Rationale:
The Paul’s epistles form a major section of the New Testament corpus and Paul’s thought has been one of the most significant factors in the shaping of both good and bad Christian theology/practice. Paul’s epistles comprise the most specific, extended treatments of the theological/ethical issues that play themselves out in the Church. Therefore, those who seek to relate the message and authority of the Bible to our culture in a responsible fashion need to be able to understand the content and context of Paul’s epistolary efforts. The Corinthian Letters bear a unique set of ideas and differ from Paul’s other epistles due to the far ranging set of issues Paul confronts in the course of his correspondence. These letters thus bear a theological framework that is particularly effective in the biblical framing of many issues we encounter in our contemporary Church. Above all the Corinthians Letters construct the premier New Testament ethic of Love in the face of the abuse of power, which establishes the effectiveness of the Church’s testimony in our world today and always.

Description:
A study of 1 & 2 Corinthians that emphasizes their socio-historical situations in the context of Paul’s mission, and their potential significance for issues confronting the contemporary church. Due to the amount of material to be covered, the class will not typically deal with every verse in both letters. Different strategies approach the text variably. Thus the class may focus on only one of the letters, or it may focus on themes in both. The class is thus to be viewed as the platform from which to observe and study Paul’s interaction with the Corinthians Christians.

Objectives:
1. To be able to give an account of the social and historical context in which the issues found in the letters take place.
2. To be able to rehearse the theological/ethical themes and points of argumentation in the letters and their significance for Paul’s context and for ours.
3. To be able to interrogate contemporary issues and circumstance from the perspective of the Corinthian Letters.
4. Demonstrate familiarity with the content and logical flow of at least 1 Corinthians.

Proposed Major Topic Outline
1. Reading Paul on his own terms: production and application of biblical texts, orthodoxy vs orthopraxy, foundationalist and non-foundationalist considerations.
2. Ancient psychagogy, contemporary leadership and the character of Paul’s ministry (Philemon, Thessalonians, 1 Cor 1–4, 2 Cor 10ff)
3. Sociology of the Early Church: Groups and Purity, (1 Cor 5-6) homogeneity/diversity/power/margins.
4. Sexuality in the Ancient world and in Paul’s writings: Marriage, Divorce, Homoeroticism (1 Cor 6-7)
5. Corinthian Problems: freedom vs responsibility (1 Cor 8-11)
6. Spirituality: The proper use of spiritual gifts, proper function and practice of worship (1 Cor 12-14)
7. The Gospel (1 Cor 15)

Major Learning Experiences
1. Lecture-discussion comprises the bulk of the in-class experience and focusses on developing a framework for understanding how Paul thinks and how his texts are effectively used.
2. Reading and analyzing assigned books provide awareness of other related issues and insight into special topics.
3. Producing personally researched work enables students to gain expertise on specific topics and to develop expertise in reasoning, debating and evaluating issues related to the biblical text.
4. Writing out the text of 1 Corinthians slows down the academic process and allows students to gain more sensitivity for the nuances of the letter.

Assignments
1. Write out the text of 1 Corinthians using the translation provided.
2. Assigned Reading: (45% of Grade, 15% for each book)
   1. Christianity at Corinth: Submit one or two page summary of each chapter (10%)
   2. Sexuality in the New Testament: submit one or two page summary of each chapter (10%)
   3. Cruciformity: Submit a five page reflection piece on how Gorman envisions “Cruciformity.” (10%)
3. 3 Research Essays: (45% of Grade 15% for each essay).
   Write an essay on each of the three themes listed below. Research essays are 1800-2000 words each (6-8 pages long). Each essay should be properly researched and cited, but think in terms of a Leadership Journal article, for
example, when reflecting on style and citation level—you should write with a view to publication. Your writing
should be above all, clear, and second of all, interesting. The topics are: (1) Corinthian Backgrounds (2) Sexuality
either as referenced in Corinthians or using Corinthians and other texts to comment upon sexuality and
contemporary Christianity (3) Power (specifically, referencing the NT rejection of the acquisition of power as a
secular ideal contrary to Christian values).

4. Each student will complete a final synthesizing project/assignment. (10% of Grade). Students who fail this final (65% or
less) will receive an F for the Course, regardless of other grades.

How to submit Assignments:
1. All assignments must be uploaded to the course page on Moodle except for the handwritten copy of 1 Corinthians.
2. All digital files submitted must have as a part of their file name both (a) some form of the student’s name, and (b) the
   name of the specific assignment: e.g. “j.krowling-research paper.doc”
3. I can accept most digital formats for Mac and Windows. Ideally, if you want digital submissions to be exactly as you saw
   them on your own computer, especially if you are using a Greek or Hebrew font rather than Unicode, you would submit
   them as PDF files.
4. Students bear the responsibility of making sure the right assignment is up in the right place on Moodle (this is just a
   basic professional requirement).

Approach to Grading:
1. What I focus on when grading: (1) Your understanding of what you are writing about (2), the professionalism of the
   materials submitted, (3) your demonstration that you are aware of and understand what was happening in class.
2. To do well: You must study well and know what you are talking about, but in addition to that you must be able to handle
   that material professionally. That means submitting material on time and in the manner prescribed (in this case via
   Moodle) and that submitted items are thoughtfully composed, well-edited and meet the style guide standards of either
   MLA, SBL, or APA.
3. There is no grade for work handed in after the due date.
4. Attendance and class participation (for the policy on this class’s attendance, see the student handbook).

Grading
1. Readers Study Notes 15% each (=45%)
2. Research Essays 15% each (=45%)
3. Final exam/project 10%
4. Handwritten copy of 1 Corinthians Pass/Fail—meaning you can’t pass the class without it.

Due Dates: (specifics discussed in class)
The due date is the last date work is accepted. No late work is accepted. Since all work may be submitted early, no late work
is accepted. All work must be completed in order to pass the course. If you cannot for any reason submit work before the due
date, then you must write a letter to the registrar (don.thomason@ccuniversity.edu) requesting information on extensions.
Only speak with Dr. Smith about this after you’ve spoken with the registrar.

Required Texts:
1. Edward Adams, David Horrell Christianity at Corinth (W/JK 2004) (Objective 1, 2, 4)

Recommended Reading:
James W. Thompson, Moral Formation According to Paul (Baker, 2011)
Gordon Fee, The First Epistle to the Corinthians NICNT (Eerdmans, 1987).
Anthony Thiselton, The First Epistle to the Corinthians: A Commentary on the Greek Text (Eerdmans, 2000)

The professor reserves the right to change any of the course requirements, schedules, grading scale, or procedure at any time during the course for either
specific individuals or the whole class.