UNDERGRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: **Spring 2011**
Instructor: Rev. William Kurz, S.J.
Course #: THEO 6120
Section: 101
Course Title: **New Testament Method**

Context:

The focus of this course is primarily on method: how one can approach and understand and utilize a New Testament text both within its original context and for theological, church and personal appropriation. Our goal will be to do sample exegeses from, and make exegetical arguments about, every genre of NT writing: Synoptic and Johannine Gospels, Acts, letters, quasi-letters, and apocalypse. We will try to understand the symbolic worlds of Hellenism, Judaism, the Old Testament and their genres of writings analogous to those of the NT. We shall become familiar not only with classic historical critical methods like textual, form, source and redaction criticism, but with rhetorical, sociological, literary and narrative approaches, intertextuality, and at least touch on hermeneutical application. An important new approach will be theological interpretation, possibly with help from patristic writers. Our aim will be learning to interpret confidently the primary texts oneself, with minimal dependence on secondary literature.

Format:

Primarily seminar format focused on cooperative class exegesis of texts, class critiques of short written outlined arguments, with appropriate input by the teacher.

Assignments and/or examinations:

Preparation for group exegesis every class. Depending on class size, about three or four 2-3 page exegesis outlines with oral class critiques of others’ outlines. Cooperative class exegesis and helpful response to the work of others are paramount aspects of the course. The final exam is a 8-10 page exegesis paper on a common passage assigned near the end of the course and due during one of the last weeks of class.

Language Pre-requisites:

For those majoring in New Testament, Greek is required. Others can easily learn the Greek alphabet to be able to use dictionaries, concordances, and similar tools that key on the Greek text. As in all departmental courses, French and/or German are expected from early in our program.