

University of
Dubuque
Theological
Seminary

BI 644: Gospel of John

Greek Exegesis/
English Exegesis

Fall 2022

Online and
Residential

Image: Marc Chagall, *Crucifixion en jaune* (1975–80)

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Instructor Information

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Course Description

The artistic centerpiece for this course is Marc Chagall's 1975–1980 piece, *Crucifixion en jaune* ("Crucifixion in Yellow").

This class explores the literary, religious, theological, historical, and social worlds of The Gospel of John. It also attends to the reception of John throughout history and how the gospel is presently read in various social contexts. In the class, students will practice and develop various exegetical skillsets related to the interpretation of the New Testament and the gospels in general and the Gospel of John specifically. In the act of interpretation, they will merge their own intersectional social worlds with John's.



Course Objectives

Everything in this course, from readings to assignments to lectures, is designed to help students accomplish the objectives below. Moreover, grades in the course are determined by students ability to complete these objectives and doing so throughout the course of the semester. Please note that objectives vary between the Greek and English Exegesis versions of the course.

Objectives

- #1:** Exegete a select passage from John, paying attention to the world behind, world of, and world in front of the text.
- #2:** Identify and articulate central tenets of your own social context, explaining how these affect how you interpret the New Testament and John in particular.
- #3:** As part of the interpretive process, make use of multiple biblical commentaries that adopt various exegetical, theological, and ideological perspectives.
- #4 (Greek Exegesis Only):** Utilize Greek linguistic tools in service of interpretation of John and select passages from it.
- #4 (English Exegesis Only):** Engage a variety of contemporary perspectives on John and determine how your own theology relates to them.

Curricular Objectives

Be formed by, live in, and minister out of Scripture and the historical and theological tradition of the church (MDiv)

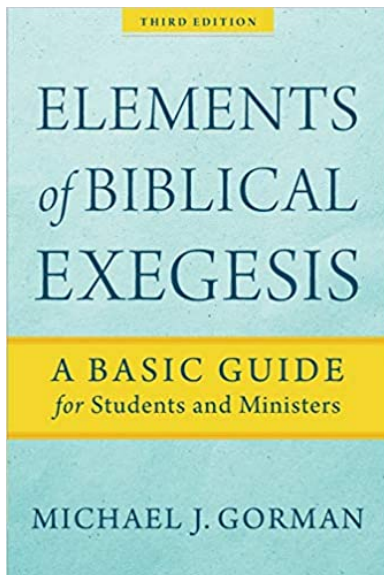
Interpret the Christian Scriptures through faithful exegesis and in light of the Christian tradition (MDiv)

Preach the Word of God with faithfulness and clarity (MDiv)

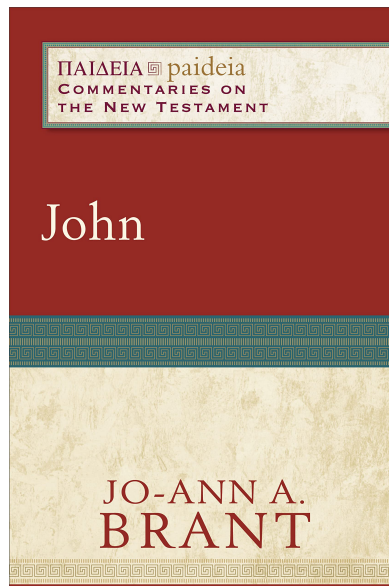
Articulate and reflect critically and constructively on the biblical and theological foundations of God's mission to the world (MAMD)

Be able to identify and interpret key themes from the Christian scriptures (MACL)

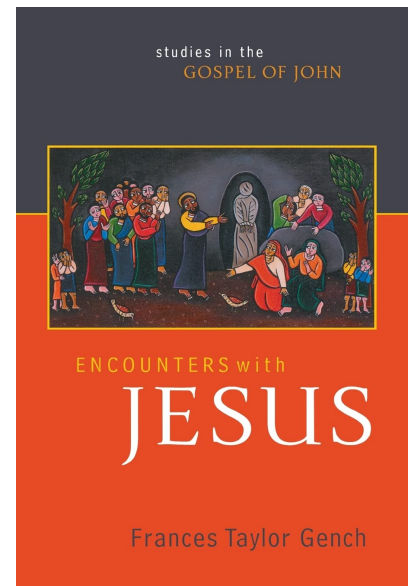
Required Texts (Both Greek and English Exegesis)



Michael J. Gorman,
Elements of Biblical Exegesis (3rd ed.),
Grand Rapids: Baker
Academic (2020).
ISBN: 1540960315
\$24 on Amazon.



Jo-Ann A. Brant **John (Paideia)**, Grand Rapids:
Baker Academic (2011).
ISBN: 080103454X
\$24 on Amazon.



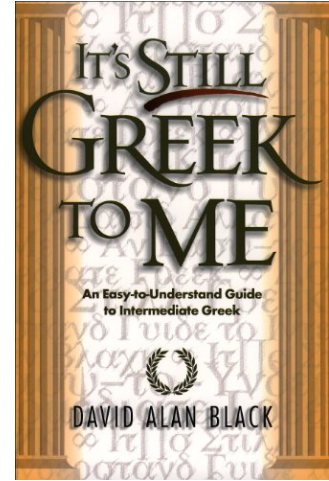
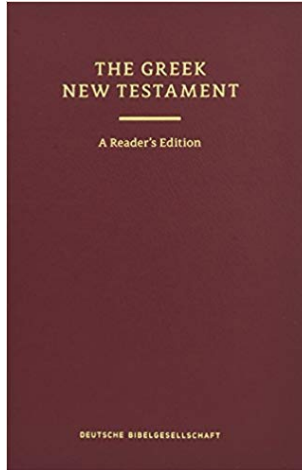
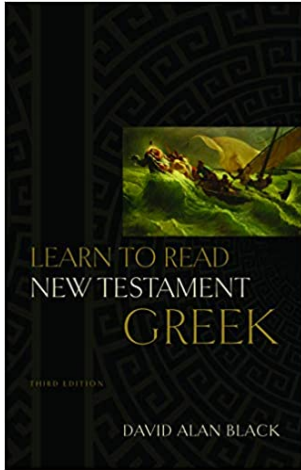
Frances Taylor Gench,
Encounters with Jesus: Studies in the Gospel of John
Louisville: Westminster
John Knox (2007).
ISBN: 0664230067
\$16 on Amazon.



Additional Texts: Greek Exegesis Only

The following texts are only relevant to Greek Exegesis students. Some are required, some are recommended, and some were likely acquired for the introductory Greek course.

Required Texts:



David Allan Black, *Learn to Read New Testament Greek*, Nashville: B&H Publishing (2009). ISBN: 0805444939 (May be substituted with another

UBS 5th Revised Greek New Testament Reader's Edition German Bible Society, 2015 ISBN: 1619706180

David Allan Black, *It's Still Greek to Me: An Easy-to-Understand Guide to Intermediate Greek* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 1998) ISBN: 0801021812

Recommended Texts:

The following are not strictly necessary to pass or to get an "A" in the class, but will be very helpful in completing the objectives for the course and for any students who will be taking the PCUSA Ordination Exam.

Walter Bauer and Frederick W. Danker et al. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, 3d ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000).

Commonly referred to as BDAG, this is the best lexicon for New Testament Greek. It is the "full version" of the required lexicon for the course. The price is steep, but serious Greek students will need to own this eventually. It is one to keep an eye out for at used book stores.

Metzger, Bruce Manning. *A Textual Commentary on the Greek New Testament: A Companion Volume to the United Bible Societies' Greek New Testament (Fourth Revised Edition)*. 2nd ed. New York: United Bible Societies, 1994.

This book explains many of the "textual variants" that appear in the Greek New Testament. It is particularly helpful for the "establishing the text" portion of the PCUSA Ordination Exam.

Köstenberger, Andreas J., Benjamin L. Merkle, and Robert L. Plummer. *Going Deeper with New Testament Greek: An Intermediate Study of the Grammar and Syntax of the New Testament*. Nashville: B&H Academic, 2016.

This is a more expansive Greek grammar than the required grammar for the course. It goes deeper into and gives more explanation to many of the grammatical concepts introduced in Black's *It's Still Greek to Me*.



Additional Texts: English Exegesis

The following are all “optional” texts. “Optional” here has several meanings and each is explained in the italics below that comes before the list. Some of these text will be necessary to complete the course’s objectives. Many will appear in assignment instructions as resources to consult. However, there is no need to acquire all of the books in the lists below.

Choose one, the other, or both (English Exegesis only):

*Both of these books are excellent general introductions to John. Each week there will be readings assigned from each of the books, but students will only be responsible to read **one** of them. Of course, if you wish, you can acquire and read both. Neither is required for Greek Exegesis students, but are recommended.*

To be determined.

Texts for English Exegesis Students:

As part of the grade specifications for this class, English Exegesis students may complete a book report on one of these texts or on another that is approved by the professor:

To be determined.



Commentaries (Choose One or More)

Each student will choose one of the following commentaries on John. Reading from this commentary will inform their forum posts and classroom contributions. The intention is that several different interpretive perspectives will be brought into the discussion on a given portion of John. Of course students may purchase more than one of these commentaries (and this is recommended for the purpose of future preaching, teaching, and research), but students will only be responsible to read and report on one of these commentaries for the purposes of the course.

Greek Exegesis students **must** choose a commentary from the second list. The reason for this is that the commentaries in the second list presume knowledge of Greek and attend to issues of translation and grammar to a much greater extent than the commentaries in the first list. English Exegesis students may choose a commentary from either list but should be aware that commentaries in the second list presume a working knowledge of Greek.

English Exegesis Students:

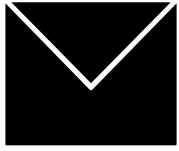
To be determined.

Greek Exegesis Students:

To be determined.



Assignments

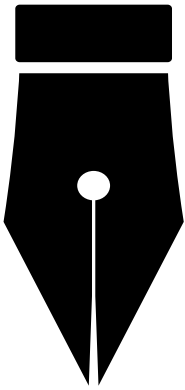
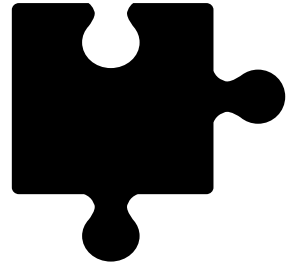


Weekly Online Forum Discussions or Residential Classes

The course will be built upon discussions of readings and translations. Online students will post in Moodle forums, as well as respond to other students' posts in Moodle on a weekly basis. Residential students will attend weekly synchronous meetings.

Greek Assignments (Greek Exegesis Only)

Students taking the Greek Exegesis version of the course will complete assignments related to Greek grammar, translation, and textual criticism. There will be one of these assignment available each week in the course, though students will not necessarily be required to complete all of them to achieve the grade they want in the class (see more in the grading section of the syllabus). Assignments will either be self-assessed or discussed in class.



Short Assignments (English Exegesis Only)

There will be the opportunity to write three short assignments throughout the course of the semester. Students will not necessarily be required to complete all three to achieve the grade that they want to in the class (see more in the grading section of the syllabus). The three short assignment topics are as follows:

- Book Report
- Topical Assignment
- Perspectives Assignment

Final Exegetical Paper

Students will write an exegetical paper on any passage from John. The exegetical paper represents the culmination of the student's learning in the course and thus requires them to consider the passage's historical and cultural contexts, its literary context, its contemporary relevance, and to consult several articles and commentaries on the passage. Detailed instructions for the exegesis paper can be found in the syllabus's appendix.



Optional: "World" Assignments





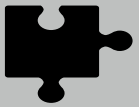
There will be one optional assignment for each of the "worlds" of the text: the World Behind the Text, the World of the Text, and the World in Front of the Text. These three assignments are designed to scaffold learning the exegetical process, as the final exegetical paper addresses all three of these worlds. The "world assignments" ask students to address each of the three worlds separately from one another before bringing all the worlds together in one interpretive paper. These assignments do not factor into a student's final grade, but they do allow students to receive feedback and assessment on work that can be incorporated into the final exegetical paper. More information on these optional assignments can be found in the syllabus's appendix.

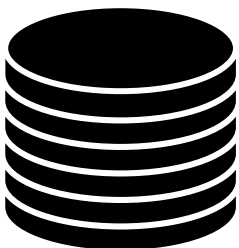


Specifications Grading

This class uses what is called specifications or "specs" grading. Final grades are **not** determined by the collective score of weighted items. Rather, they are determined by the number of grade items that you successfully complete. All assignments are graded on a pass/fail basis. The instructions for each assignment will have detailed specs (read: requirements) for how to pass the assignment. If a submission does not initially pass the requirements, a student can revise their work on the basis of the feedback provided, and re-submit it.

I use this grading system because it removes much of the subjectivity of grading, it is learning-outcome oriented, and it focuses the assessment of assignments on improving student work, rather than on quantitatively ranking work.

Letter Grade	Forums / Classes (12 Total Items)  	Exegesis Paper (1 Total Item) 	English Exegesis Assignments (3 Total Items) 	Greek Exegesis Assignments (12 Total Items) 
A	12	Advanced	3	12
A-	11	Advanced	3	11
B+	11	Advanced	2	10
B	11	Acceptable	2	10
B-	10	Acceptable	2	10
C+	9	Acceptable	2	9
C	8	Acceptable	2	9
C-	7	Acceptable	2	8
D+	7	Acceptable	1	7
D	6	Acceptable	1	7
D-	5	Acceptable	1	6
F	0-4	Acceptable	0	0-5



Grace Tokens: Every student receives three “grace tokens” that can be used at any time during the course. These “grace tokens” can be redeemed for any of the following with no explanation needed:

- A 48-hour extension on an assignment
- Excusing an unexcused absence
- A “free” credit for a week of discussion forum participation (i.e. getting credit for participating in one discussion forum without having participated in it)
- A “free” credit for a Greek assignment (i.e. getting credit for the assignment without having completed it)