

ST. PETER'S SEMINARY / KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
at *The University of Western Ontario*
Winter 2021

BIBLSTUD 5202
Fridays, 9:30-12:30
January 15, 2021 – April 9, 2021

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Office hours: Immediately after class or by appointment.

A. COURSE DESCRIPTION

“This course encourages students to apply methods of interpretation learned in the introductory course, exploring the meaning of the text for the modern reader, and examination of the original setting, structure and content of each section of the gospel.” (from the *St. Peter's Seminary Academic Calendar*) (3 hours/week; antirequisites: the former Biblical Studies 238B and 201A.

In this course we will explore the New Testament texts known collectively as the “Johannine Literature” (the Gospel of John, 1, 2, and 3 John, and the Book of Revelation), with attention to their historical, canonical, and theological characteristics, in order to responsibly actualize (apply) these texts in contemporary Catholic life.

B. GOALS

This course will assist students to grow in the following knowledge, skills and attitudes:

Knowledge:

1. The content, historical context, and theological insights of the Gospel of John with attention to its theological distinctiveness vis-à-vis the synoptic gospels, and the contributions of Johannine theology to Christian tradition.
2. The content, historical context, and theological insights of the Johannine Epistles.
3. The genre, the content, and the historical context of the Book of Revelation.
4. Knowledge of the significant Old Testament texts that form the foundation for the Gospel of John, the Johannine Epistles, and the Book of Revelation.

Skills:

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the contents of Johannine Literature.
2. Describe the major themes, images, and symbols in the Gospel of John.
3. Identify how the Gospel of John is distinct from the Synoptic Gospels.

4. Describe the main communal issues and concerns that form the background of the Johannine Epistles.
5. Describe genre of literature and historical context of the Book of Revelation.
6. To present written work in a coherent and thoughtful manner
7. To communicate exegetical material into a format accessible to the average lay parishioner in a ministry setting.

Attitudes:

1. A love for the Sacred Scripture as interpreted in the life and mission of the Church.
2. A open-minded willingness to explore new meanings within the Old and New Testaments by approaching scripture exegetically.
3. A respect for, and understanding of, the work of exegetes and other biblical scholars.
4. A desire to make appropriate use of Scripture and contemporary scholarship in the service of evangelization.

C. ASSESSMENT

1. **Participation (10%):** The following comprise your participation grade:
 - a. **Attendance:** Weekly attendance is mandatory. Seminarians must provide a valid excuse for all absences (e.g., significant illness).
 - b. **Participation:** Preparation for, and active and informed participation in class discussion is a major aspect of this component of your grade. This requires doing the assigned readings, and coming to class prepared and ready to discuss the topic of the day.

Please note: Texting and all other forms of social networking are not appropriate during class time as they are distracting to the student, the instructor, and fellow classmates. Students who engage in these forms of socializing during class will be marked as absent.

2. **Encountering Jesus in the Gospel of John (25%):**
6-7 pages. Due February 12, 2021, 5pm, uploaded to OWL.
 A distinctive feature of the Gospel of John are the numerous intimate dialogues Jesus has with various people. Often, these are one-to-one conversations, which serve to reveal aspects of Jesus' person, while at the same time bringing his hearer into a new relationship with him. For this assignment, select one such conversation and, using biblical commentaries and other library research materials, provide a responsible exegesis of the passage that is attentive to the Gospel's distinctive theological emphases, and includes pastoral commentary on what this passage teaches for today.
3. **Johannine Thematic Paper (35%):**
8-10 pages. March 26, 2021, uploaded to OWL.
 Select a predominant characteristic, theme, or symbol in the Gospel of John and describe how it flourishes throughout the Gospel of John. The expectation is for an exegetically-grounded exploration of the chosen theme or symbol in the Gospel of John.

Examples for possible topics include:

- a. The “I am” statements
 - b. Jesus as the Lamb
 - c. Wedding imagery
 - d. Women in the Gospel of John
 - e. Discipleship
 - f. Seeing, hearing, belief, and/or knowing in the Gospel of John
 - g. Light and darkness
 - h. Creation imagery
 - i. Exodus imagery
 - j. Love
 - k. Glory
 - l. Flesh and Spirit
 - m. Legal language: witness, testimony, Jesus’ trial, etc.
4. **The Book of Revelation (30%): 6-7 pgs. Due April 16, 2021, 5pm.** The Book of Revelation is a source of beautiful imagery and rich Christology. It is also very prone to misuse and misunderstanding. Select a passage from the Book of Revelation that you think is particularly difficult to understand, and provide a thoughtful, well-researched discussion of the characteristics and role of apocalyptic literature, what this passage might have meant in its historical context, and how we can understand it meaningfully for today.

D. READINGS OR TEXTBOOKS

A. Students are required to have the following resources:

1. A contemporary study bible with explanatory notes and essays. The New Revised Standard Version (preferred) or the New American Bible are appropriate. Two editions that are particularly useful are:

The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha. Fully Revised Fourth Edition, Michael D. Coogan, editor (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).

The HarperCollins Study Bible Revised Edition NRSV. Society of Biblical Literature. New York: HarperCollins, 2006.

2. Francis Martin and William M. Wright IV. *The Gospel of John.* Catholic Commentary on Sacred Scripture. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2015.
3. Periodically, additional reading materials may be supplied via OWL to support weekly topics.

E. SCHEDULE, TOPICS & READINGS

**Please note that the schedule may be subject to fluctuation*

This will be distributed on the first day of class.

F. UNIVERSITY REGULATIONS AND SUPPORT SERVICES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://www.turnitin.com>.”

Students are responsible for knowing the University’s academic policies and regulations and any particularities of their own course of study. Ignorance of these policies is not an excuse for any violation thereof. The following policies are particularly important to note:

Submission of Assignments: It is the responsibility of the student to organize his or her work so that the assignments are completed on time. A penalty of 10% of the value of the assignment will be deducted for each day it is overdue without permission.

Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt by quotation marks and/or footnotes. Plagiarism is a major academic offense. Students may be required to submit their work in electronic form for plagiarism checking.

Selection and Registration of Courses: Students are responsible for ensuring that their selection of courses is appropriate and accurately recorded, that all prerequisite course(s) have been successfully completed, and that they are aware of any anti-requisite course(s) that they have taken.

Support Services

Students who are in emotional/mental health distress should refer to Mental Health@Western: <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

University Students Council provides many valuable support services for students (including the health insurance plan) <http://westernusc.ca/services/>.

Information about Counselling and Student Development, including Services for Students with Disabilities at King’s is available at

<http://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/who-we-are/administrative-departments/dean-of-students/>

For emotional/mental health assistance see specifically: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/currentstudents/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

The web site for Academic Services at King's University College is
<http://www.kings.uwo.ca/currentstudents/academic-support/>

These services are not meant to replace those offered at the Seminary, but may be beneficial to our students after consultation with the appropriate instructors, administrators, and formators.

G. SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

Brown, Raymond E. *The Gospel According to John*. The Anchor Bible 29 and 29A. New York: Doubleday, 1966.

_____. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. The Anchor Bible Reference Library. New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Auckland: Doubleday, 1997.

Culpepper, R. Alan. *The Gospel and Letters of John*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998.

Kelly, Anthony J. and Francis J. Moloney. *Experiencing God in the Gospel of John*. Mahwah, NJ. Paulist Press, 2003.

Kysar, Robert. *John, the Maverick Gospel*. Third Edition. Louisville and London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007.

Lewis, Scott M. *The Gospel According to John and the Johannine Letters*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2005.

Moloney, Francis J. *The Gospel of John*. Sacra Pagina 4. Collegeville, MN: A Michael Glazier Book, The Liturgical Press, 1998.

Schneiders, Sandra M. *Written That You May Believe: Encountering Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*. Revised and Expanded Edition. Crossroad Publishing Company: Herder and Herder, 2003.