



EMORY
UNIVERSITY

Course of Study 311:

NT I: Orientation to the NT (Summer 2014)



The above icons from the 9th–16th centuries represent the four evangelists (Matthew, Mark, Luke, John respectively). Photos of the images are courtesy of Rromir Imami. Imami has put together a wonderful collection of images with short explanations [here](#).

Welcome to COS 311 (Summer 2014)

Welcome to the Course of Study 311 interactive syllabus. Please take time to familiarize yourself with the information on this page, and keep checking back for additional resources that will be added in the coming weeks.

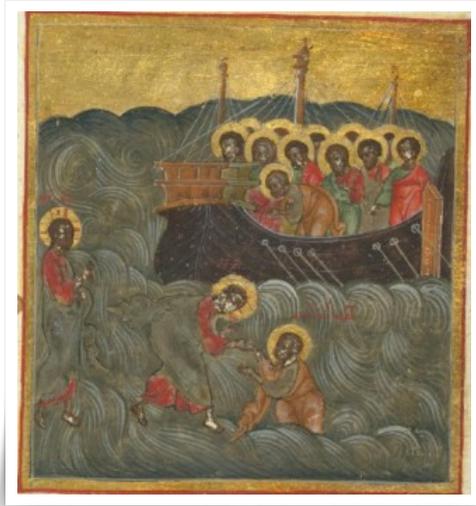
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A brief welcome video from the instructor.



"Christ Walking on Water with Peter" by the calligrapher Luke the Cypriot (late 16th–early 17th century). Courtesy of [Walters Art Museum Illuminated Manuscripts](#).

Course Description

A panoramic view of the literary content and theological perspectives of the New Testament in light of its social and historical environment within the ancient Mediterranean world. The course focuses on the distinctive portrayals of Jesus and the situations of the early Christian communities reflected in individual NT writings. The course also surveys the different literary genres and characteristics of respective texts. Furthermore, the course strives to appreciate the diverse voices and issues reflected in the canon.

A driving question of the course is: "In what ways do the 27 writings of the NT function as literary expressions of early Christianity's faith and history?"

Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course, students will:

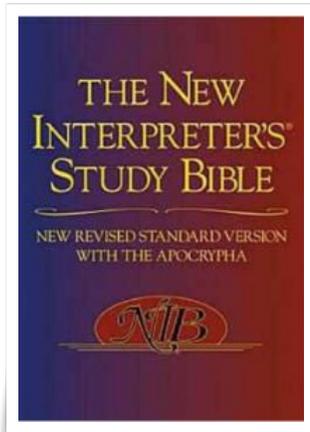
- Gain a basic understanding of the contents of the NT
- Review the scope and purpose of the New Testament
- Understand the origin and formation of the canon
- Explore the historical and social background from which the NT derives
- Consider the various portrayals of Jesus present in the NT (especially the four gospels)
- Cultivate and participate in informed and respectful class discussions
- Explore the origin & development of the Christian faith and community during the first century
- Reflect on the meaning and significance of the message of the NT for the faith and mission of the church in the contemporary world



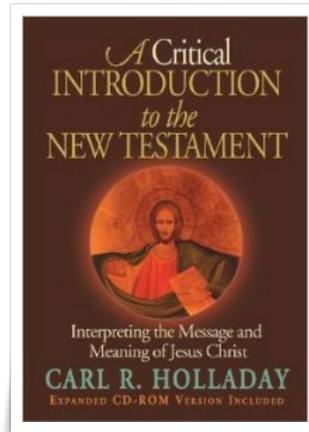
* Photo courtesy of [Mark Brannan](#)

Required Textbooks

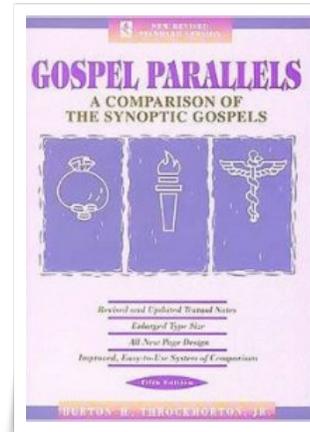
The books below are the required textbooks for COS 311. Please note that each image contains a link to the listing of each book on Amazon.com. Students are welcome to purchase used books, but must ensure that the correct edition is purchased.



Harrelson, Walter J, ed. *The New Interpreter's Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 2003.



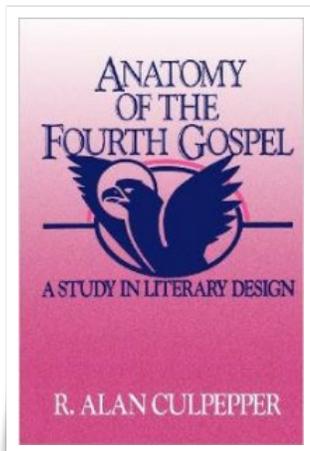
Holladay, Carl R. *A Critical Introduction to the New Testament: Interpreting the Message and Meaning of Jesus Christ*. Exp. ed. Nashville: Abingdon, 2005.



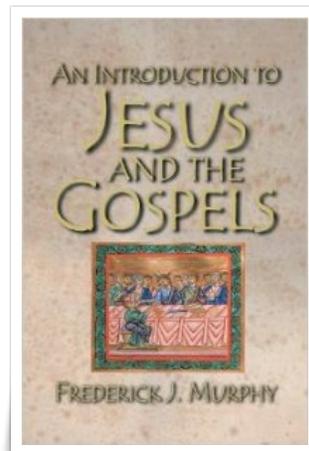
Throckmorton, Burton H., ed. *Gospel Parallels: A Comparison of the Synoptic Gospels*. 5th ed. Nashville, Tenn.; Atlanta: Thomas Nelson, 1992.

Recommended Textbooks

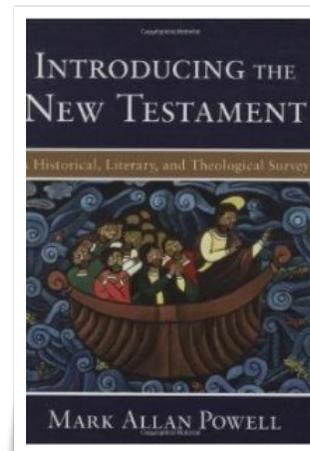
The textbooks below were recently approved by the GBHEM for use in future iterations of this course (now called COS 321). The approval came after precourse work was distributed for the summer of 2014. Therefore, these books are listed for reference only; students **do not** have to purchase these books.



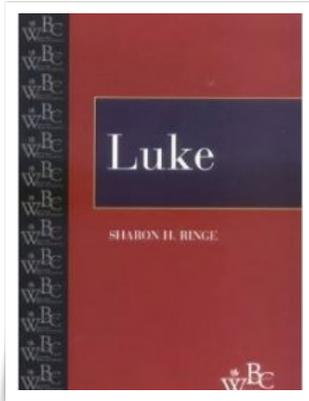
Culpepper, R. Alan. *Anatomy of the Fourth Gospel: A Study in Literary Design*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1983.



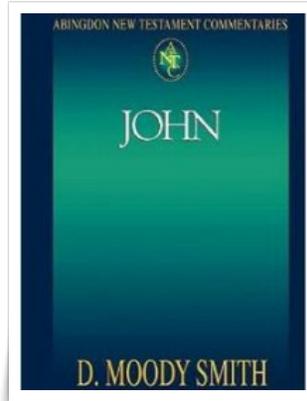
Murphy, Frederick J. *An Introduction to Jesus and the Gospels*. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 2005.



Powell, Mark Allan. *Introducing the New Testament: A Historical, Literary, and Theological Survey*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Academic, 2009.



Ringe, Sharon H. *Luke*. Westminster Bible Companion. Louisville, Kent.: Westminster John Knox, 1995.



Smith, D. Moody. *John*. Abingdon New Testament Commentaries. Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1999.

Supplementary Textbooks (per GBHEM)

The commentaries of Ringe and Smith are listed as supplementary by the GBHEM.

Course Requirements

- Timely and satisfactory completion of Precourse work (25% of total grade)
- Class attendance and participation, reading of the New Testament, and secondary texts (5% of total grade)
- Successful completion (passing) two multiple-choice tests (40% of total grade, each worth 20%)
- 4-5 Page Essay due the second week of class. Topic will be distributed in class. (30% of total grade)

Course Grading

- Grading of papers follows the Candler Course of Study Grading Policy (for more information, see [here](#)). Particular attention is paid to the established Grade Grid for papers and class participation
- For the multiple choice tests a basic point system is followed. *Keep in mind that most conferences require a letter grade of C or better to pass the course.*

Grading Scale:

- A 94-100
- A- 91-93
- B+ 87-90
- B 84-86
- B- 81-83
- C+ 77-80
- C 74-76
- C- 71-73
- D 67-70
- F 0-66



Class Schedule

July 28, 2014: Introduction to Course; Orientation to the NT; NT World, I

Presentations and Lecture Notes:

- [Prezi](#) on the NT Canon
- [PDF](#) of above Prezi

- [Google Presentation](#) on NT World, I: Judaism in Antiquity
- [PDF](#) of above presentation.

July 29, 2014: NT World, II; What are the Gospels?

Presentations and Lecture Notes:

- [Google Presentation](#) on NT World, II: Greco-Roman Culture, Religion, and Politics
- [PDF](#) of above presentation

The presentations on the NT World followed Murphy, *Introduction to Jesus and the Gospels*, pp. 43–87 (available [here](#))

- [Google Presentation](#): "What are the Gospels?"
- [PDF](#) of above presentation

Homework for Wednesday:

- Read Holladay, pp. 39–57; 104–23
- Read/Skim the Gospel of Mark
- Bring to Class: colored pens/pencils/highlighters: BLUE, YELLOW, RED, GREEN

July 30, 2014: The Synoptic Tradition; The Gospel of Mark

Presentations and Lecture Notes:

- [Google Presentation](#): The Synoptic Tradition
- [PDF](#) of above presentation

- [Prezi](#) on Mark's Gospel
- [PDF](#) of above.

- HOMEWORK for Thursday:
- Read Holladay, 128–57
- Read/Skim the Gospel of Matthew
- Begin Synoptic Tradition Paper (**due Tuesday, Aug. 5 before 8am**)

Resources for further study:

- [Synoptic Problem website](#): a comprehensive introduction to the synoptic problem, the variety of "solutions" to it, and other valuable information.
- [Introduction to the Gospel of Mark](#) (video): Dale Martin, Yale University, provides an introduction to the Gospel of Mark for the [Yale Open Course](#) on the New Testament.
- [Critical Scholarship on Mark](#) (video): an introduction as part of the [BibleDex Project](#) at the University of Nottingham.
- Mark Goodacre's collection of [study resources](#) on Mark's gospel.

July 31, 2014: The Gospel of Matthew

Presentations and Lecture Notes:

- [Prezi](#) on Matthew's Gospel
- [PDF](#) of above

HOMEWORK for FRIDAY:

- Read Holladay, pp. 158-89
- Read/Skim the Gospel of Luke
- Study for Exam #1

August 1, 2014: The Gospel of Luke; Exam #1

Presentations and Lecture Notes:

- [Prezi](#) on Luke's Gospel
- [PDF](#) of above

HOMEWORK for Monday:

- Read Holladay, pp. 225-60
- Read/Skim the Acts of the Apostles
- Work on Synoptic Tradition Paper (**due Tuesday, Aug. 5 before 8am**)

August 4, 2014: The Acts of the Apostles

Presentations and Lecture Notes:

- [Outline](#) from Eric Moore's lecture
- [Chart](#) emphasizing the significance of Jerusalem in Acts created by Eric Moore

HOMEWORK for Tuesday:

- Read Holladay, pp. 190-222
- Read/Skim the Gospel of John
- Synoptic Tradition Paper (**due Tuesday, Aug. 5 before 8am**)

August 5, 2014: The Gospel of John

***** Synoptic Tradition Paper due before 8am today *****

Presentations and Lecture Notes:

- [Prezi](#) on Gospel of John
- [PDF](#) of above

- In-class Exercise: [Gospel of John](#)

HOMEWORK for Wednesday:

- Read Holladay, pp. 77-103
- Read Murphy, "Other Gospels," (available [here](#))

August 6, 2014: The Historical Jesus; Jesus in Other Gospels

Presentations and Lecture Notes:

Historical Jesus:

- [Prezi](#) on the Historical Jesus
- [PDF](#) of above
- [Article](#) by Steve Kraftchick on the history of the "Lives of Jesus"

Other Gospels:

- [Selections](#) from the apocryphal gospels

HOMEWORK for Thursday:

- Read Ourisman, "Tell Me the Stories of Jesus" (available [here](#));
- Read Carson, "Preaching the Gospels" (available [here](#))

August 7, 2014: Teaching and Preaching the Gospels

Presentations and Lecture Notes:

- [Notes](#) from discussion

HOMEWORK for Friday:

- Study for Exam #2

August 8, 2014: Review; Exam #2

Resources for Review

I have added a linked Google Document below. I will update this document each day with the key concepts, figures, and terms from the previous day's lectures and discussion. Items listed on this document are "fair game" for the exams.

[COS 311: Key Terms, Figures, and Concepts](#)

Note: The exams will not be cumulative:

- (1) The first exam (Friday, Aug. 1) will cover: the NT canon; the World of the NT, I and II; What are the Gospels; and the synoptic Tradition.
- (2) The second exam (Friday, Aug. 8) will cover: the contents and features of the four gospels and Acts; the historical Jesus.

Students may use a Bible on the first exam, but no notes. The second exam will be close-booked.

Synoptic Tradition Paper (Due Aug. 5 before 8am)

Due August 5 before 8am

Purpose: This assignment is meant to explore the literary relationships between the Synoptic Gospels.
Length: 3-5 pages double-spaced (12 pt. font; one-inch margins)

Process:

(1) Analyze the passage (to be distributed in class) using the following key:

blue = words found identically in all three Synoptic gospels;

yellow = words found identically in Matthew and Mark;

red = words found identically in Matthew and Luke;

green = words found in Mark and Luke

(2) Based on the analysis above, briefly restate or reconstruct the core story that the three gospels share. Try not to elaborate or expand, but focus on the shared literary features and ideas. [.5 pages]

(3) List and analyze the similarities and differences between the three accounts. Full credit will only be given if similarities/differences are both listed AND analyzed. (A simple chart without further explanation will not suffice.) [1 page]

(4) From the above, select one of the three accounts and consider why the author tells the story in the way that he does. What does the account tell you about the author's conception of Jesus, other characters in the story, and so forth? [1.5 pages]

Here is the pericope from Throckmorton's *Gospel Parallels* for the Synoptic Tradition Paper.



Pericope 124—The
Transfiguration.pdf

Additional Resources for Teaching and Preaching

[Bible Oremus](#): provides the NRSV translation online

[Working Preacher](#): provides resources for preaching from the lectionary. Also able to search passages for archived resources. Provided by Luther Theological Seminary.

[Text Week](#): another resource for preaching based on the lectionary. Site also has a collection of artwork for each lectionary text.