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
- Handbook for Inclusive Language

Instructor Information

Professor: Joseph Coleson, Ph.D.  
Email: jecoleson@nts.edu
Office: 816/268-5482
Office Hours: By appointment

Catalog Description

A study of modern archaeological methods and discoveries in the Bible lands and the ways they advance understanding of biblical history, religion, and literature. Focus is on the archaeology of both the Old and the New Testaments.

Course Narrative & Rationale

The Living Word of God, revealed first by the written word, is the Christian minister’s only unique message to the world. As we come to know the written word better, it should follow that we come to know the Living Word better, and thus are able to minister Christ and his word more effectively.

As a significant part of its content, the Bible reports many events from ancient western Asia, primarily Canaan/Israel/Judah, and from the New Testament world of the Roman Empire. Assuming the reality of ancient nations and cities, it refers to ancient cultures in matter-of-fact
ways. The Bible takes much for granted in the knowledge base of its hearers and readers. But for us, two thousand and more years removed from these events and these cultures, much remains wholly or partially a puzzlement.

Over the last two hundred years, much new information has come to light to advance our understanding of biblical history and cultures. No new field of inquiry has been more rewarding in this respect than has archaeology; it illumines historical epochs and everyday life, the military movements of great kings, and the focus of humble proverbs. God approached God’s ancient people in their everyday lives; we read in the Bible of God’s faithfulness to them. As we understand better the lives of the ancients to whom God’s words of assurance and instruction first came, our own faith in God’s trustworthiness grows stronger. In our day, a primary tool for understanding the life and culture of God’s ancient people is archaeology and the abundant fruits of its labors.

Primary teaching methodologies in this MA(TS)-level course are the reading of the three course texts together with selected biblical texts, in-class lecture and discussion, and weekly short-essay assignments based on a variety of primary and secondary sources.

**Degree Objectives**

This course addresses particularly the following NTS Degree Program Objectives:

- **MDiv Objective 2**: Articulation of the knowledge of God through prayerful, scholarly study and a deepening understanding of the Christian Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments
- **MDiv Objective 5**: Understanding of local and global [and temporal] diversity through the investigation of cultural contexts, to enable the church to proclaim effectively and to embody the mission of God
- **MACFD Objective 1**: A deep personal commitment to God and God’s Church and a passionate, vital, and redemptive ministry formed through an ecclesial understanding of the Word of God, the heritage of the faith, the doctrines of the church, and through participation in the life of the church
- **MAICS Objective 1**: Knowledge of the Christian faith understood in its biblical foundations, historical developments, and theological expressions
- **MA(TS) General Academic and Research Tracks Objective 1**: Skill in academic research and writing
- **MA(TS) General Academic and Research Tracks Objective 2**: Knowledge of the major theological disciplines and their interrelationships
- **MA(TS) General Academic and Research Tracks Objective 3**: Ability to use the theological disciplines to reflect and engage the world as informed, thinking, Christian persons
- **MA(TS) Research Track Objective 4**: Ability to do theological research, critical theological reflection, and graduate-level academic writing.
**Course Outcomes**
Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:
- Identify and discuss major tools, methods, and results of the archaeological enterprise
- Identify, and discuss the importance of, major sites of Western Asian/eastern Mediterranean archaeology
- Discuss the importance of archaeology for our understanding of the biblical world.
(Because of the nature of the weekly essay assignments, each of them will contribute to the fulfillment of expected course outcomes; the same is true of assigned course readings, as well as of in-class lecture and discussion.)

**Required Texts**

**Anticipated Schedule of Text Readings/In-Class Discussion**
- Feb 3 – Syllabus; course introduction; geography of the biblical world
- Feb 10 – Currid, chapters 1-6
- Feb 17 – Currid, chapters 7-10
- Feb 24 – Hoerth, chapters 1-4
- Mar 3 – Hoerth, chapters 5-9
- Mar 10 – Hoerth, chapters 10-14
- Mar 17 – Reading and Research Week
- Mar 24 – Hoerth, chapters 15-20
- Apr 7 – McRay, chapters 3-4
- Apr 14 – McRay, chapters 5-6
- Apr 21 – McRay, chapters 7-9
- Apr 28 – McRay, chapters 10-11
- May 5 – Site report essays due and presented in class session

**Course Essay Assignments**
Twelve weekly essays will be assigned, each of six hundred (600) words minimum length. For each student, the ten essays earning the highest grades will count toward the course grade.
**N.B.** The twelfth and final essay is to be at least nine hundred (900) words in length, and is required of all students.
(Because of the nature of the weekly essay assignments, each of them will contribute to the fulfillment of all expected course outcomes.)

**N.B.:** An important purpose of these short-essay assignments is to give students sustained opportunities to improve both the *content* and the *mechanics* of their writing. This is the major reason for the allotment of three hours of *writing* time per paper in the “Distribution of Student
Learning Hours” in the chart below. Each student should schedule time for multiple proof-readings and, potentially, revision(s) of each of these short essays, before posting to Moodle. With respect both to content and to quality of writing, the bar purposely is set quite high. Fewer and shorter written assignments, with a comprehensive focus on the quality of writing, will improve one’s writing craft and artistry as longer assignments--often produced with less attention to most aspects of the writing process--usually cannot do.

**Distribution of Student Learning Hours**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-face class sessions (clock hours)</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading (primarily course texts)</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing (weekly essays, three hours per essay)</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Submitting Assignments**

Weekly essays are to be submitted in the assignments section of the Moodle course.

**Form and Style Expectations**

NTS has adopted Turabian’s text on form, style, usage, and other writing issues. Written work is to conform to best practices, as set forth in Turabian. The professor’s summary of commonly forgotten guidelines and problematic issues, entitled, “Better Academic Writing,” is included in our Moodle course resources. When writing, make it your constant reference companion.

**Inclusive Language**

NTS is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people too often use 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 writing. All written work accepted to meet course requirements will have employed gender-neutral or gender-inclusive language, as needed and/or as appropriate.

**Policy Regarding Late Work**

Essays submitted late cannot earn a grade higher than B+. Any essay submitted more than two weeks late will factor into the course grade as an essay grade of “F.”

**Additional Costs**

No course costs are expected beyond NTS tuition, fees, and textbook purchases.
**Course Grading**
The ten essays contributing to the course grade will be weighted at ten percent (10%), each. Assuming consistent class attendance and submission of ten weekly essays of graduate-level quality, the student may expect to earn a course grade of A or B. An essay earning a grade of C+ or lower may be rewritten and resubmitted within two weeks of the grade’s posting; resubmitted essays may earn a grade of B, but not higher.

**Reasonable Modifications**
In accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NTS is committed to providing students with disabilities the opportunity to participate in 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 accommodation(s) should contact the Office of the Registrar. They also should contact the professor—preferably no later than the end of the first class session—to discuss learning needs and adaptive strategies that have been beneficial in the past.

**Class Attendance**
Class attendance is essential for realizing maximum benefit from this educational experience. If a student is absent for more than six class hours, the course grade will be lowered. Absences totaling more than eight hours almost certainly will cause a student to fail the course. Prior notification of the professor for any absence is expected, when possible; the professor is to be notified of the reasons for/circumstances of all absences as soon as possible.

Attendance records must be reported for those obtaining Veterans Administration and/or Department of Education benefits. It is the student’s responsibility to notify the professor if attendance is to be reported.

**Audio and Video Recordings**
To foster a safe learning environment in which various viewpoints are respected, both audio and video recordings and transcriptions thereof, by students, are prohibited without the express permission of the faculty member in charge of the course. If permission is granted, redistribution of such recordings and transcriptions outside the scope of the course is prohibited as a matter of Seminary policy.

Students enrolling in video-conferencing courses and/or participating in certain synchronous Moodle activities should be aware that images and voices are transmitted digitally through the video-conferencing equipment and may be recorded. Continued enrollment in such a course constitutes the student’s expression of willingness to participate in the course under these conditions. If you have privacy concerns, please discuss your enrollment with the Registrar.
## Course Calendar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Personal and course introductions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 2/10  | 2    | **Reading:** Currid, chapters 1-6  
      |      | **Essay #1 due;** details in assignments section of Moodle course |
| 2/17  | 3    | **Reading:** Currid, chapters 7-10  
      |      | **Essay #2 due;** details in assignments section of Moodle course |
| 2/24  | 4    | **Reading:** Hoerth, chapters 1-4  
      |      | **Essay #3 due;** details in assignments section of Moodle course |
| 3/3   | 5    | **Reading:** Hoerth, chapters 5-9  
      |      | **Essay #4 due;** details in assignments section of Moodle course |
| 3/10  | 6    | **Reading:** Hoerth, chapters 10-14  
      |      | **Essay #5 due;** details in assignments section of Moodle course |
| 3/17  | 7    | Reading and Research Week |
| 3/24  | 8    | **Reading:** Hoerth, chapters 15-20  
      |      | **Essay #6 due;** details in assignments section of Moodle course |
| 3/31  | 9    | **Reading:** McRay, Introduction and chapters 1-2  
      |      | **Essay #7 due;** details in assignments section of Moodle course |
| 4/7   | 10   | **Reading:** McRay, chapters 3-4  
      |      | **Essay #8 due;** details in assignments section of Moodle course |
| 4/14  | 11   | **Reading:** McRay, chapters 5-6  
      |      | **Essay #9 due;** details in assignments section of Moodle course |
| 4/21  | 12   | **Reading:** McRay, chapters 7-9  
      |      | **Essay #10 due;** details in assignments section of Moodle course |
| 4/28  | 13   | **Reading:** McRay, chapters 10-11  
      |      | **Essay #11 due;** details in assignments section of Moodle course  
      |      | Course evaluations (approximate release time by the Dean's Office) |
| 5/5   | 14   | **Essay #12 due;** details in assignments section of Moodle course |