

**REL 351-W7 Spirituality of the Johannine Literature**  
**COURSE SYLLABUS Fall 2019 (S1-20)**



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**PREREQUISITES:** A desire to study the scriptures. A 100 level REL course is preferred, but not required. A pre-assignment is required.

**Class Dates: Wednesdays, 10/23, 10/30, 11/6, 11/13, 11/20, 12/4, 12/11, 6:30-9:20 pm**

**I. REQUIRED TEXTS:**

1. The Bible (any decent translation with footnotes preferred e.g. New American).
2. Schneiders, Sandra. Written That You May Believe: Encountering Jesus in the Fourth Gospel. Crossroads, 2003.
3. Kostenberger, Andreas. Encountering John. Baker, 2013.
4. Trokan, John. Instructor Packet. 2014. (available on blackboard and in class)

**II. COURSE DESCRIPTION, COURSE OBJECTIVES, AND LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Together we will explore the basic theology and spirituality of the Gospel of John and the Johannine Epistles, with an analysis of the historical context and social culture out of which the Christian message arose and was transmitted.

Learning Outcome	Performance Indicator	Assessment Artifact
Cultural Competence and awareness of other cultures	Students will explore the basic theology of the gospel and letters of John through examination of the rich socio-cultural diversity and historical context out of which the Johannine literature arose and was transmitted.	Schneider Paper Exegesis Papers

Communication Critical Thinking	Students will analyze the literary composition of the gospel and letters differentiating the unique style of the evangelist through class discussion and exegesis research.	Exegesis Papers  Seminar Presentations
Critical Thinking Ethical Awareness	Students will synthesize and articulate the unique theological and spiritual perspectives of John, in light of Matthew, Mark, Luke, Paul, and Acts through class analysis and exegesis research.	Exegesis Papers  Seminar Presentations
Integrative Learning and Ethics	Students will articulate and integrate the unique theological and spiritual message of the Johannine Literature in dialogue with their theological reflection journals.	Theological Reflection Journal

### III. FORMAT

Lecture, discussion, group work, audio-visuals, seminar-style presentations, guided meditation, Lectio Divina, and theological reflection.

### IV. METHOD OF EVALUATION:

Students will be evaluated on the basis of their ability to understand the New Testament, the assigned readings and class materials in relationship to their own experience. Evaluation will include:

1. Gospel observation and Schneider paper (5 pages) due 10/23 = 25%
2. Biblical exegesis paper on a Johannine sign (5 pages) due TBD = 25%
3. Biblical exegesis paper on passage from John 13-21 due TBD = 25%
4. NT Theological Reflection Journal due 11/20/14 = 25%





NOTE: Students will present a brief seminar report on their research for their two biblical interpretation papers in class.


Criteria for evaluation of the papers will be:

1. content development of narrative
2. depth of analysis
3. quality of critical reflection
4. clarity of expression and grammar

**Grading Scale will be: A= 90-100; B= 80-89; C=70-79; D=60-69.**

## Rubric for New Testament Papers

Criteria	Levels of Achievement				
	Exemplary	Competent	Acceptable	Needs Improvement	Missing Requirement
<b>Focus</b> 	<b>30 Points</b> Engaging and full development of a clear thesis as appropriate to assignment purpose	<b>20 Points</b> Competent and well-developed thesis; thesis represents sound and adequate understanding of topic	<b>15 Points</b> Mostly acceptable ideas, but simplistic; thesis is weak, unclear, too broad, or only indirectly supported.	<b>10 Points</b> Simplistic or confused presentation of ideas; prompt not understood; thesis is missing or not discernable	<b>0 Points</b> Inability to grasp basic point of the prompt (question
<b>Evidence</b> 	<b>20 Points</b> Consistent evidence; explores ideas in depth; ideas work together as a unified whole; main points are supported with evidence that is valid and specific	<b>15 Points</b> Evidence is sound, valid and logical.	<b>10 Points</b> Main points are only indirectly supported; specific connections are not apparent and/or loosely relevant to main points; some evidence is not-sufficient or irrelevant as supportive material	<b>5 Points</b> Lack of support for main points; frequent or illogical generalizations without support	<b>0 Points</b> Absence of support for main points
<b>Organization</b> 	<b>10 Points</b> Organization is sequential; paragraphs are well developed and facilitate readability; ideas linked with smooth and effective transitions	<b>8 Points</b> Organization, paragraph structure, transitions are consistent	<b>6 Points</b> Limited attempts to organize around a thesis; paragraphs are mostly stand-alone without building momentum from one point to another; weak or non-evident transitions	<b>4 Points</b> Organization, if evident at all, is confusing and disjointed; paragraph structure is weak; transitions are missing, inappropriate and/or illogical	<b>0 Points</b> Paragraph structure does not exist; or is a single rambling paragraph or series of isolated paragraphs
<b>Grammar/Clarity</b> 	<b>30 Points</b> Free of punctuation, spelling, capitalization errors; appropriate format and	<b>25 Points</b> Occasional punctuation, spelling, and/or capitalization errors; few formatting errors of words.	<b>20 Points</b> Contains punctuation, spelling, and/or capitalization errors; formatting is inconsistent.	<b>15 Points</b> Many and serious errors of punctuation, spelling, and/or capitalization; errors interfere with meaning;	<b>0 Points</b> Frequent mechanical errors that impede meaning. Poor paragraphs and sentences.

Criteria	Levels of Achievement				
	Exemplary	Competent	Acceptable	Needs Improvement	Missing Requirement
Citation of sources: APA or MLA or Chicago style 	presentation			formatting is weak.	
	10 Points Accurate and consistent citation of quoted and paraphrased material	8 Points Frequent citation of quoted and paraphrased material	6 Points Accurate and Inconsistent citation of quoted and paraphrased material	4 Points Limited citation of quoted and paraphrased material	0 Points No citation of quoted and paraphrased material

## V. ATTENDANCE POLICY

Attendance at class is mandatory. Class participation will assess preparation of assigned readings, meaningful comments, constructive questions, small group discussions, as well as unexcused absences. An unexcused absence will lead to the reduction of the final semester grade by one letter grade.

First/Second Semesters and All Summer Sessions	
Weeks 1-5	No record of dropped class.
Weeks 6-10	Grade of "W" for dropped class.
Weeks 11+	No drops accepted.

## VI. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

When we use the information and language of others to enrich our reflection and research papers we must:

- tell the reader when we are quoting and indicate the source (person, book, article, etc.) of that quotation
- tell the reader when we are paraphrasing and indicate the source (person, book, article, etc.) of that information.

Quoting or paraphrasing the information and/or language of a source without naming the source is plagiarism. Plagiarism is unacceptable in an academic institution and is subject to penalty. Please consult the Student Handbook for this and other College policies on Academic Integrity.

## VII. PRE-ASSIGNMENT

Read the Gospel of John in one sitting. As you read the Gospel, note the themes, characters, images of Jesus and literary style features which are striking, interesting or noteworthy to you. What do you observe in the Gospel which is new? Bring your notes to class for discussion. Also read the assigned chapters (1-6) in Sandra Schneider's Written that You May Believe. In light of your Gospel observations and Schneider's presentation of the gospel, how is John's gospel

distinctive? How is the Gospel of John's understanding of Jesus similar or dissimilar to your own? Develop your responses to these questions in a five page paper, and be prepared to discuss these questions in class. **Due 10/23**

## VIII. COURSE OUTLINE: Johannine Spirituality

Session 1 10/23	Session 2 10/30	Session 3 11/6	Session 4 11/13	Session 5 11/20	Session 6 12/4	Session 7 12/11
Introduction Overview Expectations Syllabus	Introduction Overview	Introduction Overview	Introduction Overview	Introduction Overview	Introduction Overview	Introduction Overview
Intro to Gospel Theology and Spirituality	History of the Johannine Community: Development and Messianic Expectations	Book of Signs: Context, structure, purpose, reactions	Book of Signs exegesis	Farewell Discourse: Literary, theological, and spiritual features	Passion Narrative and the Resurrection in John: Historical, Literary, Theological features	Jnn Epistles and Revelation: Historical context, literary features, theological dimensions.
Process of Gospel Formation and literary interpretive features	Qumran, Essenes and the Dead Sea Scrolls	Seminar Research Presentations  John 2-3-4-5	Seminar research Presentations  John 6-9-10-11	Seminar Research Presentations  John 13-17	Seminar Research Presentations  John 18-21	Seminar Research Presentations  Letters/Revelation
Theological Reflection  Jesus	Theological Reflection	Theological Reflection	Theological Reflection	Theological Reflection	Theological Reflection	Theological Reflection  Course Evaluation
Readings: Schneiders 1-6  Kostenberger ch 1-4  Gospel of John	Readings: Schneiders 7-8  Exegesis Research	Readings: Schneiders 9-10 Kostenberger ch 5-10	Readings: Exegesis Research	Readings: Schneiders 11 Kostenberger ch 11-14	Readings: Schneiders 12-14  Kostenberger ch 15-16	Readings: Jnn Letters Revelation

## BIBLICAL EXEGESIS PAPER GUIDELINES

1. Purpose: To enable students to research Gospel texts and explore their meanings using the tool of the course.
2. As you research your passage, keep the following in mind: your written report should concentrate on what the passage meant in its original context, exploring the historical, literary and theological dimensions.
3. Familiarize yourself with what current biblical scholarship has to say about your passage. Everyone should consult the Collegeville Bible Commentary or similar resource. Additional commentaries on John in our library will be helpful. For example:

Brown, Raymond, Fitzmyer, Joseph, Murphy, Roland, eds., The Jerome Biblical Commentary. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1968.  
A New Catholic Commentary on Holy Scriptures (1969)  
The Anchor Bible Series

4. For additional resources, consult the selected bibliography in the required readings. Also refer to periodical literature and biblical journals. For additional online resources consult the Online Resources icon on Blackboard. The following scripture journals are available in the Mount library.

*Bible Today*  
*Catholic Biblical quarterly*  
*Chicago Studies*  
*Journal of Biblical Literature*  
*New Testament Studies*  
*Novum Testamentum*

5. Sample Outline for interpretation papers:
  1. Introduction
  2. Context and Historical Analysis
  3. Literary Analysis of Passage
  4. Theological Interpretation of Passage
  5. Discussion/Critique
  6. Summary

APA/MLA source citation format and bibliography are required.  
Students may use any format they are comfortable with.

Each exegesis paper is worth 25% of final grade.

## NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION JOURNAL INSTRUCTIONS

**FORMAT:** Personal notebook or journal: 7 journal entries minimum (dates); length – determined by inspiration. **Due Date 11/20**

Purpose:

1. To immerse oneself in the meaning of the Gospel of John
2. To facilitate the ability to read the scripture critically with the mind and heart
3. To develop the habit of theological reflection within students
4. To examine the existential level of the New Testament and enable students to place their personal experience and religious questions in dialogue with the biblical texts.

Theology, as the study of God, is a disciplined reflection upon faith. These weekly journal entries are an attempt to develop the habit of theological reflection within us, and to engage our personal experience and questions with the truth and wisdom of the Christian Scriptures.

Each week students will be exposed to new ideas and insights about the Christian Scriptures from class, and from our personal readings of the assigned scripture texts. What is the existential meaning of the text? What is it saying to me today in my own life experience? What is the truth of a particular gospel story? How does this gospel truth impact my life? How does it expand my own self understandings as well as my personal beliefs and values? These questions will be the source of rich reflection for your journal.

**Process.** Focus on a particular gospel story/passage (an insight from class, or the assigned readings may also work well).

**Read the passage.** Attend to the particulars of the story: context, setting, characters, dialogue, action. To whom are you attracted to? Why? How does this story make you feel? Pause and write down a word/phrase that is striking.

**Read the passage a second time.** Write your reflections, reactions, feelings, questions, etc. What does the lesson, learning, or truth of this story say to you today? How does it impact you world? Your lifestyle? Your worldview? Your faith? Your fears? Your expectations? Your self-understanding?

Theology may be a word-from-God (revelations) through creation and history. Theology may be a word-about-God (faith) through creation and history. Theology may be a word-to-God (praxis) through prayer and worship, moral action, and practical activity. Your personal theological reflection upon the scriptures may express any one of these words, but will usually express them in combination with each other. Your reflection may discover theology in your experience, or bring theology to the experience. Regardless, theological reflection respects the integrity of your experience and places it in dialogue with the truth of the scriptures. Trust your experience, and befriend your imagination as it guides you to new insight and understanding.