

# Course Prospectus

## For THL 474 Archaeology and the New Testament

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### Overview

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This course deals with the pervasive influence of society, architecture, and religion on the peoples of the first century. The focus is upon the archaeology related to sites associated with the ministry of Jesus, the journeys of Paul, and the seven churches of Revelation. Particular attention is devoted to the Judeo-Christian synagogue on Mt. Sion in Jerusalem now called the Tomb of David (also known as the Coenaculum and the Cenacle), the house of St. Peter at Capernaum, and the Constantinian churches of Judea and Galilee as they bear on our understanding of the New Testament period.

#### COURSE CATALOG DESCRIPTION FOR THIS COURSE

This course deals with the archaeology of Syro-Palestine from Herodian times through the Second Jewish Revolt (C.E. 132-135). Emphasis on orientation to the geography and archaeology of the biblical world and the application of archaeology in biblical research. Upon completion, students should be able to explain how understanding of the social, political and religious background of the biblical world aids illumination of the New Testament text.

#### PREREQUISITES AND COREQUISITES

None.

#### COURSE CREDIT

Three (3) semester hours.

### Instructional objectives

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On successful completion of this course, a student should be able to:

1. Connect the New Testament to the historical, social, cultural, political, religious, and economic backgrounds of the ancient Greco-Roman world, where it was written;
2. Describe the methods and procedures related to biblical archaeology, and why this science is important for New testament study;
3. Identify some of the key New Testament archaeological sites, and the archaeologists who have excavated these sites;
4. Discuss how inscriptions, numismatics, pottery, sculpture, and architecture help us better understand the socio-cultural systems found in the NT;
5. Locate on a map the provinces and regions of the first-century Greco-Roman world and trace the roads that linked them; and
6. Define archaeological, architectural, and geographical terms related to their respective disciplines.

## Students with Disabilities

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The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities have a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. Students having a disability requiring an accommodation should inform the instructor through the "Contact Instructor" link on the course home page.

## Technology access

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This course requires web access and the student has to have an established e-mail account. The Adobe Acrobat Reader is necessary to view documents that are PDF files. One can download the reader free at <http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>.

## Course evaluation

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Student input is welcome for improving this course. Making suggestions by e-mail is helpful. Our goal in this course is to facilitate the successful achievement of all instructional objectives by all students. At the end of the course students have the opportunity of assessing the course. We want to make e-learning courses as effective as we can. We may also ask some other questions concerning a student's experience in distance learning to help us improve our program. We appreciate students letting us know how we can improve our products and services for them and other distance learners.

## Textbooks

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The textbook for this course is:

**MCRAY, JOHN. *ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE NEW TESTAMENT*. GRAND RAPIDS: BAKER ACADEMIC, 1991.**

Students may order this book through the University Bookstore.

The books used or referred to in this course are commercial publications. They represent the views and ideas of their authors, editors, and publishers. Living University does not endorse these texts nor vouch for their accuracy. We simply employ them in helping you master the content of the course.

## Icebreaker assignment

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To begin this course, students must complete an icebreaker assignment to introduce themselves to their classmates through the posting of a short autobiography on the course Forum. The icebreaker assignment is due by the eighth day of the semester. Students post their biographies as a reply to the "Bios" topic on the course forum. A student can earn 25 bonus points in this course by doing so "on time." As there are people from all over the world enrolled in this course each autobiography will help

all know, understand and appreciate each other. Students are to read and comment on each other's bios throughout the first week of class.

## Course requirements and grades

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### DUE DATES AND EXTENSIONS

Students must complete the course by the last official day of instruction as set forth in the academic calendar.

### READING AND WRITING EXERCISES

Refer to "Course outline and assignments" section for reading assignments. When you undertake your critical book reviews you may find the reviews of these titles on Amazon.com helpful.

### FILING WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

For instructions in how to post assignments, visit the Frequently Asked Questions pages through the link on the course homepage.

### STUDY TIPS

Distance learning emphasizes self-motivation. The instructor functions as a facilitator with the student as the driving force in mastering course content. Students are encouraged not to put off completing their readings and assignments.

## Grading

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A course grade will be determined based on the number of points a student has earned over the semester as follows:

Writing Assignments (six, each worth 50 points, for a total of 300 points)

Exams (seven, each worth 100 points, for a total of 700 points]

TOTAL 1,000 points

Posting the autobiography on time can earn a student 25 bonus points. These points could make the difference between an A or a B, or passing or not passing.

You may earn also 100 extra-credit bonus points. To do so you have to develop definitions for each of the glossary terms that have not been defined in the seven lessons. For details see the Extra-Credit Assignment on the Assignments section of the course website.

Grades are in the traditional American style of an A, B, C, D, or F. In distance learning, we believe that the measure of mastery of course subject matter is completion of 80% of the objectives for a course. That means that we want students to earn at least 800 points in this course. If they do not do so then they have not achieved the level of the mastery we would like them to have.

We want this course to be competency-based and so it is possible for the entire class to receive an A or a B. There is no artificial curving of scores in the assignment of grades (if you do not know what that means, do not worry about it). Mastery of the material is what one's goal should be.

Grades, assigned by points, are as follows:

A 900-1000 points

B 800-899 points

C 700-799 points

D 600-699 points

F Below 600 points

## Academic irregularity

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Students have the responsibility for conducting themselves in such a manner as to avoid any suspicion that they are improperly giving or receiving aid on any assignment or examination. An academic irregularity not only includes cheating but also includes plagiarism (taking another's ideas and/or words and presenting them as if they were the writer's own) and the submitting of the same paper in separate courses without prior consent from the faculty members concerned.

In cases of suspected academic irregularity, faculty members may refuse to grade such papers, completely or in part, or examinations, and to record each of them as a failure.

If an academic irregularity is sufficiently serious, the University may take one or more of, but not limited to, the following actions:

1. Drop the student from the course with a grade of F;
2. Place the student on academic probation; and/or
3. Dismiss the student from the University.

## Course calendar

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**Lesson 1 Introduction: The Role and Method of Archaeological Excavation  
(January 14-30)**

Assignments

**Topics 1-5**

McRay 17-34

**Writing Assignment 1 due January 30**

**Exam 1 due January 30**

**Lesson 2 The Architecture of New Testament Times (February 1-20)**

Reading Assignments

Topics 1-2

McRay 37-88

**Writing Assignment 2 due February 20****Exam 2 due February 20****Lesson 3 The Building Program of Herod the Great (February 22-March 13)**

Reading Assignments

Topics 1-4

McRay 91-222

**Writing Assignment 3 due March 13****Exam 3 due March 13****Lesson 4 Archaeology of the Life of Christ (March 15-27)**

Reading Assignments

Topics 1-2

McRay 153-222

**Writing Assignment 4 due March 27****Exam 4 due March 27****Lesson 5 Archaeology of the Church in the Holyland (March 29-April 15)**

Reading Assignments

Topics 1-2

To be assigned

**Writing Assignment 5 due April 15****Exam 5 due April 15****Lesson 6 Archaeology of the Church in the Greco-Roman World (April 16-29)**

Reading Assignments

Topics 1-2

McRay 225-375

**Writing Assignment 6 due April 29****Exam 6 due April 29****Lesson 7 The Constantinian Churches (April 30-May 14)**

Reading Assignments

Topics 1-2

To be assigned

**Exam 7 due April 29**