

### GRADUATE COURSE DESCRIPTION

Term: **Spring 2010**  
Instructor: W. Kurz, S.J.  
Course #: THEO 8316  
Course Title: **The Johannine Tradition**

#### Content:

Johannine writings have enriched Christian doctrine, theology, and spirituality to an extraordinary degree & continue to be the focus of lively exchange today. Within biblical studies, there has been movement by scholars to build upon an earlier exclusive focus on historical critical methods, first, to include narrative & canonical approaches, and now, theological interpretation and pastoral, spiritual & doctrinal application & actualization for believers today.

This course will treat the Fourth Gospel as biblical narrative and as God's Word addressing Christian life as paradigmatic & authoritative. Ever grounded in close readings of the Greek text, it will use historical, narrative, genre, intertextual, and theological approaches in the tradition of the church reading, interpreting, & applying Scripture.

Besides the usual questions about language, forms, sources, genres, redaction, context & history, this course includes such particular subjects as the prologue, plotting the narrative, filling gaps, intertextuality, implied readers, etc. It will address patristic and ecclesial reception of these scriptures, as well as the Johannine writings' relevance to Christology, doctrine, and Christian living. The course will also follow programmatic suggestions in the professor's co-authored book (with Luke Timothy Johnson), *The Future of Catholic Scripture Scholarship: A Creative Conversation* (2002), and in Ellen Davis and Richard B. Hays, eds., *The Art of Reading Scripture* (2003), esp. "**Nine Theses on the Interpretation of Scripture**," pp 1-5.

#### Format:

Seminar format. Because of marked graduate student & faculty preferences for once-a-week over twice-a-week class scheduling, we will use a three-hour format, broken into shorter sub-periods, with alternating teacher input, seminar presentations, discussions, & class exegesis of Johannine texts. Respectful and open class communication plus cooperation, not competition, are the basic ground rules.

#### Assignments and/or Examinations:

We begin by thorough reading of the Johannine Gospel & Letters (see also Revelation) in English and/or Greek [preferably done before the course begins], with guidance to contemporary insights into the Johannine tradition. Those working in Greek will be primarily responsible for Greek exegesis in class. The others will do more of the reporting on scholarly discussion and on translations of related Hellenistic Jewish works.

## Department of Theology

---

Depending on class size, each student will have two or three 3-page outlined arguments for a thesis, doing exegesis or narrative criticism on sections of the Fourth Gospel or letters and/or reporting on some related theme or ancient writing in translation.

Two weeks before turning in their research paper, each student will present in class its thesis & basic argument (based on a written 2-4 page outline and full bibliography provided to the class on the day of the presentation).

### Language Pre-requisites:

- As in all departmental courses, French and/or German are expected from early in our program. For those majoring in New Testament, Greek is required. Others will have to be able to use the major dictionaries, concordances, & similar tools that key on Greek words. For any who need it, help in the easy process of learning the Greek alphabet is provided at the beginning of the course.

### Required Texts:

EXEGETES IN GREEK need a Greek New Testament & the Aland four-Gospel synopsis (Greek or Greek-English). OTHERS need an English (or Greek-English) four-Gospel synopsis & an interlinear Greek New Testament.

ALL should have: English Study Bible (preferably more literal RSV *Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha*);

L.T. Johnson & W. Kurz, *Future of Catholic Biblical Scholarship* (Eerdmans, 2002), plus the Winter 2006 edition of the journal *Nova et Vetera* containing a written symposium on this book.

RECOMMENDED: *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* (Anchor Bible Reference Library, 2003) Ray Brown (ed. F.X. Moloney) or Francis X. Moloney, *The Gospel of John* (Sacra Pagina 4, 1998).

Ellen F. Davis and Richard B. Hays, eds., *The Art of Reading Scripture* (Eerdmans, 2003).

W. Kurz, *Reading the Bible as God's Own Story* (Word Among Us, 2007).

Consult instructor (x8-7148, x8-5000, [william.kurz@marquette.edu](mailto:william.kurz@marquette.edu)) if you have questions.