

School of Theology and Ministry  
Seattle University  
900 Broadway  
Seattle, Washington 98122

Spring Quarter, 2008

STMA 537-01: Gospel of John  
Hunthausen 100  
Wednesdays, 1:30 – 4:20 p.m.  
Pre-requisite: STMM 527: Christian  
Scriptures

Instructor: Ann Holmes Redding, Ph.D.  
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## Texts

**Required:** The basic text for the course is the gospel of John. You may certainly use other versions as supplements, but for the purposes of our common work we will use the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (NRSV). The introductory textbook I use for Christian scriptures is Dennis C. Duling, *The New Testament History, Literature and Social Context (4th ed)*; however, you may consult whatever basic introductory text you have for pertinent assignments (see **Class Schedule** below).

Hendricks, Obery. *Living Water*.

Kysar, Robert. *John's Story of Jesus*.

Martyn, J. Louis. *The Gospel of John in Christian History: Essays for Interpreters*.

Reinhartz, Adele. *Befriending the Beloved Disciple: A Jewish Reading of the Gospel of John*.

**Supplemental:** The texts below, while not required, may be helpful in your work for this class.

Brown, Raymond E. *The Community of the Beloved Disciple*.

Callahan, Allen Dwight. *Love Supreme: A History of the Johannine Community*.

Kysar, Robert. *John, the Maverick Gospel*.

Martyn, J. Louis. *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*.

**Course Description** (From the course listing): Students encounter the distinctive character of the Fourth Gospel and its presentation of Jesus the Christ. This course explores the literary devices and themes within the text, while attending to the profound influence of this Gospel on forming Christian faith and life. Prerequisite: STMM 527.

Instructor's addendum: Within a literary approach to the text, we will focus this quarter on the reading strategies of the scholars whose work we will be reading together with the goal of becoming conscious, critical, informed, and appreciative readers ourselves.

**Objectives and students' learning outcomes**

1. Knowledge of the major emphases, narrative features, and contents of the gospel of John, including those that are unique to the gospel of John, such that students are able to:
  - a. Write an narrative outline of the story of Jesus as told in John.
  - b. Write a final paper on a significant theme or topic within the narrative framework of the fourth gospel.
  - c. Complete and show improvement in in-class content exercises at the beginning and end of the quarter.
2. Ability to identify and use various reading strategies for approaching the gospel of John, such that students:
  - a. Read and analyze the work of Kysar, Martyn, Reinhartz, and Hendricks according to their reading strategies, interacting with at least two of them in their final papers.
  - b. Read the gospel of John according to a variety of reading strategies and make notes about their findings.
  - c. Identify the initial questions, assumptions, and interests they bring to the text and the effects of these factors on their own reading strategies.
  - d. Research a term or group of terms as used in the gospel of John in a word study that will be part of their final paper.

**Evaluation Procedures**

1. The grade for the final paper is the basis for the quarter grade. Other factors, like attendance, participation in class, evidence of preparation for class sessions and conferences, performance in the content exercises, and self-assessment by the students, will also be considered in the evaluation process. The class and instructor will discuss the equitable and appropriate procedures and criteria for evaluation both in class and in the conferences.
2. The instructor will have a preliminary and final conference with each student during the quarter to discuss and evaluate the student's progress, specifically in terms of the final paper.

**Course Requirements (Detailed assignment descriptions to be distributed separately.)**

1. **Attendance:** Attendance in a class that meets for one quarter, once a week is particularly important. Also, in a class that emphasizes collegial work, students are accountable to one another, as well as to the instructor in this regard. Students will submit in writing by the second class session notice about any anticipated absence. For other absences, students should, if possible, e-mail the instructor as soon as they are able.
2. **Goals for class/self-assessment:** Each student will prepare for the conferences with the instructor by drawing up goals for the class (for the preliminary conference) and an assessment of performance in relationship to those goals (for the final conference).
3. **Reading the gospel:** Each student will read the entire gospel of John to prepare for each class. The focus of the reading will differ according to the topic for the

class. To make the best use of the assignment, students should take notes as they read. (See Class Schedule.)

4. **Content exercises:** Each student will do two exercises on the content of the gospel of John, one on **16 April** and one on **28 May**. The evaluation proposed for this exercise would be based both on the progress shown over the quarter and on the percentage of correct answers in the final quiz.
5. **Word study:** Each student will choose a significant word, word family, or a term in John that pertains to their paper topic and prepare a word study as part of final paper. Assignment due: **28 May. (Suggested points: 35 of final paper grade.)**
6. **Final paper.** Students will choose a topic, theme, or passage in the gospel of John as the focus of a 15 – 20-page paper, including a word study. Assignment due: **28 May. (Suggested points: 100 [65 for main body + 35 for word study].)** Preliminary conferences: 16 April – 7 May. Discussion of goals and paper topics. Final conferences: 29 May – 6 June. Discussion of paper and assessment.

#### Class Schedule

Class	Preparation for class (changes possible; stay tuned)	In-class activity/topics	Due to be handed in
1. 2 Apr.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introduction to class: instructor, approach</li> <li>- In-class reading of gospel of John (part I)</li> </ul>	
2. 9 Apr.	<p><b>Reading of John:</b> general literary critical. attention to plot, characters, settings, literary devices.</p> <p><b>Conversation partner:</b> Kysar.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- In-class reading of gospel of John (part II)</li> <li>- Review of syllabus, class requirements</li> <li>- Discussion of Kysar</li> <li>- Narrator, plot, narrative time</li> <li>- Patterns: signs, “I am” sayings</li> </ul>	
3. 16 Apr.	<p><b>Reading of John:</b> settings and characters I: the Father, Jesus.</p> <p><b>Conversation partner:</b> Kysar.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review of paper assignment.</li> <li>- Settings</li> <li>- Character analysis: words of, words about, actions, points of view.</li> <li>- The Father</li> <li>- Jesus</li> <li>- Content exercise I.</li> <li>- Discussion of Kysar, cont’d.</li> </ul>	Preliminary conferences begin. Bring to them goals and paper topics.
4. 23 Apr.	<p><b>Reading of John:</b> characters II: the disciples (including Mary Magdalene, “the Jews,” the Pharisees and company.</p> <p><b>Conversation partners:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Review of word study assignment.</li> <li>- Characters, cont’d. : the disciples (including Mary Magdalene, “the Jews,” the Pharisees and company.</li> <li>- Introduction to Martyn.</li> </ul>	Preliminary conferences continue.

	Kysar, Martyn		
5. 30 Apr.	<b>Reading of John:</b> Characters III: Nicodemus; Jesus' mother; the woman at the well; the royal official; the lame man; the brothers of Jesus; <i>the blind man</i> ; Mary, Martha, Lazarus, Pilate. <i>John 9.</i>  <b>Conversation partner:</b> Martyn	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Characters in episodes: enacting scenes, assessing points of view and conflict development.</li> <li>- John 9. Martyn on John 9.</li> <li>- Progress check on papers and work.</li> </ul>	Preliminary conferences continue.
6. 7 May	<b>Reading of John:</b> Readers: 1 <sup>st</sup> -century readers. The Johannine community. <b>Conversation partners:</b> Martyn, Reinhartz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Martyn on the development of the Johannine community.</li> <li>- Introduction to Reinhartz.</li> </ul>	Last day of preliminary conferences.
7. 14 May	<b>Reading of John:</b> The Ideal Reader. <b>Conversation partners:</b> Reinhartz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Ideal Reader.</li> <li>- Reinhartz: chs. 1 – 5.</li> <li>- Progress check on papers.</li> </ul>	
8. 21 May	<b>Reading of John:</b> We the Readers. (catch-up class) <b>Conversation partners:</b> Reinhartz, Hendricks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Reinhartz: chs. 6 – 8.</li> <li>- Drawing up our concerns for last class.</li> <li>- Progress check on papers.</li> <li>- Introduction to Hendricks.</li> </ul>	
9. 28 May	<b>Reading of John:</b> We the Readers, cont'd. <b>Conversation partner:</b> Hendricks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discussion of Hendricks.</li> <li>- Imagination and interpretation.</li> <li>- Drawing up concerns for last class.</li> <li>- Content exercise II.</li> </ul>	Final conferences begin. Bring in copy of paper and self-assessment.
10. 4 June	<b>Reading of John:</b> So what? To whom are we accountable? For what are we responsible? What time is it?  <b>Conversation partners:</b> All	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Taking the show on the road</li> <li>- Cutting edges and next steps</li> <li>- Class evaluation forms</li> <li>- Self-assessment</li> </ul>	Final conferences continue through 6 June.