



Unit Descriptor

SPECIFICATION

Unit Title	Biblical Literacy in a Media Culture	
Unit Code		
Credit Rating	30	
Study hours	300	
FHEQ Level	7	
Unit Leader	Peter Phillips	
ECTS value	15	
CATS value		
Programme eligibility	<i>Pathway type/name</i> MA in Digital Theology	<i>Compulsory or optional</i> Optional
Pre-requisites; co-requisites and barred combinations	None	

SYNOPSIS

Lectures and seminars will offer an overview of key themes in biblical literacy, focussing largely on key contemporary Global North cultures where current studies have noted a decrease in biblical literacy. We will explore the perceived effects of this decrease in terms of social exclusion and contemporary thinking. We will explore various ways in which biblical literacy is present within and continues to influence media culture and appropriate ways in which to analyse and reflect on this influence. In group sessions, we will focus on the importance of biblical literacy and explore appropriate strategies to promote biblical literacy in different cultures across the world (both Global North and Global Majority cultures). The overall aim is to enable students to develop their own understanding of biblical literacy and its importance within the mission of the church in tomorrow's world.

AIMS

This unit aims to:

- Enable theological reflection on biblical literacy in contemporary culture with special emphasis on the availability of the Bible, contemporary engagement with the Bible within the Church community and in the arts and entertainment industry
- Explore appropriate ways in which biblical literacy can be fostered within these communities.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Knowledge and Understanding

By the end of this unit students will be able to:

- understand current issues relating to biblical literacy within key contemporary Western cultures in a systematic way
- apply this understanding to other Global cultures, especially Global Majority cultures
- critically assess the role of media culture in biblical literacy
- critically evaluate the contextual impact of biblical literacy on religious knowledge, social cohesion and theological understanding
- undertake in-depth examinations of the subject area, providing the basis for ongoing research opportunities and professional development.

Subject-specific and Intellectual Skills

By the end of this unit students will be able to:

- reflect theologically in a sustained and focused way upon, and evaluate critically, different forms of communication in a secular and a Christian context
- critically evaluate the place of biblical literacy within contemporary cultural identity
- understand at an advanced level the role of biblical literacy as it relates to opportunities and challenges for the mission and ministry of the church and for ongoing research and professional development
- reflect theologically within an interdisciplinary environment both on the context of contemporary society and the importance of and interpretation of biblical texts within the Church and wider society.

Generic Skills

By the end of this unit students will be able to:

- reflect within an interdisciplinary environment
- demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving complex issues
- engage in informed group analysis and discussion, developing communication of ideas and research outcomes to specialist and non-specialist audiences.

TEACHING AND LEARNING METHODS

Methods

The unit will be taught over two periods of residence offering 30 hours of contact time. This time will focus on developing an understanding of biblical literacy within media culture, through staff- led and student-led seminars, discussion groups, joint teaching, and within a multi-media environment. Specific attention

	will be given to exploration of biblical literacy through contemporary media output (films, television, theatre) and include a group opportunity to critically assess a live performance. Some individual consultation will be available during these periods and on-line.	
Resources provided	Library Various e-resources, such as e-books and scholarly articles, accessed through ATLA, Ebsco, etc. Unit-specific lecture notes, core texts and various other learning resources will be available to students via Moodle	
Breakdown	Activity	Allotted Study Hours
	Lecture	15
	Seminar/tutorial	15
	Completion of assessment task	180
	Preparation for scheduled sessions	90
	Wider reading	0
	Practical or placement	0
	Revision/ Examinations	0
	Follow-up work	0
	Total study time	300

ASSESSMENT METHODS

Task	Details (e.g., length)	Percentage weighting
<i>Formative</i> Book Review and Student-led seminar	1,000 word book review and student-led seminar, which would be a theological reflection on biblical literacy within a specific aspect of contemporary media, on which there will be written feedback.	0%
<i>Summative</i> Presentation and written evaluation	The development of a resource for encouraging engagement with the Bible aimed at either a	40% presentation 60% reflection

Church or non-Church context including a 20 minute presentation and accompanied by a critical evaluation of up to 2,500 words. The subject area of the presentation will be determined in a tutorial with the course leader and agreed between the course leader and student. The student will meet with the course tutor on a minimum of two occasions between the initial tutorial and submission of the final presentation to determine progress and ensure compatibility.

FEEDBACK METHODS

Feedback to formative assignments will comprise dialogue in seminars and written comments by tutors. Tutors will also be available for individual consultation. Written feedback on summative submissions will be supported by individual tutorials.

RESIT/ REFERRAL METHODS

A new summative essay title will be set

RECOMMENDED READING

Bauckham, Richard J., *The Bible and Mission: Christian Witness in a Postmodern World* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2003)

Brueggemann, W. *Cadences of Home* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1997)

Collins, John J., *The Bible after Babel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005)
<https://www.perlego.com/book/1725164/babel-and-bible-two-lectures-pdf>

Edwards, Katie (ed.), *Rethinking Biblical Literacy* (London, Bloomsbury, 2015)
<https://www.perlego.com/book/804224/rethinking-biblical-literacy-pdf>

Ess, Charles, *Critical Thinking and the Bible* (New York: UPA, 2004)

Ford, David, Joshua Mann and Peter Phillips, *The Bible and Digital Millennials* (London: Routledge, 2019) <https://www.perlego.com/book/1500958/the-bible-and-digital-millennials-pdf>

Mitchell, J. *Visually Speaking: Radio and the Renaissance of Preaching* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1999)

Parsons, Michael, *Text & Task: Scripture and Mission* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 2005) <https://www.perlego.com/book/1724465/text-and-task-scripture-and-mission-pdf>

Phillips, Peter, *Engaging the Word* (Oxford: BRF, 2019)

Phillips, Peter, *The Bible, Social Media and Digital Culture* (London: Routledge, 2020)

Postman, N., *Amusing Ourselves to Death* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1985)

Romanowski, W. D., *Eyes Wide Open: Looking for God in Popular Culture* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2001)

Siker, Jeffrey, *Liquid Scripture* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017)

Sogaard, V., *Media in Church and Mission* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1993)

Walsh, Brian and Sylvia Keesmaat, *Colossians Remixed* (Downers Grove, Ill.: IVP, 2004)

Wright, Tom, *Simply Christian* (London: SPCK, 2006)

ADDITIONAL NOTES

Provisional Curriculum:

- What do we mean by biblical literacy and are there counter-proposals?
- Does biblical literacy change within other Global North contexts or in Global South contexts?
- Has biblical literacy changed over the centuries?
- How has biblical literacy altered in comparison to other literacies?
- In what ways is the Bible different from other texts, e.g. theological interpretation of scripture
- What does the Bible have to say about its own interpretation?
- In what ways has the Bible always been a mediated text?
- How is the Bible mediated in contemporary (digital) media?
- How is the Bible mediated in contemporary social media?
- What is the relationship between the Bible and Digital Technology?
- In what ways does Digital transform the Bible's consumption in contemporary society?
- How does this affect the Bible's authority and influence?
- How do different people read the Bible today and through which particular lenses?

- Who is researching biblical literacy and what are they saying?
- Where is the future for biblical literacy?

APPROVAL

Date approved by UGC	
Valid from Date (Publishing Date)	