The Great Library on the Main Street of Ephesus
Conveniently across the street from the brothel (©)
Essential Information
Please refer to the following resources for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Links to these resources are available in the Essential Information section at http://support.nts.edu.

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose Degree Objectives
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS textbook information
- Online technical requirements and Moodle support information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation

Instructor Information
Professor: Andy Johnson, Ph.D.  Email: ajohnson@nts.edu
Office: (816) 268-5485
Office Hours: By appointment

Catalog Description
Catalogue Description: Particular attention to the Christology of Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians. Problems of authenticity will be considered.

Enlarged Description: This course, through lectures, readings, and discussions, will consist of a careful study of major passages in these epistles in their socio-historical, literary/rhetorical, and theological dimensions. The face to face class time may focus primarily on two of the three letters. Special attention will be paid to the way Paul attempts to use his Christological convictions to shape the epistles’ audiences into ecclesial communities whose life together reflects these convictions.

Course Narrative & Rationale
Some call Ephesians, Colossians, and Philippians the “prison epistles” because Paul indicates that he wrote these letters from prison. This is an accurate description as far as it goes but it tends to put more emphasis on the background situation of Paul than it does on the actual content of the letters. While there is, of course, more than Christological reflection in these letters, they are clearly characterized by rich Christological affirmations. But this is not Christology in the abstract. Rather, in these letters Paul articulates various Christological convictions in order to shape his audiences into communities whose life together reflects these convictions as they become—to use a phrase from one of my good friends, Mike Gorman—“colonies of cruciformity” in their particular social locations within the largest empire of the ancient world. All of this is one way of saying that Paul’s Christological affirmations are directly connected to his ecclesiological vision.

In our own particular social location in the largest empire of the contemporary world, the local churches of which most of us are a part have either: (1) misunderstood Paul’s Christological affirmations imagining that they support a “commonsense” understanding of “normal divinity” and that their church should be stamped with the character of such a god; (2) given little thought to how such Christological convictions actually shape ecclesial life together, or (3) attempted to shape their ecclesial lives together in line with the cruciform character of God revealed in Jesus Christ but have been met with varying degrees of success (or varying degrees of failure!). As anyone who’s been a Christian leader in a congregation knows, this last option is very difficult and requires a great deal of discernment. But as hard as it is, this is what you are called to do as leaders in your local churches. The ability to help your parishioners frame their ecclesial life together in a way that is contextually consistent with the claims they make about the identity of the God revealed in
Jesus is one of the most important skills you can have as a pastor. My hope and prayer this semester is that this course will open a window for you to watch Paul work at this task so that you will become more adept at it yourself.

**Degree Objectives Directly Addressed by This Course (CO = Course Outcome[s])**

**MDiv**
2. The articulation of the knowledge of this God through prayerful, scholarly study and a deepening understanding of the Christian Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. (all CO)
5. The cultivation of gifts for ministry into competent skills and practices in worship and preaching, teaching and discipleship, care and counseling, evangelism and missions, administration and servant-leadership. (CO 5)
6. The investigation of human society, thought and culture in order to articulate clear and coherent views of the context of the mission of the Church, and to develop an understanding of the Church as the community of faith with a passion for the gospel engaging in mission to different cultures. (CO 4 and especially assignment 4)

**MA(TS)**
**General Academic Track**
1. Students will develop a comprehensive knowledge of the major theological disciplines and their interrelationships. (This course only addresses the student’s knowledge of biblical studies directly but it will also address a rudimentary knowledge of systematic theology and church history as it relates specifically to the material in these epistles. (CO 1-4.)

**Research Track**
1. Students will gain specialized knowledge in designated theological disciplines as a basis for further graduate studies. (CO 1-3)
2. Students will develop skill in academic research and writing as a basis for further graduate studies. (CO 1-3 but this is only addressed if the student chooses to write a research paper in assignment 8.)

**MACE**
1. Appropriate and enhance the student’s ecclesial understanding of the Word of God, the heritage of the faith, the doctrines of the church, and the fellowship of believers, sufficient to enable him or her to deepen a personal commitment to God and His Church and to inform a passionate, vital, and redemptive ministry. (CO 1-4)

**MAICS**
2. Graduates will demonstrate the integration of theological convictions and cultural sensitivity in order to foster individual and social transformation. (See CO 2 and 4, especially assignments 2 and 4. Since all biblical interpretation is in some sense “cross cultural,” it requires familiarity with another culture to interpret the Bible well.)
**Course Outcomes**

At the end of the course you will (R = Course requirement[s] directed toward achieving objective):

1. Demonstrated a basic grasp of the content and theology of Philippians, Colossians, and Ephesians (All R).
2. Demonstrated a rudimentary understanding of the socio-historical, rhetorical, inter-textual/canonical backgrounds against which they might be best understood (R2, R3, R4, R6).
3. Demonstrated an ability to articulate how the Christological affirmations in these three epistles shape other theological topics, e.g. soteriology, ecclesiology, etc. (R3-6, 8).
4. Demonstrated an ability to exercise creative theological imagination by reflecting on how the theology of these letters might be embodied in a local church body given the particular challenges facing the Church in North America (R4, 5, 8).
5. Demonstrated an ability to utilize responsibly a passage or passages from these epistles in an ecclesial setting i.e., most probably teaching or preaching in a local church or para-church setting (R7).

**Church of the Nazarene COSAC Competencies** (R = Course requirement[s] directed toward achieving objective)

- CN11 Ability to identify the significant elements of the message of Jesus and Paul (R1, 3-6, 8)
- CN12 Ability to describe the impact of the historical background of the NT on the message of Jesus & Paul (R2, 3, 6)
- CN14 Ability to identify and describe the major theological concepts of the NT (R3-6)
- CN20 Ability to reflect theologically on life and ministry (R 4, 5, 7, 8)
- CP1 Ability to communicate publicly through multiple methods (oral, written, media, etc.) with clarity and creativity for the sake of fostering meaning (R2-8)
- CP2 Ability to write clearly and in a grammatically correct manner in the modes of discourse used in the ministry (R2-8)
- CP3 Ability to speak coherently and cogently in the modes of discourse appropriate for the various ministry contexts (R5, 7)

**Required Texts & Course Materials**


*If you have already read Longenecker and completed an assignment for me in another class, buy Walsh and Keesmaat instead of this book.*

Walsh, Brian J. and Sylvia C. Keesmaat. *Colossians Remixed: Subverting the Empire*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP, 2004. (233 pages) *Only buy this book if you have already read Longenecker and completed and assignment for me on it in another class.*
Recommended Websites

http://www.ntgateway.com/paul-the-apostle/
This is the Paul section of the NT Gateway site. It is one of the best sites on the Web for generally reliable information on Paul and the rest of NT studies.

http://www.luthersem.edu/ckoester/Paul/Main.htm
Journeys of Paul, by Craig Koester. Clearly presented and nicely illustrated pictures of Philippi and Ephesus.

Course Outline

See Course Calendar below.

Course Assignments & Requirements (Course Outcome = CO)

Pre-Module Assignments

1. Reading the Epistles. (CO 1) While this is listed as a pre-module assignment, it actually spans the whole course. You must read Philippians, Colossians, and Ephesians through (preferably in one sitting but in no more than two sittings) at least seven times during this class, including once by April 14. Use one translation for each reading but do not use the same translation each time. Make sure you use at least four different translations for the seven readings. You may also count a hearing of the epistles (an audio recording) as a reading. See the other scheduled readings on the Course Calendar below. Each time a reading is due, you must post a statement in the Reading the Epistles Forum in Moodle by the due date saying that you have completed that reading. Each reading counts 10 points toward your final grade, making all seven readings count 70 points toward your final grade. You cannot “make up” any of this reading. You can only get credit for what you actually read by the due date listed on the Course Calendar below. Since these are basically “give-away” points, this is an all or nothing assignment. You do not get credit for partial reading.

   **Note Carefully** To save time, as you read the epistles, you should keep a running master list of critical questions and insights of comprehensive or theological significance that arise from a careful reading of the text. These questions and comments should not only note the scriptural context of the concern, but what matter of importance is at stake. These questions will later become a part of requirements 3 and 6 described below.

2. Longenecker Reflection Paper: (CO 2) If you have not read Longenecker’s, *The Lost Letters of Pergamum* and written a paper based on it for me in a prior class, make Longenecker the basis for the following assignment. If you have read Longenecker and written a paper based on it for me in a prior class, read Walsh and Keesmaat’s, *Colossians Remixed* and make that the basis for the following assignment. (Walsh and Keesmaat’s book is on Colossians and some of the background they describe would be specific to the city of Colossae. But much of the background they describe would be common to the whole Greco-Roman world. For purposes of this assignment, focus on what they describe that is common in the whole Greco-Roman world and use it as the basis for writing your paper on Philippians.)

   Read Longenecker and then read Philippians carefully (you may count this reading of Philippians in your second reading of the epistles). Assume for now that Longenecker’s novel or Walsh and Keesmaat’s book captures the socio-historical, cultural, and especially the political feel of the first century setting in which Philippians would have
been first heard. Write a 750-1,000 word paper, typed, and double-spaced, answering the following question: How does understanding the letter against this sort of background change the way I read Philippians? Give specific examples from the text of Philippians which sound different to you after having read Longenecker and explain why they now sound different. Do not quote the verse or verses from Philippians to which you are referring. Just give the reference to the verses you have in mind (e.g., Phil 3:2-5). Please Note: More than a few English errors like incorrect punctuation, spelling, and grammar will have a significant negative impact on your grade. You may earn up to 70 points for this assignment. Your assignment must be uploaded as an MS Word file by 11:55 PM CT, Sunday, April 21. See instructions below on how to upload your file into Moodle under “Method for Submitting Assignments.”

3. Critical Reading Response (CRR) to Philippians/Flemming (CO 1-3) You will prepare a critical reading responses of 1,000-1,500 words in which you critically engage Philippians and the reading in Flemming associated with it. This is CRR1 and it must be uploaded as an MS Word file by 11:55 PM CT, Saturday, May 18. (For CRR2 and CRR3 see requirement 6 below.) See instructions below on how to upload your file into Moodle under “Method for Submitting Assignments.” You may earn up to 100 points for each CRR making them worth a total of 300 points. An assistant may be grading your CRR’s.

The following instructions apply also to all CRR’s. The CRR’s should each have two sections: (1) Critical questions and insights of comprehensive or theological significance that arise from a careful reading of the epistle itself prior to reading the selections from the commentaries. These questions and comments should not only note the scriptural context of the concern, but what matter of importance is at stake. These questions should be an edited version of your running master list of critical questions and insights that you generated during your prior readings of the epistles. Note carefully: you must have at least one critical question on each chapter of the letter. (2) Critical questions and observations that your reading of the commentaries raises in your mind about the biblical text and/or vice-versa, critical questions and observations that reading the biblical text raises in your mind about your commentators’ interpretations. Do not just mention “insights” you picked up from your commentators. Rather, in this second section, specifically mention places where you disagreed or questioned the views of the commentators and give reasons for why you did so.

An example of an “A” quality CRR will be available in Moodle in the Additional Course Resources topic area. It will be called “Model CRR.” In addition, a grading scale for these CRR’s will be available in the Additional Course Resources topic area.

Module Assignments

4. Fishbowl Discussion on Gorman’s Inhabiting the Cruciform God (CO 1, 3, 4). You will actively participate in a “fishbowl” discussion on this book during class on Wednesday, May 22. The “fishbowl” will consist of a class discussion/critical analysis/contextualization of Gorman. You may earn up to 50 points for this assignment. I will not simply give these points away because you show up in class that day. You must make regular contributions during this discussion period in a way that demonstrates an understanding of, and a critical engagement with, Gorman. I may split the class into a number of groups with one group discussing one part of the assigned reading and the other group(s) discussing the other part(s) of the reading. You will not know which part of the reading you will be assigned to discuss. In any case, you are responsible for all of Gorman. Hence, you should carefully
read all of the book and take careful notes on it (in some form or fashion) or even bring a summary of it to refer to during the discussion.

I will attempt to focus the discussion by asking some or all of the following four questions: (1) What is the main thesis/purpose of the particular chapter/book? (2) How does the author argue his overall case? (3) What are the ramifications for our understanding of the one or all of the epistles we’re studying in light of his argument? (4) How might his arguments and conclusions be contextualized for engaging in Christian formation in particular ecclesial contexts in North America (e.g., rural or small town churches, predominantly African American urban churches, suburban Nazarene churches, Latino evangelical churches in urban areas; churches who display “emergent” characteristics)?

5. Fishbowl Discussion on Gombis, Drama of Ephesians (CO 1, 3, 4). You will actively participate in a “fishbowl” discussion on this book during class on Tuesday, May 28. The “fishbowl” will consist of a class discussion/critical analysis/contextualization of Gombis. You may earn up to 50 points for this assignment. I will not simply give these points away because you show up in class that day. You must make regular contributions during this discussion period in a way that demonstrates an understanding of, and a critical engagement with, Gombis. I may split the class into a number of groups with one group discussing one part of the assigned reading and the other group(s) discussing the other part(s) of the reading. You will not know which part of the reading you will be assigned to discuss. In any case, you are responsible for all of Gombis. Hence, you should carefully read all of the book and take careful notes on it (in some form or fashion) or even bring a summary of it to refer to during the discussion.

I will attempt to focus the discussion by asking some or all of the following four questions: (1) What is the main thesis/purpose of the particular chapter/book? (2) How does the author argue his overall case? (3) What are the ramifications for our understanding of the one or all of the epistles we’re studying in light of his argument? (4) How might his arguments and conclusions be contextualized for engaging in Christian formation in particular ecclesial contexts in North America (e.g., rural or small town churches, predominantly African American urban churches, suburban Nazarene churches, Latino evangelical churches in urban areas; churches who display “emergent” characteristics)?

Post-Module Assignments

6. Critical Reading Responses (CRR) to Ephesians/Fowl and Colossians/Gupta (CO 1-3) You will prepare two critical reading responses of 1,000-1,500 words each in which you critically engage Ephesians and Colossians and the reading in Fowl and Gupta associated with them. CRR2 is devoted to Ephesians and Fowl must be uploaded as an MS Word file by 11:55 PM CT, Sunday, June 9. CRR3 is devoted to Colossians and Gupta must be uploaded as an MS Word file by 11:55 PM CT, Sunday, June 23. See further instructions on completing these and submitting them under requirement 3 above.

7. “In Ministry” Assignment. (CO 4) After May 31, you will teach or preach from a passage in one of the epistles. You could do this in a local church setting (e.g., preaching, teaching a Sunday School class, a Bible study, etc.) or a para-church setting (e.g., preaching at a rescue mission, leading a Bible study at a prison or urban youth center, etc.). Whatever setting you choose, you must ask someone to fill out an evaluation form and sign it. Preferably the person should be a pastor, a person in charge, someone with theological training, or a professional type person. The person cannot be a current NTS student and cannot be not related to you. I must approve the person you plan to ask ahead of time. I
will use that person’s evaluation of your presentation as well as your written sermon, notes, lesson plan, etc. to evaluate this assignment. The person will complete the evaluation form, place it in a sealed envelope, and sign their name over the seal. They will give that back to you and you will place the unopened envelope together with your written sermon and/or sermon notes, lesson plan, etc. in the mail. The packet must be postmarked by no later than Tuesday, July 9 at 4:30 PM and sent to: Andy Johnson, 11179 Grandview St., Overland Park, KS 66210. You and your evaluator might also choose to submit these materials to me via email. If so, your advisor should fill out the form, scan it into their computer, and email me a PDF file of the evaluation directly and you should send me a separate email containing your sermon materials as an attached MS Word file. If you submit this assignment via email, all materials must be emailed to me by no later than Thursday, July 11 at 11:55 PM. Please note: I will not accept this assignment late. You may earn up to 60 points for it.

8. Take-home Essay/Research Paper. (CO 1-4) You may choose to either write a take-home essay on a question that will be distributed the last day of class (3,000-4,000 words) or a research paper on some aspect of the interpretation of these epistles (4,500-5,000 words). You may earn up to 400 points for this essay/research paper. Your essay/paper must be uploaded as an MS Word file by 11:55 PM CT on Friday, July 12. See instructions below on how to upload your file into Moodle under “Method for Submitting Assignments.”

The take-home essay will be a question (or questions) related to the interpretation of these epistles and the ministry implications of the material we’ve covered in class and in the reading. Hence, to answer it, you will creatively draw on your class notes, all your course reading, and on your own theological reflections in the context of a ministry situation.

Unless you will have access to a good theological library (not a church or personal library but something equivalent to the library at NTS!), you should not choose to write the research paper. As a research paper, it clearly requires additional research over and above your class resources. If you do choose to write the research paper, I must approve whatever topic you choose by May 31 by the time class is over. If I haven’t approved a research topic for you by that time, I will assume you are writing the take home essay.

As general guidelines for the research paper, follow the instructions given by Joel Green in the document, “Some Comments on Research Papers” (which also contains a grading rubric albeit based on a 100 point scale). It is located in Moodle in the Additional Course Resources topic area. I will assume you have read and followed Green’s directions when I grade your paper. Note carefully: You should begin your research paper with a thesis statement that explicitly states the thesis you intend to argue and return to that thesis statement in your conclusion. While the paper should generally follow Turabian style, you may consult the SBL Handbook of Style for proper form for footnotes, abbreviations, etc. You may also use the document entitled “Ripples and Luke 24HBT.doc” located in Moodle in the Additional Course Resources topic areas as a general guide as to how this paper should look in terms of footnotes and style.
**Distribution of Student Learning Hours**

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**Method for Submitting Assignments**

Written assignments are to be submitted in Moodle. Your assignments must be uploaded as an MS Word file by the dates given above.

The one exception to the procedure above is the “In-Ministry” Assignment if you should choose to mail it. If so, send it to the following address: Andy Johnson, 11179 Grandview St., Overland Park, KS 66210. Or it may be emailed directly to me. See instructions under this assignment above.

**Form and Style Expectations**

Should you choose to write a research paper, it should generally follow Turabian style. However, you may consult the *SBL Handbook of Style* for proper form for footnotes, abbreviations, etc. and/or use the document entitled “Ripples and Luke 24HBT.doc” located in Moodle in the Course Resources topic areas as a general guide as to how this paper should look in terms of footnotes and style. **There are no style requirements for the other written assignments.**

**Inclusive Language**

NTS is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, NTS urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in their writings. **All written work presented to meet course requirements must use gender inclusive language when possible. If it does not, points will be deducted from your grade.**

**Policy Regarding Late Work & Missed Exams**

You are expected to attend class regularly and participate in the daily discussions. Attendance will be taken daily. An absence will only be excused in accordance with the guidelines *established* in the NTS catalogue. Unless I have noted above that I will not accept a written assignment late, I will assign a letter grade penalty to all written assignments turned in after the time they are due. When an assignment is more than one week late, I will assign a two letter grade penalty to it. I will not accept an assignment that is more than two weeks late.

**Course Grading**

**A Word about Grading:** Evaluation in this kind of course, by its very nature, involves an element of subjectivity. It involves someone who is an expert in the field making a judgment on the kind of work you produce. That is a part of what you are paying for in this class. The primary factors I take into account in assessing “good solid graduate work,” the sort of work to which I assign a “B” are (1) ability to demonstrate a breadth and depth of understanding of the material engaged; (2) ability to engage this material in a critical way; (3) ability to exhibit how the material is related to a larger theological and ecclesial context. If you demonstrate a consistent ability to do these things in all your coursework, you can expect to receive a B. If you demonstrate consistent ability to do them...
incisively and with excellence, you can expect to receive an A. If you demonstrate an ability to do these things often, but not consistently, you can expect to receive a C. (Hence, I assume that a C means “average,” or “satisfactory” work. It does not mean “bad” or “unsatisfactory.”) If you seldom demonstrate an ability to do these things, you can expect to receive a D.

The final grade will be computed using the following point scale. There are 1,000 possible points.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<td>70</td>
<td>Reading the Epistles</td>
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<td>70</td>
<td>Longenecker Reflection Paper</td>
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<td>300</td>
<td>CRR’s</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>Gorman Fishbowl</td>
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<td>50</td>
<td>Gombis Fishbowl</td>
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<td>In-Ministry Assignment</td>
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<td>400</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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The following point scale will determine letter grades:

- A: 1,000-900
- B: 899-800
- C: 799-700
- D: 699-600
- F: 599-0

**Documented Learning Disabilities**

In accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NTS is committed to providing students with disabilities the opportunity to participate and benefit from its programs and activities. Accordingly NTS will make reasonable modifications to its programs and activities to accommodate otherwise qualified students with disabilities, unless such modifications would impose an undue burden on the operation of the particular program or activity or would fundamentally alter the nature or purpose of the program or activity. Students needing accommodations should contact the Office of the Registrar. They also should contact the instructor no later than the end of the first class session to discuss learning needs and adaptive strategies which have been beneficial for the student in the past.

**Class Attendance**

Attendance at classes is essential for realizing the maximum benefit of your education. If you must be absent because of extenuating circumstances, contact me as soon as possible to discuss the situation. If you are absent for 9 hours of the module, you may automatically fail the course. Daily attendance records must be reported for those obtaining V.A. and Department of Education benefits. Students must make the professor aware if their attendance must be recorded.

**Audio and Video Recordings**

In order to foster a safe learning environment in which various viewpoints are respected, audio or video recordings or transcripts thereof by students is prohibited without the permission of the faculty member in charge of the course. If permission is granted, redistribution of these recordings or transcripts thereof outside the scope of the course is prohibited.

Students enrolling in videoconferencing courses or participating in certain synchronous Moodle activities should be aware that their images and voices will be transmitted digitally through the videoconferencing equipment and may be recorded. Continued enrollment in these courses constitutes willingness to participate in the class with these conditions. If you have privacy concerns, please discuss your enrollment with the Registrar.
## Course Calendar

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Class Topic</th>
<th>Assignment Due by 11:55PM CT unless otherwise noted</th>
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<td>First Epistles Reading due on 4/14</td>
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<td>2. Second Epistles Reading due on 4/21</td>
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<td>4/22-4/28</td>
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<td>Read Gorman and Gombis and take notes in preparation for fish bowl discussions</td>
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<td>Read Gorman and Gombis and take notes in preparation for fish bowl discussions</td>
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<td>Third Epistles Reading due on 5/12</td>
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<td>1. CRR 1 on Philippians Due on 5/18</td>
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<td>2. Fourth Epistles Reading due on 5/18</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Post Module Begins</td>
<td>CRR 2 on Ephesians Due 6/9</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/10-6/16</td>
<td>10</td>
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<td>Fifth Epistles Reading due 6/16</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/17-6/23</td>
<td>11</td>
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<td>CRR 3 on Colossians Due 6/23</td>
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<tr>
<td>6/24-6/30</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>1. Sixth Epistles Reading due 6/30</td>
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<td>2. Work on Take-Home Essay/Research Paper</td>
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<td>7/1-7/7</td>
<td>13</td>
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<td>1. Seventh Epistles Reading due 7/7</td>
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<td>2. Work on Take-Home Essay/Research Paper</td>
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<td>3. Course Evaluations (approximate release time by the Dean’s Office)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/8-7/12</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td>1. In-Ministry Assignment to be postmarked by 7/9 by 4:30PM or due on 7/11 at 11:55 PM if you submit all materials electronically</td>
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<td>2. Take-Home Essay/Research Paper Due on 7/12 at 11:55 PM CT</td>
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