

3.1 Revised Division Goals

BIBLICAL DIVISION GOALS

The Bible regularly is invoked as an authority in various arenas of discourse, ranging from public policy to church doctrine, yet there is often little agreement on what the Bible actually says or means. Therefore it is imperative that those who are engaged in varied Christian ministries be fluent in interpretation of the Bible that is responsive to the historical processes that gave rise to it and to its hermeneutical potential.

OBJECTIVE:

To be fluent in biblical interpretation, the student must be able to employ appropriate exegetical models to understand the Bible as emerging out of the historical development of communities, institutions, and texts in ancient Israel and early Christianity.

Because the Bible is a product of historical processes, interpretation pays attention to several interpretive concerns such as the following:

- Historical context,
- Literary character,
- Social and cultural environment,
- Theological heritage and development,
- Hermeneutical implications.

Fluency in interpretation enables the student to use the Bible with an awareness of scholarly understandings as a resource for thinking about the issues and concerns of everyday life. The introductory courses (HB 500, NT 500) implement this objective in a complete although elementary sense. Other biblical courses implement aspects of this objective at a deeper level.

ASSESSMENT:

Each student will demonstrate their fluency in biblical interpretation by producing two exegesis papers, one in Hebrew Bible and one in New Testament, and receiving a passing grade. Normally these papers will be written in a second level exegesis course.