

# SC-617: The Pauline Letters

## Fall 2022 Syllabus

Edward F. Duffy, Adjunct, New Testament Greek

**Meeting Dates and Times:** Wednesdays 4:00pm-6:45pm

**Contact Information:** eduffy@hartfordinternational.edu

**Office Hours:** By appointment

***Email Policy:** The instructor will use the official Hartsem student email addresses for all communications. Please check your Hartsem email account regularly.*

*Students should also make sure they have access to **Canvas**, as some assignments will be online. **24/7 Canvas Hotline: 877-249-4494***

### I. Course Description

In his New Testament letters, Paul describes himself as an apostle – passionately preaching Jesus Christ. In this self-described calling as an apostle, he makes bold claims about who this Jesus was, and is; and the kind of relationship a believer can have with him. Those truth claims are frequently made in the context of, and in response to, specific, local contexts. It is likely that Paul himself would have been baffled at a modern tendency to interpret his writings as if they were the work of a systematic theologian. In this course, we will seek beyond the broad characterizations that are so often made about a “theology of Paul” – to delve into his specific words, at specific times, on specific topics in the thirteen epistles that are normally ascribed to his pen. Who is he? What texts has he written, and why? For whom? Our goal will be to sharpen the focus on our picture of this remarkable, always controversial figure of faith history.

### II. Course Objectives

- To examine the Pauline letters in their ancient contexts, and engage in literary and rhetorical inquiry, considering questions such as how, why, and for whom these texts were written. • To discuss major methodological approaches to Pauline interpretation.
- To analyze the political, theological, and ethical implications for contemporary society due to various interpretations of Pauline literature.
- To develop skills of critical analysis by reading Pauline texts closely, engaging secondary literature, constructively contributing to discussions, and crafting scholarly writing assignments.

### III. Identified Seminary Learning Outcomes:

- To demonstrate foundational and critical knowledge of one’s own religion. • To demonstrate knowledge and skills for dialogical and constructive engagement with diversity.

## IV. Required Texts

1. Bruce W. Longenecker and Todd D. Still, *Thinking Through Paul: A Survey of His Life, Letters, and Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Academic, 2014).
2. The *New Revised Standard Version* of the Bible. Students will bring a print Bible to each class – not smartphone/electronic Bibles.

## V. Course Requirements and Assessments

### A. Presence, Participation, and Preparation (45% of Final Grade)

**Regular attendance at all class sessions and active participation in discussions are expected.**

If you are unable to attend a class session, please notify the professor in advance or at the earliest opportunity. Please plan to arrive promptly to class, and stay for its duration. *It is also important that students return promptly after class breaks.*

### B. Midterm Paper (30% of Final Grade) Due: eight week of class.

Students will write a **7-page research paper** on a topic or biblical passage related to this course employing methodological approaches discussed in class. In addition to some of the readings from the course, the paper must also incorporate at least four works that were not assigned.

***Paper topics must be approved by the instructor by sixth week of class.***

Papers will show a critical engagement with both primary and secondary texts. This includes, but is not limited to:

- the student's interpretation of the text (based on an examination of the immediate and broader literary context)
- engagement of the text with one of the methodological approaches discussed in class
- implications of such an interpretation (who might benefit or suffer from it?)
- a recapitulation of the secondary author's main arguments
- critical assessment of the secondary texts (agree or disagree, and why?)

**Paper specifications:** Times New Roman, 12-point font, 1-inch margins, double-spaced.

### C. Final Reflection Paper and Presentation (25% of Final Grade) Due: last day of class.

In this reflection, **which will be read on the last day of class**, students will critically reflect on some issue raised by the Apostle, in its original context; and how it relates to a believer's life in the contemporary world. Why does it matter?

Students must show engagement and immersion in the methodology of this class; include scriptural citations, aspects of secondary scholarship, etc. Nevertheless, it is your voice, your deep thinking that is to come to the fore in this paper. I do want to hear your voice, not just that of secondary scholars.

### **Essay specifications:**

- Length: Four pages (minimum 1200 words) *No longer.*
- Double-spaced, 12 pt. font, Times New Roman, no justified margins, 1-inch margins *Students will bring TWO hardcopies to class, & email a copy to eduffy@hartfordinternational.edu by*

*4pm.*

## **VI. Learning Resources and Expectations**

### ***Hartford Seminary Grading Scale***

#### **Master's Students:**

A (95-100) Demonstrates excellent mastery of the subject matter, a superior ability to articulate this, and provides helpful connections to daily life or contemporary issues. Exceeds expectations of the course.

A- (90-94) Demonstrates mastery of the subject matter, ability to articulate this well, and makes connections to daily life or contemporary issues. Exceeds expectations of the course.

B+(87-89) Demonstrates a very good understanding of the subject matter, able to articulate lessons learned in the assignment well. Meets expectations of the course.

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B (83-86) Demonstrates an understanding of the subject matter and the ability to articulate lessons learned. Meets expectations of the course.

B-(80-82) Demonstrates an understanding of the material at hand, has some difficulty articulating this, and basic connection of the material to daily life or contemporary issues/life. Meets basic expectations for the course.

C+(77-79) Demonstrates a basic comprehension of the subject matter, weak articulation and connections. Does not meet expectations for the course.

C (70-76) Demonstrates a minimal comprehension of the subject matter and has difficulty making connections. Does not meet expectations of the course.

F (below 70) Unable to meet the basic requirements of the course.

- Grades range from A to C and F; A+'s and C-'s are not part of the grading system. • On a 4.0 GPA scale – A (4.00), A-(3.66), B+(3.33), B(3.00), B-(2.66), C+(2.33), C(2.00) and F(0.00). A grade point average of no less than B- (2.66) is required to maintain good standing. The minimum G.P.A. required for graduation is 2.75.

**DMin students:** High Pass (95-100), Pass (83-94), Low Pass (70-82), and Fail (below 70)

### ***Plagiarism and Academic Integrity***

Academic honesty and integrity are expected of all students. **Plagiarism exists when:** a) the work submitted was done, in whole or in part, by anyone other than the one submitting the work, b) parts of the work, whether direct quotations, ideas, or data, are taken from another source without acknowledgement, c) the whole work is copied from another source [especially a web based source], or d) significant portions of one's own previous work used in another course. See "Plagiarism" at <http://www.hartsem.edu/current-students/policies/>.

***Appropriate Classroom Etiquette and Use of Technology:***

In order to respect the community within the classroom: 1) **Mute all cell phones** during class; 2) Utilize laptops for the sole purpose of taking class notes. Please do not surf the web, email, or other programs during class time. Such use of the computer during class is disrespectful of the class and professor, and may result in **lowering your participation grade**.

***Inclusive Language:***

Hartford Seminary is committed to a policy of inclusion in its academic life and mission. All members of the community are expected to communicate in language that reflects the equality of genders, openness to diverse cultural and theological perspectives, and sensitivity to one another's images of God.

***Extensions:***

Extensions for papers will be given for illnesses or family emergencies only in consultation with the instructor.

***Official Handbooks:***

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For all other questions you might have regarding policies or procedures, please check the student handbook <http://www.hartsem.edu/current-students/student-handbook/> and seminary policies at Academic policies are listed at <http://www.hartsem.edu/current-students/policies/>

## **CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS**

*\*\* Please note that all readings are subject to change.  
Students will be notified in advance. \*\**

### **Week 1 – Wednesday, September 7: Introduction to the Course: Approaching Paul**

**Primary Reading: Acts 9-28.**

**Secondary Reading:**

- Longenecker and Still, *Thinking Through Paul*, 10-51.
- Beker, J.C., "The Authority of Scripture: Normative or Incidental?" *Theology Today* 49.3 (1992), pp. 376-382.

### **Week 2 – Wednesday, September 14: Paul and the World in Which He Lived**

**Secondary Reading:**

- Neil Elliott, "Situating the Apostle Paul in His Day and Engaging His Legacy in Our

Own” in *Fortress Commentary*, pp. 365-393

- Victor Furnish, *The Moral Teaching of Paul: Selected Issues*, pp. 9-27
- Lawrence M. Wills, “Negotiating the Jewish Heritage of Early Christianity,” in *Fortress Commentary*, pp. 31-45.

### **Week 3 - Wednesday, September 21: 1 and 2 Thessalonians**

#### **Primary Reading:**

- 1, 2 Thessalonians

#### **Secondary Reading:**

- Longenecker and Still, 57-85.

#### **Exegesis Reflection:**

1 Thessalonians 5:14-24 “Quench the Holy Spirit: What Does It Mean?”  
(compare English translations; and what is your best “read” on what Paul is trying to say, when he uses the word, ‘quench’?)

### **Week 4 – Wednesday, September 28: Philemon**

#### **Primary Reading:**

- Philemon and Colossians

#### **Secondary Reading:**

- Longenecker and Still, 211-237.

#### **Exegesis Reflection:**

Philemon 10-11-12 “Trace the line of argument” (How is the writer making the appeal; why does the word “profitable” or “useful” appear in v. 11; read about the different “plays on words” – Onesimus in v. 20 and the word for “benefit”; and “useful” in v. 11 and the name for Christ)

### **Wednesday October 5: (no class, seminary closed in observance of *Yom Kippur*)**

### **Week 5 - Wednesday, October 12: Galatians**

#### **Primary Reading:**

- Galatians

#### **Secondary Reading:**

- Longenecker and Still, 87-105.

**Exegesis:** “*Faith of Jesus Christ; or faith in Jesus Christ.*” (2:16) Making the case for one, or the other.

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### **Week 6 - Wednesday, October 19: Romans**

*Deadline for Midterm Paper Topic Approval! Send to [eduffy@hartfordinternational.edu](mailto:eduffy@hartfordinternational.edu).*

#### **Primary Reading:**

- Romans

**Secondary Reading:**

- Longenecker and Still, 163-191.
- Nasrallah, 179-223.

**Exegesis Reflection:**

Romans 12:1-5 “A Plethora of Questions” ( How does Paul use the word, “members”? How do you hear and ‘process’ the words, “conformed” and “transformed? Consider the “tense” of the imperative verbs – “do not be . . .”)

**Week 7 - Wednesday, October 26: 1 Corinthians**

**Primary Reading:**

- 1 Corinthians

**Secondary Reading:**

- Longenecker and Still, 107-137.
- Nasrallah, 141-178.

**Exegesis Reflection:**

1 Corinthians 1:18-25 – The Word of God – how is it “foolishness” to those who are perishing; can you make an outline, or diagram, or chart that would illustrate the flow of ideas, the development of thoughts in the apostle’s argument?

**Week 8 - Wednesday, November 2: 2 Corinthians**

***Midterm Papers Due Today!***

*Bring a hardcopy to class and email a copy to [eduffy@hartfordinternational.edu](mailto:eduffy@hartfordinternational.edu)*

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**Primary Reading:**

- 2 Corinthians.

**Secondary Reading:**

- Longenecker and Still, 139-161.

**Exegesis Reflection:**

An “Abundance of Riches” in 2 Corinthians 3:18 – reflect on the phrases “unveiled face,” and “the divine presence . . . as reflected in a mirror,” and “glory to glory” and other phrases – and what they are seemingly saying, in particular about human transformation.

**Week 9 – Wednesday, November 9: Ephesians**

**Primary Reading:**

- Read Ephesians

Secondary Reading:

- Longenecker and Still, 239-259.

**Exegesis Reflection:** Ephesians 2:1-10.

“Prepositions” – you do not need to read Greek to know that the prepositions are key – *by* grace, *through* faith. Reflect on some of the deeper meanings of this passage with particular attention to its prepositions.

### **Week 10 - Wednesday, November 16: The Pastoral Letters**

**Primary Reading:**

- 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, and Titus

**Secondary Reading:**

- Longenecker and Still, 261-295.

**Exegesis Reflection:**

1 Timothy 1:15-16 – What is chiasm, and how might it help explain not only the structure but some of the deeper meanings of this passage?

### **Week 11 - Wednesday, November 23: Apocalyptic Narrative in Paul**

**Secondary Reading:**

- Longenecker and Still, 297-319.

**Exegesis Reflection:**

Revelation 3:20 – “I stand at the door and knock” – Before you do an exegesis of this verse and the pericope contained by it, we will offer some pointers – as tools – for potentially unlocking some of its meaning: conditional sentences, verb tenses.

### **Week 12 - Wednesday, November 30: Theological Narrative in Paul**

**Secondary Reading:**

- Longenecker and Still, 321-347.

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### **Week 13 – Wednesday, December 7: Micro-Narratives of Jesus Groups**

**Secondary Reading:**

- Longenecker and Still, 349-376.

### **Week 14 - Wednesday, December 14: Final Reflection Paper Presentations & Course**

**Papers Due on Wednesday, December 21**

