

University of  
Dubuque  
Theological  
Seminary

# BI 672 / 673: Revelation

Greek Exegesis/  
English Exegesis

Fall 2021

Online and  
Residential



Image: Anthony Falbo, *Revelation Chapter 4* (2011)

## What's in the Syllabus?

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## Instructor Information

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**Phone #:** 913-221-1901  
**Virtual Office Hours:** TBD



## Course Description

The artistic centerpiece for this course is Anthony Falbo's 2011 cubist work, *Revelation Chapter 4* (above). Like the book of Revelation itself, the elements of *Revelation Chapter 4* are both familiar and eccentric. Also like Revelation, the crucified, resurrected, and glorified Lord Jesus sits prominently at the work's center, bringing different figures into the concentric circles of worship.

This class explores the literary, religious, theological, historical, and social worlds of Revelation. It also attends to the reception of Revelation throughout history and how John's apocalypse is presently read in various social contexts. In the class, students will practice and develop various exegetical skillsets related to the interpretation of the New Testament in general and Revelation specifically. In the act of interpretation, they will merge their own intersectional social worlds with the author of Revelation's.

Revelation is a puzzling text, especially to those not accustomed to reading apocalyptic literature. Historically, the book has been shied away from even by Christianity's most-eminent thinkers. By situating Revelation in its literary, historical, and cultural contexts, students will be better equipped to interpret, apply, and preach this peculiarly glorious Christian Scripture.



## Course Objectives

Everything in this course, from readings to assignments to lectures, is designed to help students accomplish the objectives below. Moreover, grades in the course are determined by students ability to complete these objectives and doing so throughout the course of the semester. Objectives vary between the Greek and English Exegesis version of the course.

### Objectives

- #1:** Exegete a select passage from Revelation, paying attention to the world behind, world of, and world in front of the text.
- #2:** Identify and articulate central tenets of your own social context, explaining how these affect how you interpret the New Testament and Revelation in particular.
- #3:** As part of the interpretive process, make use of multiple biblical commentaries that adopt various exegetical, theological, and ideological perspectives.
- #4 (Greek Exegesis Only):** Utilize Greek linguistic tools in service of interpretation of Revelation and select passages from it.
- #4 (English Exegesis Only):** Engage a variety of contemporary perspectives on scholarship of Revelation and determine how your own theology relates to them.

## **Curricular Objectives**

*Be formed by, live in, and minister out of Scripture and the historical and theological tradition of the church (MDiv)*

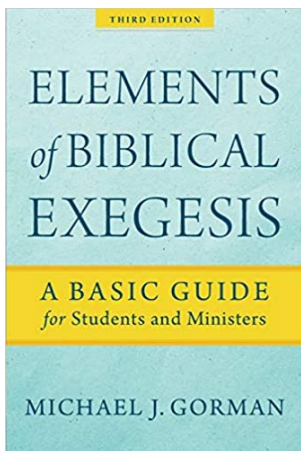
*Interpret the Christian Scriptures through faithful exegesis and in light of the Christian tradition (MDiv)*

*Preach the Word of God with faithfulness and clarity (MDiv)*

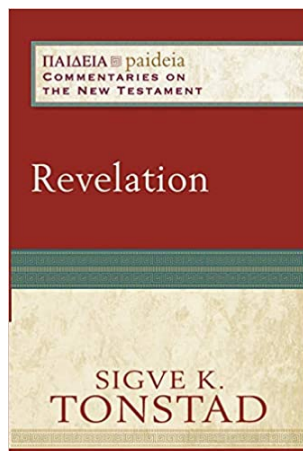
*Articulate and reflect critically and constructively on the biblical and theological foundations of God's mission to the world (MAMD)*

*Be able to identify and interpret key themes from the Christian scriptures (MACL)*

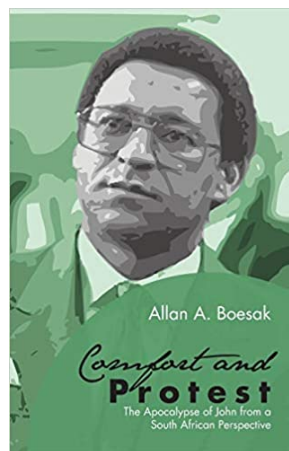
## **Required Texts (Both Greek and English Exegesis)**



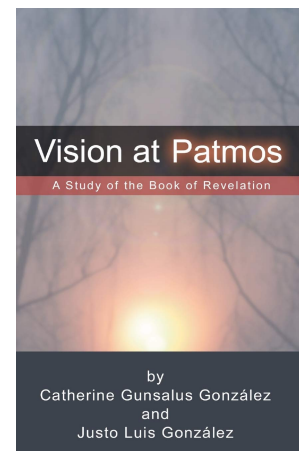
Michael J. Gorman,  
***Elements of Biblical Exegesis***  
**(3rd ed.)**, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic (2020).  
ISBN: 1540960315  
\$24 on Amazon.



Sigve K. Tonstad  
***Revelation (Paideia)***, Grand Rapids: Baker Academic (2019).  
ISBN: 0801049008  
\$31 on Amazon.



Allan A. Boesak,  
***Comfort and Protest: The Apocalypse of John from a South-African Perspective***  
Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock (2015, reprint ed., 1987 original ed.).  
ISBN: 1498226418  
\$19 on Amazon.



Catherine Gunsalus González and Justo Luis González,  
***Vision at Patmos: A Study of the Book of Revelation***  
Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock (1978).  
ISBN: 1592444148  
\$18 on Amazon.

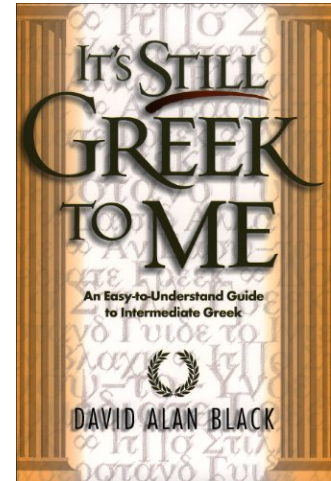
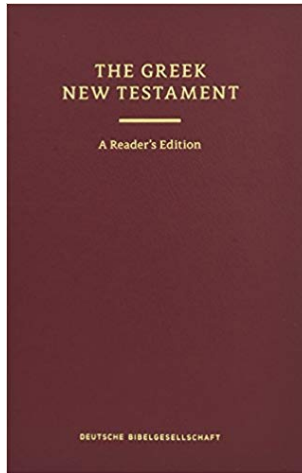
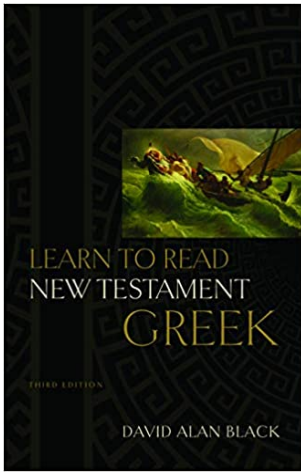


## Additional Texts: Greek Exegesis Only

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The following texts are only relevant to Greek Exegesis students. Some are required, some are recommended, and some were likely acquired for the introductory Greek course.

### Required Texts:



David Allan Black, *Learn to Read New Testament Greek*, Nashville: B&H Publishing (2009). ISBN: 0805444939(May be substituted with another

**UBS 5th Revised Greek New Testament Reader's Edition**  
German Bible Society, 2015  
ISBN: 1619706180

David Alan Black, *It's Still Greek to Me: An Easy-to-Understand Guide to Intermediate Greek* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998)  
ISBN: 0801021812

### Recommended Texts:

The following are not strictly necessary to pass or to get an “A” in the class, but will be very helpful in completing the objectives for the course and for any students who will be taking the PCUSA Ordination Exam.

**Walter Bauer and Frederick W. Danker et al. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).**

Commonly referred to as BDAG, this is the best lexicon for New Testament Greek. It is the “full version” of the required lexicon for the course. The price is steep, but serious Greek students will need to own this eventually. It is one to keep an eye out for at used book stores.

**Metzger, Bruce Manning. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament: A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament (Fourth Revised Edition)*. 2nd ed. New York: United Bible Societies, 1994.**

This book explains many of the “textual variants” that appear in the Greek New Testament. It is particularly helpful for the “establishing the text” portion of the PCUSA Ordination Exam.

**Köstenberger, Andreas J., Benjamin L. Merkle, and Robert L. Plummer. *Going Deeper with New Testament Greek: An Intermediate Study of the Grammar and Syntax of the New Testament*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016.**

This is a more expansive Greek grammar than the required grammar for the course. It goes deeper into and gives more explanation to many of the grammatical concepts introduced in Black's *It's Still Greek to Me*.



## Additional Texts: English Exegesis

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The following are all “optional” texts. “Optional” here has several meanings and each is explained in the italics below that comes before the list. Some of these text will be necessary to complete the course’s objectives. Many will appear in assignment instructions as resources to consult. However, there is no need to acquire all of the books in the lists below.

**Choose one, the Other, or Both (English Exegesis Only):**

*Both of these books are excellent general introductions to Revelation. Each week there will be readings assigned from each of the books, but students will only be responsible to read **one** of them. Of course, if you wish, you can acquire and read both.*

Gorman, Michael J. *Reading Revelation Responsibly: Uncivil Worship and Witness: Following the Lamb into the New Creation*. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2011.

Koester, Craig R. *Revelation and the End of All Things*. Second Edition. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2018.

**Texts for English Exegesis Students:**

*As part of the grade specifications for this class, English Exegesis students may complete a book report on one of these texts or on another that is approved by the professor:*

To be determined. This list will be updated and sent to enrolled students as soon as it is finalized.

*As part of the grade specifications for this class, English Exegesis students may write a report on perspectives and approaches to Revelation, explaining how their own theology and perspective on the text relate to them. One or more of these texts will be particularly helpful for that report:*

To be determined. This list will be updated and sent to enrolled students as soon as it is finalized.



## Commentaries (Choose One or More)

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Each student will choose one of the following commentaries on Revelation. Reading from this commentary will inform their forum posts and classroom contributions. The intention is that several different interpretive perspectives will be brought into the discussion on a given portion of Revelation. Of course students may purchase more than one of these commentaries (and this is recommended for the purpose of future preaching, teaching, and research), but students will only be responsible to read and report on one of these commentaries for the purposes of the course.

Greek Exegesis students **\*must\*** choose a commentary from the second list. The reason for this is that the commentaries in the second list presume knowledge of Greek and attend to issues of translation and grammar to a much greater extent than the commentaries in the first list. English Exegesis students may choose a commentary from either list but should be aware that commentaries in the second list presume a working knowledge of Greek.

### **English Exegesis Students:**

To be determined. This list will be updated and sent to enrolled students as soon as it is finalized.

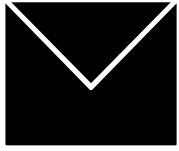
### **Greek Exegesis Students:**

To be determined. This list will be updated and sent to enrolled students as soon as it is finalized.



# Assignments

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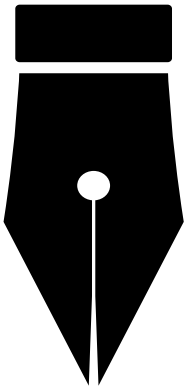
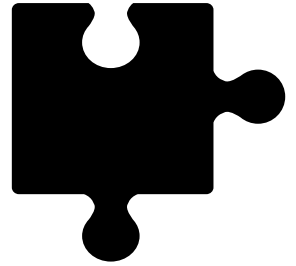


## Weekly Online Forum Discussions or Residential Classes

The course will be built upon discussions of readings and translations. Online students will be assigned will post in Moodle forums, as well as respond to other students' posts in Moodle on a weekly basis. Residential students will attend weekly synchronous meetings.

## Greek Assignments (Greek Exegesis Only)

Students taking the Greek Exegesis version of the course will complete assignments related to Greek grammar, translation, and textual criticism. There will be one of these assignment available each week in the course, though student will not necessarily be required to complete all of them to achieve the grade they want in the class (see more in the grading section of the syllabus). Assignments will either be self-assessed or discussed in class.



## Short Assignments (English Exegesis Only)

There will be the opportunity to write three short assignments throughout the course of the semester. Students will not necessarily be required to complete all three to achieve the grade that they want to in the class (see more in the grading section of the syllabus). The three short assignment topics are as follows:

- Book Report
- Topical Assignment
- Perspectives Assignment

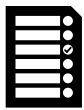
## “World” Assignments

There will be one assignment for each of the “worlds” of the text: the World Behind the Text, the World of the Text, and the World in Front of the Text. These three assignments are designed to scaffold learning the exegetical process. The final exegetical paper (detailed below) addresses all three of these worlds. The “world assignments” require students to address each of the three worlds separately from one another before bringing all the worlds together in one interpretive paper.



## Final Exegetical Paper

Students will write an exegetical paper on any passage from Revelation. The exegetical paper represents the culmination of the student's learning in the course and thus requires him or her to consider the passage's historical and cultural contexts, its literary context, it's contemporary relevance, and to consult several articles and commentaries on the passage. Detailed instructions for the exegesis paper can be found in the syllabus's appendix.



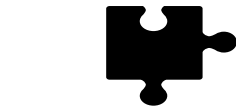
# Greek Exegesis Specifications Grading

This class uses what is called specifications or "specs" grading. All assignments are graded on a pass/fail basis. The instructions for each assignment will have detailed specs (read: requirements) for how to pass the assignment at an "acceptable" level. To achieve the grade you want in the class, you will need to complete the different specs for each letter grade. This will be slightly different for each "version" of the class (Greek online, Greek residential, English online, English residential). The rationale for using this grading system is that it removes much of the subjectivity of grading, restores rigor to academic work, and it is learning-outcome oriented.

## To Earn a "D:"



1 "Acceptable"  
Exegesis Paper



5 Greek Assignments

8 Forums or Classes



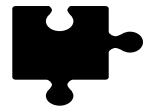
0 "World" Assignments



## To Earn a "C:"



1 "Acceptable"  
Exegesis Paper



7 Greek Assignments

9 Forums or Classes



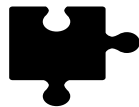
1 "World" Assignments



## To Earn a "B:"



1 "Advanced"  
Exegesis Paper



9 Greek Assignments

10 Forums or Classes



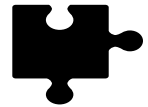
2 "World" Assignments



## To Earn an "A:"



1 "Advanced"  
Exegesis Paper



10 Greek Assignments

11 Forums or Classes



3 "World" Assignments



**Grace Tokens:** Every student receives three "grace tokens" that can be used at any time during the course. These "grace tokens" can be redeemed for any of the following with no explanation needed:

- Revising and resubmitting a paper that did not meet the specs to be deemed "acceptable"
- A 48-hour extension on a paper
- Excusing an unexcused absence
- A "free" credit for a week of discussion forum participation (i.e. getting credit for participating in one discussion forum without having participated in it)
- A "free" credit for a Greek assignment (i.e. getting credit for the assignment without having completed it)





# English Exegesis Specifications Grading

This class uses what is called specifications or "specs" grading. All assignments are graded on a pass/fail basis. The instructions for each assignment will have detailed specs (read: requirements) for how to pass the assignment at an "acceptable" level. To achieve the grade you want in the class, you will need to complete the different specs for each letter grade. This will be slightly different for each "version" of the class (Greek online, Greek residential, English online, English residential). The rationale for using this grading system is that it removes much of the subjectivity of grading, restores rigor to academic work, and it is learning-outcome oriented.

## To Earn a "D:"



1 "Acceptable" Exegesis Paper



0 Short Assignments

8 Forums or Classes

0 "World" Assignments



## To Earn a "C:"



1 "Acceptable" Exegesis Paper



1 Short Assignment

9 Forums or Classes

1 "World" Assignments



## To Earn a "B:"



1 "Advanced" Exegesis Paper



2 Short Assignments

10 Forums or Classes

2 "World" Assignments



## To Earn an "A:"



1 "Advanced" Exegesis Paper



3 Short Assignments

11 Forums or Classes

3 "World" Assignments



**Grace Tokens:** Every student receives three "grace tokens" that can be used at any time during the course. These "grace tokens" can be redeemed for any of the following with no explanation needed:

- Revising and resubmitting a paper that did not meet the specs to be deemed "acceptable"
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- A "free" credit for a week of discussion forum participation (i.e. getting credit for participating in one discussion forum without having participated in it)
- A "free" credit for a Greek assignment (i.e. getting credit for the assignment without having completed it)

Please note that this course description is a preliminary version of the course syllabus and is **not the syllabus itself**. The document will be updated in advance of the semester. You can use this document as a guide to purchase books (any texts listed here **will not change**), but grade items and other elements of the course description may change in advance of the course's start date in Fall 2021.

See you in the class!

–Dr. Elder