University of St. Thomas  
MLTHE 5365-N (2407) 
Gospel and Letters of John  
Fall Semester 2015

♦ Mission Statement

We are the University of St. Thomas, the Catholic university in the heart of Houston. We are committed to the Catholic intellectual tradition and the dialogue between faith and reason. By pursuing excellence in teaching, scholarship, and service, we embody and instill in our students the core values of our founders, the Basilian Fathers: goodness, discipline, and knowledge.

We foster engagement in a diverse, collaborative community. As a comprehensive university grounded in the liberal arts, we educate students to think critically, communicate effectively, succeed professionally, and lead ethically.

♦ Course Details

• Instructor: Rev. Dr. Dempsey Rosales-Acosta
• Email: drosale@stthom.edu
• Office Hours: 7:00 am - 9:15 am, 12:15-2:00 pm TTH; 7:00 am - 12:02 pm MW., and by appointment (use the email).
• Office: Hughes House #201
• Weight/Times: 3 credits (3-0-0); Monday & Wednesday
• Class time: MoWe 12:10PM - 1:25PM
• Classroom: Strake 206
• Meeting dates: 08/24/2015 - 12/07/2015

1. Course Description

This course portrays an exegetical approach to the study of the Greek text of John’s Gospel and the letters attributed to his authorship. The content, situation, historicity, literary character, and particularly theological message of John’s Gospel and his epistles will be examined in relation to a careful exegesis of selected passages from John. The course also (inductively) introduces the student to have contact with the critical edition of the Greek text of the NT (Nestle-Aland 27th and 28th edition) in order to discover the richness of the semantic levels hidden in the text closest to the original. This help the students to have a critical approach to the translations in modern languages.
During the course we will explore various historical, literary, and theological aspects of the Fourth Gospel and the Letters, as well as their relationship to the other canonical and non-canonical Gospels. Special attention will be given to the inter-relationships between the search for the historical Jesus, the investigation of the Evangelist's (or real authors') communities and traditions, and some contemporary social, ideological, and literary interpretations of the *Corpus Ioanneum*.

This course welcomes students of all faith traditions and religious backgrounds or lack thereof (including those who were raised in non-religious contexts) as we explore together how these writings reflect the concerns of Jews and Christians and their cultural importance.

2. Course Objectives

- To become familiar with the structure, themes, symbols and terminology of the Fourth Gospel.
- To compare and contrast the Johannine portrait of Jesus with those of some other Gospels.
- To investigate the history and development of the Johannine Community in its first-century context.
- To learn how various methodological approaches (patristic, history-of-religions, sociological, feminist, modern literary, etc.) have affected the interpretation and understanding of the Fourth Gospel.
- To learn about and apply contemporary Catholic teachings about the interpretation of the Bible.
- To study the message of John’s Gospel and his letters, particularly by interacting with Maloney and Raymond Brown’s commentaries and work. Authors who represent the Catholic biblical Scholarship.
- To acquire exegetical and Greek linguistic skills, becoming more acquainted with Greek syntax at a basic level.
- To study the theological content, literary style and the problem of the authorship of the Gospel and the letters by writing an exegesis paper on chapter 1 of John's Gospel, Chapter 1 of 1 John, and the second and third letter of John.
- To consider approaches to Johannine theology and historical problems of the proto-Christians communities, particularly through lectures, reading, and class discussion.
- To engage current scholarship on the Gospel and Letters, including historical, literary, and narrative criticism.
- To explore living faithfully to the witness of John’s Gospel to Christian life by exploring its contribution to practical theology and ethics.

3. Required Texts/Readings

- A Bible (it is accepted in different languages and versions). It is recommended, if you don't have one, to buy a Jerusalem Bible, study version.
b. Various photocopied articles and handouts provided by the professor will be posted on Blackboard.

c. **Writing a research Paper.** This book, consisting of handouts for writing the research papers, is not available in the book store but it will be posted on the Blackboard.

d. Suggested reading of different authors will be presented in every class according to the topic. 

e. It is **strongly recommended** the reading


e. **Obligatory readings:** The Gospel of John (all chapters); 1John (all chapters); 2 and 3 John (the complete letters). **All the material that will be uploaded on Blackboard.**

4. **Approach and Assessment**

   - The course will have four (4) major grades: each evaluation will have the value of **25% of the final grade.**
   - The tests are not cumulative.
   - Three evaluations will be written exams, including the final test. One evaluation will be a research paper because this course is designated “writing course”. The topic and specifications regarding the Research paper will posted as separate article on Blackboard.
   - The grading scale is the usual one at UST: 90, 80,70,60. In detail:

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   - **Attendance:** **IS REQUIRED.** Be prompt. After every week’s worth of absences (2 for TTH courses, 3 for MWF), a next absence will lower your final grade one step (B to B-, etc.). Please be punctual for class, to be present for the roll. It is your responsibility, if you are tardy, to remove an absence at the end of class **that same day.** Removal of an absence thereafter will require a written excuse on a medical agency’s Letterhead.

   To be successful in this course students must demonstrate independent, critical thinking. Students are expected to come to class ready to participate meaningfully and enthusiastically in classroom activities. This requires prior completion of assigned readings. Students are responsible for knowing what is required and when assignments are due. Absences will make it very difficult to do well in this course.
• Tests must be taken at the times they are scheduled. The paper must be due on the established date. Failing to the established dates will implied a penalty. Meaning that the evaluation or paper taken out of the assigned date cannot have the value of 25%.

• If opportunities to extra-credit will be given, the extra-credit won't surpass the total value of 4% of the class grade. The extra-credits DO NOT substitute the main evaluations of the semester. The maximum value of an extra-credit will be 2.5 points.

5. Code of Honor

The Students in this course are expected to be familiar with and follow this basic Academic Honor Code. According to this code, the students of the University of St. Thomas are expected to:

• Refrain from cheating, including plagiarism.
• Refrain from lying.
• Express opinions with civility and with consideration for the opinions of others.
• Respect shared intellectual property and resources.
• Promote the importance of the honor code in all their interactions for the benefit of the learning community.
• Refrain from doing anything that will embarrass yourselves and your families.
• Everything that you do, must be for the major glory of God: Ad maiorem Dei gloriam.

Academic honesty and integrity is essential to the academic enterprise and the College community. All written work submitted must be your own. Guidelines for Research Writing defines plagiarism as the failure to give credit where credit is due: “To plagiarize is to give the impression that you have written something original which in fact you have borrowed from another without acknowledging that other person's work” (Guidelines for Research Writing, 2002, p. 5). If you borrow ideas or distinctive phrases, or include direct quotations in your written assignments, you must acknowledge your source(s) properly by in-text citation or footnote. It is also wrong to copy another person’s work or to submit an assignment previously handed in for credit in another course. Students guilty of plagiarism will receive a grade of zero for the assignment and will be brought to the attention of the College’s Discipline Committee.
Course Schedule: Fall 2015

August 2015

26 W Continuation

September 2015

7 M Labor Day: No classes (sad news.....depressive)

9 W Influences and currents of Thought behind the Fourth Gospels. Recommended readings: Blackboard articles.


16 W Continuation

21 M Identity of the Author, Place, and Date of composition. Outline of the Structure of the Gospel.


1st Exam


30 W Christology (continuation)

October 2015

5 M The Signs in John: Selected texts from the Gospel. Recommended readings: Blackboard articles.

7 W The signs (continuation)

12-13 M Fall Break: No classes (incredible.... another sad news)

14 W "I am" sayings: Selected texts from the Gospel. Recommended readings: Blackboard articles.

19 M "I am" sayings (continuation)

26 M Time (continuation).

28 W **First Letter of John**: general analysis of the Message and basic information: Date, authenticity, unity and integrity of the text. Recommended readings: Blackboard articles.

**November 2015**


4 W **2nd Exam**


11 W Second Letter of John (continuation)

   **Research Paper Due**


18 W Third Letter of John (continuation)

23 M Exegesis of John 9

**25-27 Thanksgiving Break**

30 M Exegesis of John 9 (Continuation)

**December 2015**

2 W Exegesis of John 9 (continuation)

7 M The notion of Joy in John's Gospel

**Final Exam:** TBA

**Same Classroom**