

**SCRIPTURE AND TRADITION 022: THE SYNOPTIC GOSPELS
SPRING 2000**

Instructor: Catherine Murphy
Office: Bannan 354
Office hours: MW 4:15–5:15 p.m. and by appointment
Phone: (408) 551-1909

SCTR 022.70738
Bannan 236
MW 2:15-4:00 p.m.
E-mail: cmurphy@scu.edu

Required Texts:

- Robert J. Miller, ed., *The Complete Gospels, Annotated Scholars Version*, rev. ed.
(San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1992, 1994) [\$20.00/\$15.00]
- Kurt Aland, ed., *Synopsis of the Four Gospels, English Edition* (New York:
United Bible Societies, 1982) [\$15.95/\$11.95]
- Stephen L. Harris, *The New Testament: A Student's Introduction*, 3d ed. (Menlo Park:
Mayfield, 1999) [\$37.30/\$28.00]

Course Description and Objectives

This course examines the three most similar stories of Jesus in the New Testament: the Gospels of Mark, Matthew and Luke. Through close reading and guided observation, you will gain a basic mastery over the content, formal features, social locations and theological perspectives of these three short stories. In addition, comparative analysis of the three will challenge you to consider several questions:

- how the gospels are related to one another
- why these three gospels (and John) were selected as scripture against some 17 others
- what these stories tell us about the historical Jesus
- what these stories tell us about the early Christian communities

You will learn how to use the basic tools of gospel study—a concordance, a synopsis, biblical commentaries, and Bible dictionaries. The course will also help you develop certain skills essential to your continuing success at Santa Clara, such as types and styles of questioning, your own style of inquiry, group work, oral presentation, writing, and university-level research.

Course Format

Your Reading in Advance of Class. Read the primary (biblical) texts first. Keep a log of observations and questions as you read. During the first half of the course, read the biblical material online first (unformatted; a symbol will mark the portions), and then read the same material in Miller. This will give you the chance to notice things without the prejudgments of an editor.

Introductory Lecture. Introductory lectures to each topic will provide historical and social background for understanding the texts, and will model the kinds of questions you will gradually be expected to ask of texts yourself. During these lectures, you are encouraged to raise observations, issues and questions that came up for you when you read the primary and secondary texts.

Exegesis. We will spend half of each class doing close readings of the scriptural texts under discussion. Students will be expected to have read the scriptural passages in advance and to have logged several observations and questions about the texts. Starting in the second week of class, students will rotate the responsibility for posting their questions on the ERes bulletin board the night before class, so that the professor and other students can see in advance what ideas will govern the discussion. Each individual will have this responsibility approximately twice.

Forum. Four of the ten weeks will include a half-period dedicated to a forum, a class discussion in which representative students from each forum group raise and address to each other and to the class questions and comments on the readings from the prior week(s).

SYLLABUS ONLINE (with links to course assignments and related materials)

- www-relg-studies.scu/facstaff/murphy/courses/sctr022/index.html
- eres.scu.edu [type in course title, then the password "gospel"]

Course Requirements

Attendance

You are expected to be present and on time to class. Should illness or circumstance necessitate absence, please notify the professor in advance of or soon after the class. Notice renders the absence excused; lack of notice constitutes an unexcused absence. After the first excused absence, and for all unexcused absences, your class participation grade will be affected. The general equation is that the class participation grade (5 pts) will drop for the percentage of class time missed for unexcused absences, or at half that rate for excused absences. However, at two or more unexcused absences (10% of the course) your entire grade for the course drops the full percentage of class time you have missed. Four unexcused absences (20% of course) will result in a failing grade. Daily roll will be taken.

Class Participation & Forum

Class participation is a critical part of this course. It will include your informed questions posted on ERes and your oral remarks in class (during formal lectures, exegesis and the Forum). 25% of grade.

During the first week of class, you will be asked to choose forum groups of four students, and to schedule each of the members as your group's representative speaker for the quarter's four events. The groups will meet outside of class roughly a week before each forum date to discuss the readings in order to prepare their speaker for his/her presentation. The designated speakers are each responsible to type a 1-2 page summary of discussion points raised during the group meeting (format directions are posted online). Your group's speaker will then pair up with one other speaker, merge their best points, post these online at the course ERes site's bulletin board two days before the forum, and prepare to present these points at the forum itself. Each group's speaker will submit their group's individual discussion points at the end of the forum.

During the forum, each pair of speakers will have the floor for about 12 minutes. They will introduce at least one point for discussion, and facilitate that discussion first among the small group of speakers, and then with the entire class.

Critical Inquiry: Exegetical Papers

Exegesis is the close observation and analysis of a literary work. You will write two 5-page exegetical papers during the quarter, one during each half of the course. The first paper will explore a particular synoptic gospel passage or issue in the context of that gospel alone. The second paper will examine a passage or issue in the context of all three of the gospels, or in the light of extra-canonical gospel literature. Some topics are identified on the course web site, but you are encouraged to develop topics based on your own interests, in consultation with the professor. 20% of grade.

Quizzes & Examinations

Five reading quizzes are scheduled during the quarter. These quizzes will be brief (roughly 10-15 minutes), and are intended to help you keep up with the readings. 20% of grade.

Two exams are scheduled. Each exam is cumulative of material covered up to that point in the course. Midterm exam 1 hour (10%), final exam 2-3 hours (20%). 30% of grade.

Extra Credit

Extra credit opportunities are posted online at "Assignments" periodically throughout the quarter. To receive extra credit, attend the event and write a 2-3 page summary and evaluation. Directions can be found online at "Assignments." 3% of grade max, applied to grade only if all required assignments have been submitted.

Suggested Allotment of Time Outside of Class

University courses typically require two hours of homework for every hour spent in class, which works out to seven hours per week for this class. It is also typical to require approximately 100 pages of reading. This course requires on average only 65 pages of reading per week, in order to make time for a closer reading of the primary (biblical) texts. A suggested allotment of time per week spent on this course outside of class is:

Close Reading of Primary Texts (30 pgs/wk)	4 hours (7 pages/hour)
Reading (35 pgs/wk)	1 hour (35 pages/hour)
Forum Group Work	0.5 hour (1 hour every 2 weeks)
<u>Exegetical Papers</u>	<u>1.5 hours</u>
TOTAL:	7.0 hours

Grading

Grade Philosophy

Your level of engagement in a course determines your success in that course. That does not mean that a lot of effort will earn you an “A”; it does mean that a lot of effort will enable you to exceed yourself in several measures of performance beyond grades, such as self-discipline, note-taking, coherent writing, oral confidence, initiative, creativity, and group leadership.

A letter grade can only measure the final product you create, and that against the output of your classmates. It is a very limited “return” on your investment in the class. In this class, therefore, you’ll receive not only a letter grade, but also an evaluation of your individual performance. This is intended to provide feedback for you as a learner, to identify areas of success and suggestions for improvement. The general format and criteria of this evaluation will be posted on the course web site.

Grade Breakdown

Attendance	5%
Class Participation & Forum	25%
Exegetical Papers	20%
Reading Quizzes	20%
Midterm Exam	10%
Final Exam	20%

Grade Scale

93.5–100	A	86.7–89.9	B+	76.7–79.9	C+	66.7–69.9	D+
90.0–93.4	A-	83.3–86.6	B	73.3–76.6	C	63.3–66.6	D
		80.0–83.2	B-	70.0–73.2	C-	60.0–63.2	D-

Academic Integrity

You are expected to collaborate to share ideas, resources, and questions, particularly in forums and exam preparation. This sharing becomes cheating or plagiarism when you present as original the insights or work of another. Work on extra credit, exegetical papers, quizzes and exams is expected to be original to you. That does not mean that every idea and insight you write about will be your own. What it does mean is that your assignments should be guided by your insights and, when you do rely on an authority other than yourself, you note that reliance through standard footnotes and bibliography (see the online Writing Guidelines). If you are caught plagiarizing on a required assignment, you will receive an “F” on the assignment and in the course, and the matter will be forwarded for further action to the Office of Student Leadership and Integrity.

Wk	Date	Pages of Reading	Topic of Lecture & Discussion
1	3/27		INTRODUCTIONS TO COURSE
	3/29	[16/42]	THE GOSPEL OF MARK <u>Primary Reading:</u> Mark 1–6 (Online version for first reading, Miller for second reading) <u>Secondary Reading:</u> Miller vii-xvi, 1-12, 330-31; Harris 1-17 (An Overview of the New Testament) P Choose Forum Groups
2	4/3	[15/39]	THE GOSPEL OF MARK <u>Primary:</u> Mark 7–12 <u>Secondary Reading:</u> Harris 101-28, 18-28 (Mark’s Portrait of Jesus and How the New Testament Was Handed Down to Us) P Quiz #1
	4/5	[9/0]	THE GOSPEL OF MARK & FORUM <u>Primary:</u> Mark 13–16

Wk	Date	Pages of Reading	Topic of Lecture & Discussion
	4/9		P EXTRA CREDIT: ROBERT KENNEDY, S. J., "ZEN'S GIFT TO CHRISTIANITY" Recital Hall in Performing Arts Center 8:00 p.m.
3	4/10	[12/32]	THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW <u>Primary:</u> Matthew 1-7 <u>Secondary Reading:</u> Miller 55-8, Harris 129-56 (Matthew's Portrait of Jesus)
4/10 & 11			P Library Sessions: Tools for Religious Studies Research, Library Classroom in SE corner of Reference Room (Monday 4:15-5:15 p.m., Tuesday 5:10-6:10 p.m.)
	4/12	[14/16]	THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW <u>Primary:</u> Matthew 8-14 <u>Secondary Reading:</u> Harris 47-62 (The Jewish Covenant Community)
			P Quiz #2
4	4/17	[13/17]	THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW <u>Primary:</u> Matthew 15-21 <u>Secondary:</u> Harris 63-79 (The Diverse World of First-Century Judaisms)
	4/19	[17/0]	THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW & FORUM <u>Primary:</u> Matthew 22-28
5	4/24	[20/27]	THE GOSPEL OF LUKE <u>Primary:</u> Luke 1-8 <u>Secondary:</u> Miller 115-17, Harris 157-85 (Luke's Portrait of Jesus)
			P Quiz #3
	4/26	[18/18]	THE GOSPEL OF LUKE <u>Primary:</u> Luke 9-16 <u>Secondary:</u> Harris 29-46 (Alexander and the Hellenistic World)
6	5/1	[19/0]	THE GOSPEL OF LUKE <u>Primary:</u> Luke 17-24
			P Exegetical Paper #1 Due in Class
	5/3		P MIDTERM EXAM
7	5/8	[14/22]	THE SYNOPTIC PROBLEM & THEORIES TO EXPLAIN IT <u>Primary:</u> Synopses §§ 18, 95, 25, 38, 33, 50-52, 54, 64, 57, 60, 86, 183, 200, 114 <u>Secondary:</u> Miller 53-4; Harris 81-100 (The Gospels)
	5/10	[36/10]	THE GOSPEL GENRE & ITS EARLIEST COMPONENTS <u>Primary:</u> Q [skim only to get a sense of it], The Gospel of Thomas [read closely] (Miller 247-329) <u>Secondary:</u> Miller 248
8	5/15	[16/28]	REDACTION CRITICISM: THE MARKAN COMMUNITY <u>Primary:</u> Synopses §§146, 155, 164, 182, 235, 330-331, 344-345, 347 <u>Secondary:</u> Harris 101-28 (Review)
			P Quiz #4

Wk	Date	Pages of Reading	Topic of Lecture & Discussion
8	5/17	[24/28]	REDACTION CRITICISM: THE MATTHEAN COMMUNITY & FORUM <u>Primary</u> : Synopses §§1-12, 103-104, 158, 181, 252, 269, 300, 339-341, 347, 359 <u>Secondary</u> : Harris 129-56 (Review)
9	5/22	[28/29]	REDACTION CRITICISM: THE LUKAN COMMUNITY <u>Primary</u> : Synopses §§1-12, 161, 176, 180, 199, 200, 224-226, 267, 271, 292, 311, 333, 336-338, 343, 346-347, 365 <u>Secondary</u> : Harris 157-85 (Review)
	5/24	[31/19]	THE OTHER GOSPELS <u>Primary</u> : The Gospel of Mary, The Infancy Gospel of James, The Gospel of the Ebionites (357-66, 380-96, 425-26, 435-40) <u>Secondary</u> : Harris 357-72 (Outside the Canon and The Judeo-Christian Bible and Subsequent History)
			P Quiz #5
10	5/29		<i>Holiday: Memorial Day</i>
	5/31	[0/23]	THE QUEST FOR THE HISTORICAL JESUS & FORUM <u>Secondary</u> : Harris 214-36 (The Continuing Quest for the Historical Jesus)
			P Exegetical Paper #2 Due in Class
	6/5		P FINAL EXAM, Monday, June 5, 6:30-9:30 p.m.