

**John
NT 640**

January Interterm 2021 (January 4-15, M-F 9am-12pm)

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Purpose:

To introduce students to the major themes of the Gospel of John and issues entailed in the critical study of it and, where possible, Johannine literature generally. To learn to recognize the distinctive vocabulary of John's Gospel and to begin to gain an understanding of its semantic domain. To situate the theologies of the Fourth Gospel writer in the social matrix of antiquity and to identify the cultural and historical influences on Johannine theology, especially with reference to Johannine anti-Judaism and sectarianism. To assess the relevance of these theologies for Christian proclamation and ministry, and for existence in society and the critical issues entailed in their contemporary appropriation. To explore a wide breadth of non-historical-critical approaches to Johannine literature and to assess their relative strengths and weaknesses. To assess critically the place of John's Gospel in the Christian Year and the Revised Common Lectionary and to engage in a close reading of Johannine texts from the perspective of exegetical, liturgical, and lectionary vantage points. To gain an acquaintance with a variety of exegetical commentaries on John's Gospel from a variety of historical periods as well as differing critical vantage points.

Competence Objectives:

1. To demonstrate a level of expertise consistent with an intermediate level of biblical study in the analysis, exegetical discussion, and contemporary interpretation of the Gospel of John and related New Testament Johannine literature.
2. To demonstrate an ability to apply the study of John's Gospel to the tasks of ministry (preaching, pastoral care, theological reflection, etc.).
3. An ability to identify and discuss the elements of Johannine theological syntax, to relate that syntax to the critical exegetical study of a Johannine pericope, to place a Johannine pericope in the narrative of John's Gospel and to discuss its function in promoting the Johannine theology and communal identity.
4. To describe the development of Johannine theology in the Gospel of John and the way different texts reflect an unfolding historical identity in the Johannine community.
5. To write a critical abstract of a cross-section of scholarly articles on the Gospel of John, to discuss the relative strengths and weaknesses of Johannine studies.
6. Through close reading of a series of texts, to demonstrate skill in exegetical study, the application of the basic elements of Greek grammar and syntax, and an intermediate ability in relating the tools of narrative and literary criticism to the interpretation of Johannine texts.
7. To show an understanding of the literary design of John's Gospel.
8. To locate Johannine theology within the currents of intertestamental sapiential literature and emerging Judaism in the first century of the Common Era.
9. To assess critically currents of alleged anti-Judaism in the Gospel of John, the challenges of the uses of John to promote anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism, and to consider ways John's Gospel urges attention to Jewish-Christian conversation in our contemporary context.
10. To demonstrate a critical appraisal of the Revised Common Lectionary's division and treatment of John's Gospel.

11. For students taking the course for advanced exegetical credit, to use the resources of the course as an aid in the composition of the advanced exegetical paper. A separate list of competences will be furnished with the advanced exegetical paper description.

Format:

One 3-hour class daily for two weeks, which will include time for group discussion of assigned readings. Roughly the first week of class will be given over to a literary investigation of the narrative strategies of John's Gospel as whole. During this time, 2 hrs/class will be lecture in format and 1 hr/class will be devoted to discussion of assigned reading posted on the Canvas website. The second week will entail focused discussion of Johannine pericopae as they appear in the Revised Common Lectionary with students picking from a series of commentaries and expositions of John's Gospel on reserve in the library as exegetical companions in the preparation of exegetical worksheets to be completed in preparation for class. Students will be responsible for taking up one of the assigned two pericopae/class.

Content:

1. The Authorship of John and the Historical Critical Reconstruction of the history of "the Johannine Community" and its Problems
2. Toward a literary and theological Encounter with John: The Prologue, Epilogue, Signs Stories and their Redaction
3. Narrative Time and Time of Narration in John's Gospel Especially as These Relate to Plot, Jewish Festivals, Cosmic Time, and Remembered Time
4. The Final Discourse
5. The Johannine Passion Narrative as Political Exposé and Resurrection Narratives
6. An Orientation to John's Gospel as it appears in the liturgical calendar, in the Revised Common Lectionary, and as a narrative in its own right
7. Exegetical Study of Pericopae: the Prologue; Nicodemus; The Samaritan Woman; The Feeding in the Wilderness; The Man Born Blind; Lazarus; The Farewell Discourse; The Passion Narrative and the Resurrection Narratives

Prerequisites:

NT 500; if taken for exegetical credit (M.Div and MATS biblical studies) - BIB 500 or Greek

Evaluation:

1. 100% class attendance and participation is required to pass the course. No exceptions. Students who are late or need to leave early are required to write a synopsis of the part of the lecture they have missed.

2. Before the first week of the course, students will read five journal articles posted on Canvas and are expected to have read Robert Kysar, *John: The Maverick Gospel* (157 pages). During the first week students will write ONE journal reflection of ONE of the articles. Assigned reading will be given before the start of class. Precis is due the date of discussion. The substance of the reflection is as follows: in one paragraph, describe the methodology used by the author of the article (no more than 50 words); the rest of the reflection is to be a critical discussion of the method used, its strengths and weaknesses, and a critical appraisal of its value for exegesis. **In order to gain credit for this course assigned exercises must be handed in on the assigned date.** E-mail submission of précis are required in accordance with the rubrics for electronic submissions posted on the Canvas site.

3. **Paper (MATS; MAPPL; MAIS):** Either John Text-to-Interpretation paper **or** a paper that compares a Johannine and synoptic pericope on the same theme or motif (paper description to be distributed in class and posted on Canvas). The first paper option will entail, first, locating each pericope in its historical, social and literary setting. The second comparison paper comparing/contrasting the theology of each pericope or a Johannine pericope with another medium will consider first the location of the pericope in its historical and literary context; second, a description of the passage, motif, medium being compared in its own context; third, a comparison of the as it relates to and attests to John and the Synoptic Gospel/Media under consideration and a reflection on the meaning for contemporary practices of ministry and theological reflection. Fourthly **both** papers will address the implications of the Johannine text/motif/theme for contemporary theology and life, especially, where relevant, in reference to sectarian Christian identity, the place of pluralism in contemporary society, and questions of anti-Judaism.

Paper length: The shorter Text-to-Interpretation/Comparative Paper 3500-3750 words/ 10-12 pages that uses 10 bibliographical entries beyond the course texts as research resources, with the citation style indicated at the start of the bibliography. Papers that do not indicate the citation style or use it inconsistently, or exceed the word limit by 10% will be returned for resubmission. Electronic submission is required and must conform to protocols for electronic submissions.

Due Date:

16 April; NAPP rewrite for graduating students due 30 April
 NAPP Rewrite for non-graduating students 14 June;
 Medical Extension due-date 25 May

4. **Paper (MDiv students; Biblical Studies MATS; ThM): Major Exegetical Paper:** 6000 words/ 25 pages (excluding footnotes and bibliography) that

uses 20 bibliographical entries beyond the course texts as research resources, with the citation style indicated at the start of the bibliography. Papers that do not indicate the citation style or use it inconsistently, or exceed the word limit by 10% will be returned for resubmission. Papers that do not indicate the citation style or use it inconsistently, or are more or less than 10% of the assignment (excluding bibliography and footnotes) will be returned for resubmission. Requirements will be handed out in class and posted on Canvas. Electronic submission is required and must conform to protocols for electronic submissions.

Major Ex. Due Date:

16 April; NAPP rewrite due 30 April for graduating students;
 Non-Graduating Students: 14 June;
 Th.M papers and Medical Extension due-date: 25 May

5. **An annotated bibliography**, posted on the Canvas website, due with the paper submission of 5 commentaries, books, articles, and/or websites the student found useful in preparing for class exercises and exegetical discussion.

Pre-Reading for the Class (895 pages):

1. The Gospel of John, 1,2,3 John, The Book of Revelation, *The Apocryphon of John* [<http://gnosis.org/naghamm/apocjn-davies.html>], *The Gospel of Truth* [<http://gnosis.org/naghamm/got-barnstone.html>].
2. Robert Kysar, *John: The Maverick Gospel* (157 pp.) – see the list of required texts below.
3. Gail O’Day, *The Word Disclosed: Preaching the Gospel of John* (160 pp.) -- see the list of required texts below.
4. Sandra Schneiders, *Written That You May Believe: Encountering Jesus in the Fourth Gospel* (328 pp.) – see list of required texts below.
5. Select Essays posted on Canvas from *The Jewish Annotated New Testament* (100 pp.)
6. Five journal articles, posted on Canvas (ca. 150 pp.). If your last name begins A-H, set one; I-P, set two; Q-Z, set three.

Required and Recommended Textbooks:

Required:

A Bible. Students are invited to bring a translation of choice, preferably a critical study edition, but no paraphrases, pocket-sized versions, KJV. *The Jewish Annotated New Testament NRSV*, edited by Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler. Oxford:

Oxford University Press, 2011 (ISBN 9780195297706) is a particularly useful Bible for the study of John's Gospel in its early Jewish context, especially the essays in the appendix many of which are assigned as pre-reading.

Kysar, Robert. *John: The Maverick Gospel*, 3rd ed. Atlanta: John Knox, 2007. ISBN 9780664230562

O'Day, Gail. *The World Disclosed: Preaching the Gospel of John*, rev. ed. Collegeville: Chalice, 2002, ISBN 9780827242456

Schneiders, Sandra. *Written That You May Believe: Encountering Jesus in the Fourth Gospel*, 2nd rev. ed. New York: Crossroad, 2003. ISBN 08245192.

Recommended:

The Jewish Annotated New Testament NRSV, edited by Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011 (ISBN 9780195297706)

Culpepper, R. Alan. *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1987. ISBN 978-0800620684. Out of print, but used copies are available via used book merchants.

Reinhartz, Adele. *Befriending the Beloved Disciple: A Jewish Reading of John*. New York: Continuum, 2002. ISBN 978-08264144. Out of print, but used copies are available via used book merchants.