

THIS IS A DRAFT ONLY!
FURTHER CHANGES WILL BE MADE TO THIS SYLLABUS BEFORE CLASSES BEGIN.
YOU MAY CONTACT THE PROFESSOR FOR UPDATES BEFORE THAT DATE.

Spiritual Formation BTS-5390M and BTS-5390LMS¹ (3 credit hours)

Canadian Mennonite University: Graduate Course Syllabus
Winter, 2017

2:30-5:15 p.m., Room **TBA**, (weekly September 11 – November 29)

NOTE: class will not meet on October 30 or November 29 (as scheduled in the academic calendar). Instead the class will meet for a one-day retreat off campus during the semester. The retreat date will be decided in consultation with the students at the start of the semester. A small lab fee will be charged to each student to cover the cost of the retreat. Class will also not meet on October 9 (Thanksgiving Day).

Professor: Andrew Dyck, PhD, VU (Vrije Universiteit) Amsterdam
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Mission statement of Canadian Mennonite University:

CMU is an innovative Christian university, rooted in the Anabaptist faith tradition, moved and transformed by the life and teachings of Jesus Christ. Through teaching, research, and service CMU inspires women and men for lives of service, leadership, and reconciliation in church and society.

Mission statement of Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary Canada:

MBBS exists to educate and equip people who help lead the church in reaching Canada and the world with the good news of Jesus Christ.

Note: this course will also be delivered with a live-stream option for students who live beyond easy driving distance to CMU. They may participate by attending classes in person on campus, or through interactive online live-streaming of class sessions. For students who attend on campus, the class experience will essentially be like that of any other course. Students who join by live-streaming need to study the detailed guidelines and participation requirements in this syllabus' appendix A titled "Live-Streamed Courses." When registering to join the course via live-streaming, note that the registration process and fees for live-streamed courses are slightly different than for in-class courses.

Course Description:

"This experience-centred course introduces students to practices and perspectives for growing in attentiveness to God's presence in order to be continually formed into Christlikeness by the Holy Spirit. The course helps cultivate spiritual habits that can sustain students in their future ministries within and beyond local congregations. Both individual and communal spiritual formation will be explored" (as posted at www.cmu.ca).

¹ This course number is for students attending via live-streaming.

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During the course, students will be offered guided experiences of classical spiritual practices, augmented by lectures and by personal and biblical-theological reflection. The day spent as a class off campus will be conducted as a spiritual retreat—a ‘Vacation with the Lord’.²

Objectives of this course:

The student will

- give greater attentiveness to God’s presence within the student’s own experience in the company of other believers, in order to be formed by the Holy Spirit into the image of Christ.
- identify biblical-theological dimensions of spiritual formation practices.
- describe features of the student’s own character, temperament and history that are important for spiritual formation.
- select and use personal spiritual practices—both individual and communal—from various Christian traditions, integrating those practices into the student’s own life for the sake of the student’s own Christian ministry.
- create a plan for nurturing ongoing spiritual formation.
- think critically about issues of spirituality.

Textbooks and reading materials:

- a. Alexander, Donald K. ed. *Christian Spirituality: Five Views of Sanctification*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1988.
- b. Augsburg, David. *Dissident Discipleship: A Spirituality of Self-Surrender, Love of God, and Love of Neighbor*. Grand Rapids: BrazosPress, 2006.
- c. Barton, Ruth Haley. *Invitation to Solitude and Silence: Experiencing God’s Transforming Presence*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2004.
- d. Mulholland, M. Robert, Jr. *Shaped by the Word: The Power of Scripture in Spiritual Formation*, Revised. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2000.
- e. Willard, Dallas. *Hearing God: Developing a Conversational Relationship with God*, Revised and Expanded. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 2012.

Other short readings (e.g. articles and book excerpts) will be assigned during the course.

See Supplementary Reading Suggestions for Other recommendations.

Assignments—summary:

1) Reading and Personal Reflections

Reflections	15%	Due: 2:30 p.m., September 18, October 16, <u>and</u> November 13
Presentation	5%	Due: 2:30 p.m., September 18, October 16, <u>or</u> November 13

2) Critical Book Review 15% Due: 2:30 p.m., October 2

3) Spirituality Reflection 15% Due: November 6

² The words vacation and vacate have their roots in the Latin word *vacare*, which is used in the Latin Vulgate to translate Psalm 46:10, where “Be still and know that I am God” begins with the words “*Vacate et videte.*”

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- 4) Retreat Reflections
 Pre-Retreat 5% Due: 9:00 a.m. on the day of the retreat
 Post-Retreat 5% Due: 2:30 p.m. the Monday following the retreat
- 5) Theology Paper 30% Due: 2:30 p.m., November 27
- 6) Integrative Reflection 10% Due: December 11

Assignments—details:*

1. Reading and Personal Response

Reflections 15% Due: 2:30 p.m., September 18, October 16, and November 13

Write three 3-page (900 word) responses to that month's assigned chapters from *Hearing God*, answering the questions below. Write succinctly. One response is due on each of the due dates.

- i. What in these readings attracts me or gives me rest; and what in these readings arouses feelings of resistance or unrest in me?
- ii. What would I therefore like to ask the author about paying attention to God?
- iii. How might my MBTI temperament (as per the inventory) be influencing my responses to these chapters?
 - Students who have not recently completed a Myers-Briggs Temperament Inventory (MBTI) should complete the inventory at www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JungType.htm (click on the link "Jung Typology Test") and use those results in this assignment.
 - Students who have recently completed a Myers-Briggs Temperament Inventory (MBTI) should draw on those results (incl. the appropriate description at www.humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/JungType.htm) in this assignment.
- iv. Conclude by reflecting on your own experiences of noticing or not noticing God in the past month.

Presentation 5% Due: 2:30 p.m., September 18, October 16, or November 13

On one of the three due dates, present to the class the main points of the assigned portion of the book *Hearing God*. More details will be given at the first class.

2. Critical Book Review 15% Due: 2:30 p.m., October 2

Write a 5-page (1500 word) critical and researched book review of *Shaped by the Word*. Focus especially on the author's convictions about paying attention to God. By drawing on other authors and scripture you will strengthen the review's critical engagement. Use Appendix B (at the end of this syllabus) as a guide.

3. Spirituality Reflection 15% Due: November 6

Write a 4-page (1200 words) reflection paper on the relationship between attentiveness (esp. to God) and personal transformation. Draw on scripture and your own experiences to engage **one** of the following two options:

- (a) a devotional classic from the list at the end of the Supplementary Reading Suggestions (below). As much as possible, choose a book from a writer and tradition that seem

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you desire will be the result from engaging these practices. Reflections will be strengthened by drawing on the student's assignments, lecture notes, and/or textbook readings.

*Although not all these assignments are strictly academic in genre (e.g. reflections, proposals), all assignments should conform to academic standards of formatting and of citing sources (cf. details below).

Equivalency chart of letter grades to % (or numerical) grades:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Percentage</u>	<u>Grade Points</u>	<u>Descriptor</u>
A+	95-100	4.5	Exceptional
A	88-94	4.0	Excellent
B+	81-87	3.5	Very Good
B	74-80	3.0	Good
C+	67-73	2.5	Satisfactory
C	60-66	2.0	Adequate
D	50-59	1.0	Marginal
F	0-49	0.0	Failure

Course outline:

This course's emphasis on being attentive to God will be structured along five sub-themes: attentiveness to self, to scripture, in silence, through spiritual direction, and in community. The sequence of these sub-themes may be adjusted, depending on the date of the one-day retreat.

Students will be introduced to the topic of spiritual formation, to spiritual writers outside the student's own Christian tradition, and to a variety of ways of praying in common and in solitude. Students will also become aware of their own spiritual experiences by reflecting on their present attentiveness to God and by considering the unique features of who they are. Lectures and group discussions will give attention both to spiritual practices (e.g. solitude, silence, *lectio divina*, *examen*, prayers of thanking and asking, spiritual direction, journaling, fasting) and to theological considerations (e.g. God's presence, appropriating practices from other Christian traditions, the relationship of prayer and action, the interaction between prayer and personality, prayer as listening, paying attention to one's own person, the importance of desire, individual and communal formation, spiritual formation of ministering persons).⁴

Academic Policies:

Students are expected to be familiar with CMU's academic policies, as published in the *Academic Calendar—Graduate Studies* (online at www.cmu.ca). Sections of particular relevance include "Extensions and Incompletes," "Email Submission of Assignments," "Multiple Submissions of the Same Work," "Attendance in Classes," "Students with Disabilities," "Academic Misconduct," and "Appeals."

⁴ These lists of practices and topics are not exhaustive, and may be adjusted depending on the interests of the group and the dynamics of the retreat.

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The following comments are supplementary to these policies:

Voluntary Withdrawal:

The last day for voluntary withdrawal from winter courses without academic penalty is November 17.

Academic Writing:

All written assignments should conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style* (online at www.cmu.ca/library (click on 'MORE' at the bottom of the page, then look under the heading 'Writing Assistance') and summarized in Diana Hacker's *A Pocket Style Manual*, seventh edition, which is available in CMU's bookstore. These resources specify details for formatting (e.g. 1-inch margins, formal fonts in 10- to 12-point font size, double-spacing) and for citing sources.

Excellence in terms of format, spelling, grammar, sentence and paragraph construction, etc. are assumed. Frequent and persistent errors will result in lower assessments. Formal title page, footnotes or endnotes, bibliography, skilled paragraphing, etc. are essential for academic writing. Where the length of an assignment is defined in a range, be aware that 'exceptional' and 'excellent' grades are more likely to be awarded for work that is closer to the maximum length than the minimum (unless the work is especially outstanding).

Attendance:

If a student must miss class due to illness or other extenuating circumstances, it is the student's responsibility to talk with the professor as soon as possible about missing material. Students who miss the equivalent of 2 weeks of classes will be required to complete an additional assignment for the course. Students missing an excessive number of classes without valid reason may be barred from further class attendance.

Extensions:

The professor has full discretion in granting extensions. Extensions must be requested *before* the due date of an assignment—normally at least one week before the assignment's due date.

Submission of assignments:

All assignments submitted after the specified due date and time will be penalized one letter grade for each day late (e.g. from B to C+). No assignments will be accepted or graded if the professor receives them more than five business days after the due date (unless an extension has been granted prior to the due date).

All assignments are to be submitted as paper copies (i.e. not digital documents), unless prior permission has been given by the professor. If such permission is granted, assignments submitted by email must be sent as '.docx' Microsoft Word documents. Other word-processing formats or PDF's are not acceptable. The professor will notify the student by return email of the time and date on which the emailed assignment was received (normally, this will happen within 24 hours of the professor receiving the assignment, not including weekends). It is the student's responsibility to gain confirmation that the professor received his/her assignment.

NOTE: Live-streaming students are to submit assignments by email, as described above. These assignments will be returned to the students by email.

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It is my commitment to return graded assignments to the students in a timely manner. Assignments will normally be returned in class, or by means of student mailboxes. (Graduate students without a student mailbox may choose to receive their graded assignments in the professor's office door mailbox, or at the receptionist's desk on the south campus.)

Communication:

Students are encouraged to engage the professor outside of class hours. His contact details and office number are above. Beyond this, email will be considered a standard means of communicating. Students should therefore check their CMU email regularly.

Academic Misconduct:

Plagiarism and cheating will be treated very seriously, as outlined in the *Academic Calendar* (available online). It is the student's responsibility to be familiar with these published expectations.

Students with Disabilities

CMU strives to provide a fair and supportive learning environment for academically qualified students with disabilities. The University will seek ways to develop and provide services that support students with disabilities. The Disability Services office coordinates with the Academic Office to provide academic accommodations to eligible students. If you are eligible for these services or have questions about becoming eligible, please contact Sandra Loeppky, Coordinator of Disability Services at sloepky@cmu.ca or 204-487-3300 ext. 340.

Other Academic Supports

CMU offers its students academic supports at no cost. Academic tutors are available to all students; see Vern Kehler Coordinator of Student Advising (vkehler@cmu.ca), to set up a first appointment with a tutor. Volunteer tutors are available to work on a one-on-one basis with students; see Vern for details.

Supplementary reading suggestions*:

This is a sampling of the many excellent resources available on spiritual formation and spirituality. CMU's library offers many more. (Books marked with an asterisk are not in CMU's library.)

*Anderson, Fil. *Running On Empty: Contemplative Spirituality for Overachievers*. Colorado Springs: WaterBrook Press, 2004.

Barry, William A. *Spiritual Direction and the Encounter With God: A Theological Inquiry*. Rev. ed. New York: Paulist Press, 2004.

Boers, Arthur Paul. *The Rhythm of God's Grace: Uncovering Morning and Evening Hours of Prayer*. Brewster: Paraclete Press, 2003.

*Chester, P. Michael, and Marie C. Norrissey. *Prayer and Temperament: Different Prayer Forms for Different Personality Types*. Charlottesville: The Open Door, 1991.

Conversations: A Forum for Authentic Transformation. (Atlanta: Richmond Graduate University, 2003-2016.). [Copies on a wide variety of topics are available from the professor.]

*Dieter, Martin E., et al. *Five Views On Sanctification*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987.

Foster, Richard. *Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*. Rev. ed. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1988.

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- . *Streams of Living Water: Celebrating the Great Traditions of Christian Faith*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998.
- *Green, Thomas H. *Weeds Among the Wheat: Discernment, Where Prayer and Action Meet*. Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 1984.
- Howard, Evan B. *The Brazos Introduction to Christian Spirituality*. Grand Rapids: BravosPress, 2008.
- *Imbach, Jeff. *The River Within: Loving God, Living Passionately*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1998.
- Journal of Spiritual Formation and Soul Care* (La Mirada: BIOLA University, 2009-present).
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=edspub&AN=edp554214&site=pf-live>
- Klassen, Erwin. "Grave Robber: Spirituality and the Art of Theft." *Direction* 34.1 (2005): 64-70.
- *Linn, Dennis, et al. *Sleeping With Bread: Holding What Gives You Life*. New York: Paulist Press, 1995.
- *May, Gerald. *The Dark Night of the Soul: A Psychiatrist Explores the Connection Between Darkness and Spiritual Growth*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 2004.
- *Miller, Wendy. *Invitation to Presence: A Guide to Spiritual Disciplines*. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1995.
- Moon, Gary W., and David G. Benner. *Spiritual Direction and the Care of Souls: A Guide to Christian Approaches and Practices*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004.
- Mulholland, M. Robert, Jr. *Shaped By the Word: The Power of Scripture in Spiritual Formation*. Rev. ed. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2000.
- Peterson, Eugene. *Working the Angles: The Shape of Pastoral Integrity*. Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1987.
- . *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction*. Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans, 1989.
- *Phillips, Susan S. *Candlelight: Illuminating the Art of Spiritual Direction*. Harrisburg: Morehouse Publishing, 2008.
- *Scazzero, Peter. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality: Unleash a Revolution in Your Life in Christ*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson 2006.
- White, John. *The Fight: A Practical Handbook for Christian Living*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1976.
- Wilhoit, James C. *Spiritual Formation as if the Church Mattered: Growing in Christ Through Community*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2008.
- Willard, Dallas. *In Search of Guidance: Developing a Conversational Relationship With God*. Ventura: Regal, 1984. (Also titled *Hearing God*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1999.)
- . *The Spirit of the Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1990.
- . *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life in God*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998.

The following is a sampling of spiritual classics written in different centuries. Many of these classics have been published in various editions. Sometimes these classics are published within larger anthologies of works by one author.

À Kempis, Thomas. *The Imitation of Christ*.

Augustine of Hippo. *Confessions*.

Benedict. *Rule*. (e.g. Chittister, Joan. *The Rule of Benedict: Insights for the Ages*. New York: Crossroad, 1992.)

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *The Cost of Discipleship*

—. *Life Together*.

Brother Roger of Taizé. *Living Today for God*. Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1961.

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- Bunyan, John. *The Pilgrims Progress*.
- Green, Thomas. *Opening to God: A Guide to Prayer*. **OR** *When the Well Runs Dry: Prayer Beyond the Beginnings*.
- Guyon, Madame Jeanne. *Experiencing Union with God Through Inner Prayer*.
- John of the Cross. *Dark Night of the Soul*.
- Jones, E. Stanley (an appropriate book of your choice).
- Julian of Norwich. *Showings*, also titled *Revelations of Divine Love*.
- Kierkegaard, Søren. *Purity of Heart Is to Will One Thing*.
- Lawrence, Brother. *The Practice of the Presence of God*.
- Lewis, C. S. *Letters to Malcolm: Chiefly on Prayer*.
- The Little Flowers of Francis of Assisi*.
- Norris, Kathleen. *The Cloister Walk*. New York: Riverhead Books, 1996.
- Nouwen, Henri. *The Return of the Prodigal Son: A Story of Homecoming*. New York: Image, 1993.
- . *The Way of the Heart: Desert Spirituality and Contemporary Ministry*. New York: Seabury Press, 1981.
- Simons, Menno. *The Complete Writings of Menno Simons* edited by J. C. Wenger. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1956. Note especially the following four chapters: “The Spiritual Resurrection” (p.51-62), “The New Birth” (p. 87-102), “The Cross of the Saints” (p. 579-622) and “Meditations and Prayers for Mealtime” (p. 953-958).
- Teresa of Avila. *The Interior Castle*.
- Tugwell, Simon. *Prayer: Living With God*. Springfield: Templegate Publishers, 1975.
- . *Prayer in Practice*. Springfield: Templegate Publishers, 1974.
- Wesley, John. *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*.

Appendix A: Live-Streamed Courses

A live-streamed course makes it possible for students at a distance to observe and participate interactively with an on-campus class in real time. Those who attend a class by live-streaming see and hear the professor. They can watch class media presentations (e.g. PowerPoint) on their computer screens. They can follow and participate in class discussions, posing questions and making comments of their own. They can have discussions with other students when the class breaks into smaller groups. Through the internet, students at a distance can share the essential elements of a regular class experience with those who attend class in person.

Unless otherwise stated in the syllabus, live-streaming students will do the same course assignments and follow the same course schedule as on-campus students.

Requirements for Participating in a Live-streamed Course

- Because the number of live-stream participants to a course is limited, ***students must receive faculty permission prior to the beginning of the course*** in order to participate through live-streaming.
- ***Students must participate in classes in real-time***, as they would if they were attending class in person. For example, those who take a live-streamed course that meets on Wednesday evenings will be expected to be in that class virtually, or physically when that class is in-session. (If live-streaming students come to Winnipeg, they are welcome to attend class in person.)
- Participation in a course through live-streaming ***requires the following:***

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- ***a fast and consistent internet connection*** (broadband ADSL or cable; or wireless 3G or 4G/LTE—wired is better than wireless),
- ***a reasonably up-to-date computer*** system (at least MacOS 10.6.8 or Windows 7; mobile devices may work as well),
- ***a supported browser*** (e.g. Firefox, Chrome, Safari 5+, IE7+, Opera12+),
- ***Zoom software*** (provided by CMU),
- ***a webcam***, and
- ***a good quality headset with a microphone*** (CMU can suggest some).
- CMU has the capacity to record live-streamed courses for later viewing, but does not do so as a matter of routine. If it is difficult for students to participate in a class session, they may ask the professor for permission to watch recorded versions of the class. This permission will only be granted in exceptional circumstances.
- Students may use the Zoom software to meet together via live-streaming between classes (e.g. for group projects or other consultations). The professor can give instructions for this.
- Students must familiarize themselves with the live-streaming software platform (i.e. Zoom) and ensure that their link, webcam, and headset are working properly ***before*** the first class session. Please arrange for a practice run on the system with the professor ***prior*** to class; this is essential. A practice run can be arranged by email.
- ***Be sure to login for each class session at least 15 minutes before the class begins.*** Remember that any testing of the system or other logistics that requires faculty assistance needs to be done before class starts. The professor will do their best to ensure that everything is in place for the live-stream session; but they cannot allow live-stream setup to significantly delay or interfere with the smooth flow of the class session once class begins. (To avoid distracting the class, it is helpful to mute the mic on your computer when you are not speaking to the class.)
- Arrange a backup plan with your professor in case of a system failure. CMU uses high-caliber, up-to-date equipment and communication platforms for live-streaming, but hardware and internet connections are not infallible and on occasion may fail. Your professor cannot stop class in order to troubleshoot and resolve technical problems in this unlikely event. To minimize possible disruption in the case of a loss of connection:
 - provide the professor with your email, text, or phone contact information before the course begins so that the professor can contact you at the next natural break in the class;
 - discuss with the professor the possibility of a back-up link to the class in case of a system failure (e.g. a Skype or phone link if the Zoom connection fails); and
 - have a plan for follow-up contact with the professor and/or a fellow student to fill any gaps in your interaction with the class (as you would if you had to miss a class for other reasons).
- If you have technical difficulties that you cannot solve with your professor (e.g. with the login process), contact Richard Boyd from CMU's I.T. department (204.451.0980).

Appendix B: Critical Book Review Guidelines:

The following outline is designed to provide the student with a set of categories and questions to consider when writing a critical book review. In a seven-page critical book review (as outlined below, for instance), the student may not be able to address all of the items below. Therefore, the student is advised to use these guidelines in his/her preparatory work on the critical book review. Then, when writing the review, the student should address those items that are most important. An A or A+ student will go

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beyond completing or answering these individual items by weaving the paper into a coherent and compelling whole.

- Introduction (c. ½–¾ page):
 - A brief description of the books: title, author, subject and format. Here you can include details about who the authors are, their credentials and expertise, how the title and subject matter are linked, etc.
 - A brief summary of the purpose of the books and their general arguments or themes. Include a statement indicating for whom the books are intended.
 - Your own thesis about the books. (This should include but is not necessarily limited to a consideration of whether the books are a suitable or appropriate piece of writing for the audiences they have identified).
- Summary of Content (c. 1 pages):
 - This can be done in the same way that is done for a simple book report (do not spend too many words on this section, as the subsequent analysis and evaluation of content are more important than a simple summary).
- Analysis of Text (c. 2–2½ pages):
 - What are the writers' styles: simple/technical, persuasive/logical? Be brief.
 - How well do the organizational methods (comparison/contrast; cause/effect; analogy; persuasion through example) develop the arguments or themes of the books? (Give examples to support your analysis.) Be brief.
 - What evidence do the books present to support their arguments? How convincing is this evidence? (Select pieces of evidence that are weak, or strong, and explain why they are such. As you write, be attentive to ways in which the books have confirmed and/or challenged your biblical-theological understanding of the topic.)
 - Are there facts, perspectives, and/or evidence that the authors have neglected to consider? (You will normally need to refer to other relevant material, including but not limited to the Bible.)
- Evaluation of the Text (c. ¾ page):
 - Briefly summarize of the weakness and strengths you have found in the books (incl. whether the books do what they set out to do).
 - Evaluate the books' overall usefulness to the audiences for whom they are intended.
 - Comment on the books' relevance to your life and ministry.