Read Exodus 19:3-6; 20:1-17; 23:20-33; 24:3-8. Describe the Mosaic Covenant. Include in your description the answers to the following: Who issues (or initiates) the covenant and who responds? How do you describe the stipulations of the covenant, which are imperative terms to keeping the covenant? What are the promises God makes if Israel will remain faithful to the covenant? What does Moses use to seal the covenant and how does this point us forward to the New Covenant made by Jesus? (1-2 pages)
* From Study III, “The Discipline of Disaster”, pages 39-46
  + Describe the role of the prophet in Jeremiah 1:4-19.
  + Jeremiah 2:1-13 contains the prophetic message. How have God’s people violated their covenant agreement?
  + Jeremiah 7:1-15 – The people believed that the Temple is the sign of God’s presence with them. Where do you see signs of God’s grace in this passage? What are the consequences the people must face for their disobedience? (1 page)
* Read the remainder of the book, pages 47-98 (Study IV, Study V, Study VI, Study VII and Study VIII)
  + God initiates a new Exodus. This second half of the drama of God’s people, Israel, is a new beginning. This time, we can see in the story that God is also preparing the way for the Messiah to come, expanding the definition of who may be included in God’s chosen people.
  + Write a summary of this last movement of God in your own words. Include the return of the Jews from exile, the promises of a suffering Messiah and a new covenant, the coming of Christ and the formation of the covenant community we know as the church. (3 pages)

Pre-Class Assignment; Bring to our First In-Person Class September 30 and October 1st

* Do a Google-search of your name. You may choose just one of any of your names, first, middle or last. Find any of the following information that you can:
  + What your name means
  + What country did your name originate
  + Find the date your name is first recorded or any important dates that trace a migration of your ancestors.
  + Find any alternative spellings to your name as it may have been used in history.
  + How did your ancestors migrate to the United States? How does your name rank in the USA today?

Note: It is important that you bring this information to our first class meeting on Friday, September 30th.

* Read Chapters 1-6 of *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner’s Handbook* by John H. Hayes and Carl R. Holladay

**Mid-Term draft and Final Exegesis paper**

Due by October 10th at 5:00 p.m. Mid-Term Exegesis draft using the techniques covered in class.

* Write a very rough draft of the beginning of your exegetical paper on the text assigned to you. You will need to break down your paper as follows:
  + Introduction – 1 page
  + Contextual analysis – historical, textual, grammatical – 3 pages
  + Form analysis – literary and form criticism – 1 page

Due by In-Person Class October 15th

* Read Chapters 7-13 of *Biblical Exegesis: A Beginner’s Handbook* by John H. Hayes and Carl R. Holladay
* Bring to class answers to the following questions based on the scripture text you are writing your exegetical paper on:
  + In your own words, paraphrase the central meaning of the text.
  + What does the text tell you about God? About human beings? About the relationship between God and people?
  + How does this text help us understand the historical context in which the passage took place? What impact has this text had in the life of faith, both as Jews and as Christians?
  + Do you see any contemporary issues or situations that may be addressed by the text?
  + If readers in our day take the message of the text seriously, how would their lives be different today?

Due by October 28th at 5:00 p.m.: Final Exegesis Paper

Your final paper should include your corrected mid-term exegesis papers and a synthesis of the information based on answers to the above questions. Your final paper should be no less than 8 pages and no more than 12 pages.

**Instructor**

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Tupelo District

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