

NVCC COLLEGE-WIDE COURSE CONTENT SUMMARY

REL 217 - LIFE AND LETTERS OF PAUL (3 CR.)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Studies the journeys and religious thought of the apostle Paul. Lecture 3 hours per week.

GENERAL COURSE PURPOSE

To introduce students to an understanding of the world of the apostle Paul through a study of biblical and historical scholarship. To help students understand the history of the career of the apostle to the Gentiles and the contributions of his subtle and nimble mind to the earliest understanding of the Christian way of life and the implications for western thought and life.

ENTRY LEVEL REQUIREMENTS

None

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the completion of this course students will be able to

- Historically and critically trace the major events of the missionary journeys of the apostle Paul.
- Distinguish critically between the original Pauline Epistles and the Deutero-Pauline works.
- Discuss insightfully the major themes of Paul's thought: justification by Faith, Christ as the New Adam, law and grace, sin and redemption, the relation of circumcision to baptism, the cross and sufferings of Jesus, freedom and integrity.

MAJOR ELEMENTS OF CONTENT

The following topics will be considered.

- Interpretation of the major epistles: Romans, Galatians, Corinthians I and II, Thessolanicans I and II.
- Critical comparison of the narration of the career and teachings of Paul in the Acts of the Apostles with what Paul says himself about the related issues in his epistles.
- Paul's conflict with Jerusalem over the circumcision of Gentile converts.
- The Rabbinic arguments of Paul in the epistles.
- The dialectical structure of Paul's thought.

Revised 7/01