I. COURSE DESCRIPTION. Focusing on the art and science of understanding the Scriptures in their literary and historical-cultural contexts, the acquisition and application of key guidelines for unlocking the meaning and message of any biblical passage according to its specific literary genre will be stressed. The question of how to determine timeless principles in contrast to culturally-bound teachings will be addressed as a part of the process of learning to apply the Bible in a valid way.\(^1\)

II. COURSE OVERVIEW. This course is a study of Bible study methods, hermeneutics, the art and science of understanding the Scriptures.

III. COURSE INSTRUCTION. This course will include three hours of classroom lecture and discussion each week plus reading, practice exercises, and one exegetical paper.

IV. COURSE TEXTBOOK. The required textbook is:


V. COURSE OBJECTIVES.

A. To explore the art of biblical interpretation.
B. To practice the art of biblical interpretation.
C. To understand the various forms or literary genres used in recording the Bible.
D. To apply the teachings of the Bible to the student‘s life.
E. To commit to a lifelong study of God‘s Word.
F. To read extensively in the area of biblical hermeneutics.

VI. COURSE REQUIREMENTS.

A. Reading Assignments.

\(^1\)Baptist Missionary Association Theological Seminary 2008-2010 Catalog, 64.
1. **The Textbook.** Reading from the required textbook will be absolutely necessary. Students will be required to read from the textbook as the class progresses from chapter to chapter.

2. **The Bible.** Some assigned reading of biblical books or portions of them will also be required. These reading requirements will be announced or published in an assignment handout.

3. **The Bibliography.** Some assigned reading from material listed in the bibliography will also be required. These reading requirements will be announced or published in an assignment handout.

B. **Practice Assignments.** The textbook has practice assignments listed at the end of most chapters. Some of these practice exercises will be assigned for students to do outside of class. Review of these exercises will occur in class. These practice assignments will be announced or published in an assignment handout.

C. **Writing Assignment.** There will be one paper or writing assignment for this class. Each student will write one exegetical paper. A handout explaining the exegetical paper will be distributed to students in the first class session. However, the paper will follow the basic guidelines in the textbook. See Appendix 2, pages 421-23, in *Grasping God’s Word*. Also, students will discover helpful bibliographic information for the exegetical paper in Appendix 3, pages 425-50, *A Building a Personal Library,* @ in *Grasping God’s Word*.

D. **Testing Assignments.** There will be no tests or exams in this class.

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**VII. COURSE GRADING.**

A. **General Grading Information.** Grading for this class will follow this grading scale:

- A: 91-100
- B: 81-90
- C: 71-80
- D: 61-70
- F: 00-60

B. **Specific Grading Information.** Grading will be calculated on a point system. A point value will be assessed to the reading assignments, practice assignments, and the paper. The total points earned by a student will be divided by the total points possible for the class to determine a student’s grade.

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**VIII. COURSE POLICIES.**

A. **Participation.** Since this class meets only once each week, attendance and participation are a requirement. Participate in class discussions and be faithful in your class attendance.² Obviously, a student’s grade could be adversely affected by excessive absences. Each three hour class will be counted as three class sessions for attendance purposes. Students will be afforded six cuts without penalty. One

²See the BMATS 2008-10 Catalog for the general class attendance and absence policy, 44.
A cut equals a one-hour class session. So, if a student misses one entire afternoon of class, a three-hour session, that involves three cuts. Starting with the seventh absence, a student’s final grade will be reduced by one point for each excessive absence. For each cut that a student does not take, a point will be added to the student’s final grade. Be faithful in attendance and you will be rewarded.

B. **Schedule.** This class is scheduled to meet on Thursdays from 2:00 P.M. until 5:00 P.M. in LC 110.

C. **Information.** Here is my personal contact information:

- Office: Cooper Complex LC 104
- Office telephone: 501-329-6872 extension 146
- Cell telephone: 501-314-9911
- Email address: vporter@cbc.edu

**IX. COURSE BIBLIOGRAPHY.** This is a short bibliography listing primarily books dealing with hermeneutics, Bible study methods, Bible reading, and issues related to hermeneutics like the historical, cultural, and literary backgrounds of the Bible. With only a few exceptions (* indicates the exceptions), most of these books listed on the bibliography are in the CBC library. Students will need to do additional research for the required exegetical paper. Bibliographic material for the paper is not provided in this bibliography. However, helpful information is available in *Grasping God’s Word* and in Turabian. Appendix 3, pages 425-50, *Building a Personal Library,* in *Grasping God’s Word* provides bibliographic information that would be helpful in selecting research material for the exegetical paper.


X. **COURSE SCHEDULE.** The class schedule will follow the school calendar. Exceptions will be announced. Here are the dates for the class schedule with notations of importance and interest.

1. Sept 3   First Class Session: Syllabus and Course Introduction  
2. Sept 10  
3. Sept 17  
4. Sept 24  
5. Oct 1   
6. Oct 8  
7. Oct 15  No Class ∙ CBC Fall Break  
8. Oct 22  
9. Oct 29  
10. Nov 5  
11. Nov 12  
12. Nov 19  Paper Due!  
13. Nov 26  No Class ∙ Thanksgiving Break  
14. Dec 3  
15. Dec 10  Last Class Session: Evaluation Forms.

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3 15 class sessions, 3 hours each.