



**Course Syllabus
WYB 2671 – The Gospel of John
Wycliffe College
Toronto School of Theology
Fall 2019**

Instructor Information

Instructor: Stephen Chester, PhD.
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Course Identification

Course Number: WYB 2671
Course Format: *In-class*
Course Name: The Gospel of John
Course Location: St George Campus, Wycliffe College (5 Hoskin Avenue)
Class Times: Tuesdays, 11:00am – 1:00pm
Prerequisites: None

Course Description

The course will introduce students to the text of John's Gospel and to issues surrounding its interpretation. These will include the Gospel's authorship, date, compositional history, social context, literary character, and its theological themes. Particular attention will be paid (i) to a diverse range of scholarly approaches to interpreting John, (ii) to questions concerning the contemporary application of John, and, above all, (iii) to the portrayal of Jesus in John's Gospel. "Who is Jesus for John?" will be the guiding question with which the class is concerned. This course aims to assist students in apprehending the distinctive witness of John's Gospel to the identity of Jesus and in reflecting upon its contemporary significance.

Course Resources

Required Course Texts/Bibliography

- Richard Bauckham, *Gospel of Glory: Major Themes in Johannine Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015)
- Ruth B. Edwards, *Discovering John: Content, Interpretation, Reception* (**2nd edition**; Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, **2015**)

Course Website(s)

This course uses Quercus for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT Quercus login page at <https://q.utoronto.ca/> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to Quercus using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Quercus-based courses. (Your course registration with ACORN gives you access to the

course website in Quercus.) Information for students about using Quercus can be found at: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10701>.

Course Methodology

The class is geared towards exploring significant issues in Johannine scholarship while engaging closely with the text of the Gospel. Class meetings will typically be divided between lectures and text seminars. The lectures will provide students with an orientation to vital historical and theological questions and themes. The text seminars will discuss selected texts in detail, relating their content to these questions and themes. Alongside assigned readings relating to the topics covered by the lectures, in preparation for each text seminar students will consult one of the recommended commentaries (see bibliography) and one other commentary. In this way students will be exposed to a cross-section of the many commentaries available on John’s Gospel. The text seminars and assessments will also provide the opportunity for students to explore alternative approaches to interpreting John (history of reception, postmodern/literary approaches, feminist approaches, post-colonial approaches etc.) and to explore the significance of John’s Gospel for Christian mission in the contemporary world. The learning of the class builds towards a final exegesis paper in which students will propose their own critically aware interpretation of a passage from John’s Gospel.

Course Learning Outcomes

COURSE OUTCOMES	COURSE ELEMENT	PROGRAM OUTCOMES
By the end of this course, students will be able to:	This outcome will be demonstrated through these course elements:	This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of Wycliffe’s statement of outcomes (MTS, MDiv):
read and appraise the text of John with reference to the findings of critical scholarship.	Lectures, text seminars (inc. presentation and paper), exegetical research paper.	MTS: 1.1, 1.2 MDiv: 1.1, 1.2
analyze the major literary themes and theological issues in the Gospel, especially as they relate to the portrayal of Jesus.	Lectures, text seminars (inc. presentation and paper), exegetical research paper.	MTS: 1.1, 2.1 MDiv: 1.1, 1.2, 2.1

COURSE OUTCOMES	COURSE ELEMENT	PROGRAM OUTCOMES
propose their own critically informed exegesis of selected texts from the Gospel.	Exegetical research paper	MTS: 1.1, 2.1 MDiv: 1.2, 2.1
evaluate the significance of major issues in the interpretation of the Gospel for contemporary Christian mission.	Lectures, text seminars, paper on the Gospel of John and Christian conversion today	MTS: 1.4, 2.1 MDiv: 1.6, 2.1

Evaluation

Requirements

The final grade for the course will be based on evaluations in the following areas:

- 10%** Participation
- 25%** Text Seminar Presentation and Paper
- 25%** Paper on “The Gospel of John and Christian Conversion Today”
- 40%** Exegesis Research Paper

- Participation: Students are expected to read the Gospel of John by the end of the first week of the semester, to attend classes, to participate in class discussion, and to complete the required reading. A record of attendance will be kept, and a reading log will be provided, which students will submit at the final class of the semester on **Tuesday December 3**.
- Text Seminar Presentation and Paper: Each student will be allocated **one** of the weekly text seminars (from those between September 17 and November 26) and asked to report to the class on one of the following approaches to interpreting the verses under discussion:
 - Reception History: Patristic Era
 - Reception History: Medieval and Reformation Eras

- Postmodern/Literary Approaches
- Feminist Approaches
- Post-Colonial Approaches

Further written guidance and bibliography will be provided at the beginning of the semester. After the class students will write up their report into a paper of 1200-1500 words. The paper will focus on the main distinctive features of the approaches to interpretation explored and will critically assess them. What did you find helpful or unhelpful for the task of interpreting the text in contemporary contexts? **For those who give a presentation before reading week the paper is due on Tuesday October 29. For those who give a presentation after reading week the paper is due on Tuesday December 10.**

- Paper on “The Gospel of John and Christian Conversion Today”: Students will write a paper of 1200 - 1500 words on the following question:

How does John’s Gospel understand conversion?

We are in a period of strong reaction against the theologies of personal conversion (e.g. Are you born again?) that were very prevalent in the late twentieth century. Yet much of the vocabulary used in these theologies comes from John’s Gospel. Therefore, what is the true nature of conversion in John’s Gospel and what are the implications of that for understanding conversion today? The paper should be based on texts in John but apply the teaching of the Gospel to contemporary discussion of conversion. **The paper is due on Tuesday October 29.** Further written guidance will be provided at the beginning of the semester.

- Exegesis Research Paper. Prepare an exegesis paper of 3000 - 3500 words on one of the texts listed below. **The paper is due on Monday December 9.** Further printed guidance as to how students are to approach the paper will be provided. However, students should use at least five **exegetical** commentaries and at least one article focused on your passage. Students will select from the following passages:

John 1:35-51

John 5:15-24

John 12:1-12

John 14:1-14

John 15:1-15

Those with Greek should make use of it in their exegesis (paying attention to textual variants etc.) and attach their own translation of the passage selected to the paper (additional to word count).

Those without Greek should compare several major English translations of the passage selected and attach to their paper a list of points at which differences in translation involve significant differences in meaning (additional to word count).

Grading System

1000, 2000 and 3000 level courses use the following numerical grading scale (see section 11.2 of the BD Handbook):

90-100 (A+)	Exceptional
85-89 (A)	Outstanding
80-84 (A-)	Excellent
77-79 (B+)	Very Good
73-76 (B)	Good
70-72 (B-)	Acceptable
0-69 (FZ)	Failure

Grades without numerical equivalent:

CR	Designates credit; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
NCR	Designates failure; has no numerical equivalent, but has a grade point value of 0 and is included in the GPA calculation
SDF	Standing deferred (a temporary extension)
INC	Permanent incomplete; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
WDR	Withdrawal without academic penalty
AEG	May be given to a final year student who, because of illness, has completed at least 60% of the course, but not the whole course, and who would not otherwise be able to convocate; has no numerical equivalent and no grade point value

Late work (BD). Basic Degree students are expected to hand in assignments by the date given in the course outline. [The instructor should stipulate the penalty for late work.] The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of exam week for the semester in which the course is taught, whichever is sooner.

This penalty is not applied to students with documented medical or compassionate difficulties or exceptional reasons (e.g., a death in the family or a serious illness); students facing such difficulties are kindly requested to consult with their faculty adviser or basic degree director, who should make a recommendation on the matter to the instructor and request an SDF. The absolute deadline for obtaining an SDF for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course or the last day of examination week, whichever is sooner. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of exam week in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

Up until a week after submission deadlines, two percentage points per day will be deducted from the assignment grade if an extension has not been requested by the stated deadline. Beyond the end of the first week a further 10% will be deducted from the assignment grade for each week or part of a week. However, no late work will be accepted without an approved extension after Friday December 13.

Course grades. Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted to ACORN. Grades are not official until they are posted to ACORN. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University Assessment and Grading Practices Policy found at www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf, policies found in the TST conjoint program handbooks, or college grading policy.

Additional Policies

Accessibility. Students with a disability or health consideration, whether temporary or permanent, are entitled to accommodation. Students in conjoint degree programs must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

Plagiarism. Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* and the Graduate program Handbooks (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871>). A student who plagiarizes in this course will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm.

Other academic offences. TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>.

Back-up copies. Please make back-up copies of all papers before handing them in.

Obligation to check email. At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all students in conjoint programs are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up their utoronto email address which is entered in the ACORN system. Information is available at www.utorid.utoronto.ca. The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. *Students should check utoronto email regularly* for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder. Students in non-conjoint programs should contact the Registrar of their college of registration.

Email communication with the course instructor. The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students in conjoint programs must be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses

are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses for students in conjoint programs. Students in non-conjoint programs should only use the email address they have provided to their college of registration.

Course Evaluations. At the end of the course students are expected to complete a course evaluation. The evaluation is done online, and instructions will be contained in an e-mal message that will be sent out by the Wycliffe College registrar.

Course Schedule

Week	Date	Topic	Text Seminar	Assigned Readings
1	September 10	Introduction to the class; the Authorship, Date, and Purpose of John	John 1:1-9	Edwards 1-32, 45-58
2	September 17	Methods in Interpreting John (1): Bultmann's approach	John 1:10-18	Edwards 100-114; Bauckham 109-29; commentary work
3	September 24	Miracles in John	John 2:1-11	Edwards 59-72; Bauckham 43-62; commentary work
4	October 1	Methods in Interpreting John (2): J.L. Martyn, the Johannine Community, and Subsequent Historical Approaches	John 2:13-25	Lamb, 1-28 (see bibliography); Edwards 142-55; commentary work
5	October 8	John and the Synoptic Gospels	John 3:1-21	Edwards 33-44; Bauckham 185-201; commentary work
6	October 15	John and Mission	John 4:1-54 (focus vv.6-30)	Edwards 115-30; commentary work
	October 22 (no class - reading week)			
7	October 29	Johannine Christology (1): son of man	John 6:25-40	Edwards 73-85; commentary work
8	November 5	Johannine Christology (2): Son and Messiah	John 6:41-59	Bauckham 77-107; commentary work

9	November 12	Jesus, Judaism, and the Old Testament	John 8:12-59 (focus vv.39-59); see also John 10:1-21	Edwards 131-41; commentary work
10	November 19	Dualism and Decision in John	John 9:1-41 (focus vv.18-41)	Volf, 189-218 (see bibliography)
11	November 26	The Spirit in John	John 16:1-15 (focus vv.7-15) and John 17:1-26 (focus vv.1-19)	Bauckham 21-42; commentary work
12	December 3	The Crucifixion and Resurrection of Jesus in John	John 19:1-42 (focus vv.16b-37) and John 20:1-31 (focus vv.19-31)	Edwards 86-99; Bauckham 63-76; commentary work

Bibliography

Commentaries suitable for Class Preparation (those indicated with (R) will be available on reserve at the Graham Library)

- C.K. Barrett, *The Gospel According to St. John*. (London: SPCK, 1978).
- J. Beutler, *A Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017)
- T. Brodie, *The Gospel according to John: A Literary and Theological Commentary* (Oxford: OUP, 1993)
- R. Brown, *The Gospel According to John. 2 Vols.* (New York: Doubleday, 1966 & 1970). **(R)**
- F. Bruner, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012)
- R. Bultmann, *The Gospel of John* (Oxford: Blackwells, 1970)
- D. Carson, *The Gospel According to John* (Leicester: IVP, 1991).
- E. Haenchen, *John: A Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1984).
- J.J. Kanagaraj, *John – NCCS* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2013)
- C. Keener, *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2003). **(R)**
- A. Köstenberger, *John* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2004).
- A. Lincoln, *The Gospel According to St. John - Black's NT Commentary* (Peabody: Hendrickson, 2005). **(R)**
- B. Lindars, *The Gospel of John*. (London: Marshalls, 1972).
- B. Malina & R. Rohrbaugh, *Social-Science Commentary on the Gospel of John* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998).
- J. Ramsey Michaels, *The Gospel of John – NICNT* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010)
- F.J. Moloney, *John – Sacra Pagina* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1998).
- R. Schnackenburg, *The Gospel According to St. John. 3 Vols* (London: Burnes & Oates, 1968).
- C. Talbert, *Reading John: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Fourth Gospel*. (Smyth & Helwys, 2005).
- Marianne Meye Thompson, *John: A Commentary* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2015). **(R)**
- U.C. von Wahlde, *The Gospel and Letters of John 3 Vols* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010).
- B. Witherington, *John's Wisdom: A Commentary on the Fourth Gospel*. (Louisville: WJKP, 1995).

More Devotional Commentaries

- G. Burge, *John* – NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000)
L. Newbigin, *The Light has Come: An Exposition of the Fourth Gospel* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1982)

Assigned Readings (other than those that are from required texts for the class)

- D.A. Lamb, *Text, Context, and the Johannine Community* (London and New York: T&T Clark Bloomsbury, 2014), 1-28
M. Volf, "Johannine Dualism and Contemporary Pluralism," *Modern Theology* 21 (2005), 189-218.

Select Other Works

- J. Ashton (ed.), *The Interpretation of John* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1988)
J. Ashton, *Understanding the Fourth Gospel* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1991)
P. Bieringer, D. Pollefeyt & F. Vandecasteele-Vanneuville (eds.), *Anti-Judaism and the Fourth Gospel* (Assen, Netherlands: Royal van Gorcum, 2001)
M.C. de Boer (ed.), *From Jesus to John* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1993)
R.E. Brown, *An Introduction to the Gospel of John* (New York: Doubleday, 2003)
T.G. Brown, *Spirit in the Writings of John* (London: T&T Clark, 2003)
A.C. Brunson, *Psalm 118 in the Gospel of John* (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr, 2003)
C.A. Evans, *Word and Glory* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1993)
C.A. Evans & W.R. Stegner (eds.), *The Gospels and the Scriptures of Israel* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1994)
C.A. Evans & J.A. Sanders (eds.), *Early Christian Interpretation of the Scriptures of Israel* (Sheffield: Academic Press, 1997)
R.T. Fortna & T. Thatcher (eds.), *Jesus in the Johannine Tradition* (Louisville: WJKP, 2001)
P.M. Hoskins, *Jesus as the Fulfillment of the Temple in the Gospel of John* (Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2006)
E. Käsemann, *The Testament of Jesus* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1968)
D.A. Lamb, *Text, Context, and the Johannine Community* (London and New York: T&T Clark Bloomsbury, 2014)
A.J. Levine (ed.), *A Feminist Companion to John Vol. 1* (London: Sheffield Academic Press, 2003)
J.M. Lieu and M. de Boer (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Johannine Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018)
W. Loader, *Jesus in John's Gospel: Structure and Issues in Johannine Christology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2017)
J.L. Martyn, *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel* (Louisville: WJKP, 2003 3rd Edition)
F.J. Moloney, *Love in the Gospel of John* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2013)
D. Moody Smith, *The Theology of the Gospel of John* (Cambridge: CUP, 1995)
S. Motyer, *Your Father the Devil? A New Approach to John and 'the Jews'* (Carlisle: Paternoster, 1997)
J. Painter, *The Quest for the Messiah* (Nashville: Abingdon Press 2nd Edition, 1993)
S.E. Porter, *John, His Gospel, and Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2015)
S. Schneiders, *The Revelatory Text: Interpreting the New Testament as Sacred Scripture* (San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1993)
J.L. Staley, *The Print's First Kiss* (Atlanta: Scholar's Press, 1988)
T. Thatcher, *Why did John write a Gospel?* (Louisville: WJKP, 2006)

Note: further bibliography relating to the history of reception and to literary, feminist, and post-colonial approaches to interpreting John will be provided with the printed instructions for the text seminar presentation and paper.