

SCTR 48: Jesus the Jew
Winter 2014

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T/TH 10:20-12:00; Kenna Hall 306
Office Hours: T/TH 12:05-1:05,
and by appointment

Course Description: This course explores the Jewish identity of Jesus and the historical, political and theological issues arising from Christianity's origins as a Jewish sect. Study entails close reading of select Hebrew and Christian Scriptures and a consideration of their liturgical use to this day. Questions raised include: (1) the variety and complexity of Jewish religion in the time of Jesus; (2) the Jewish context of the infancy and life of Jesus as narrated in New Testament and extra-biblical sources; (3) the conflict passages in the Gospels, and whether they are better understood as a repudiation of Judaism or as Jewish discourse; (4) the shared traditions of early Rabbinic and early Christian literature; and (5) the significance of these questions for the contemporary encounter between Synagogue and Church. In analyzing and commenting on sacred texts, students will employ historical critical, literary critical and folklore methodologies.

Texts and Course Materials:

The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha, Oxford Press.

The Jewish Annotated New Testament, Amy-Jill Levine and Marc Zvi Brettler, editors.
Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.

Daniel Boyarin, *The Jewish Gospels*. New York: The New Press, 2012.

Additional Course Readings on Camino (Canvas); Occasional handouts in class

Learning Objectives and Goals for Core Courses in Religion, Theology and Culture 2:

- *Learning Objective #1:*
Students will be able to analyze complex and diverse religious phenomena (such as architecture and art, music, ritual, scriptures, theological systems, and other cultural expressions of religious belief).
- *Learning Objective #2:*
Students will be able to integrate and compare several different disciplinary approaches to a coherent set of religious phenomena.
- *Learning Objective #3:*
Students will be able to clarify and express beliefs in light of their critical inquiry into the religious dimensions of human existence.

Please Note: In accord with the sequencing requirement of the Core Curriculum, students seeking RTC 2 credit for this course must have completed an RTC 1 course. (Transfer students exempted)

Specific Goals for this Course:

- To appreciate the diversity within Judaism in late antiquity
- To explore current scholarship on the historical Jesus
- To apprehend the importance of locating Jesus within a Jewish context
- To analyze and reflect upon the portrayal of Jews in Christian scripture and liturgy
- To consider the impact of this study on contemporary relations between Jews and Christians

Course Requirements and Assessment:

Attendance and Active Class Participation (25% of final grade): This is essential if all of us are to achieve the learning outcomes desired. Focus questions will be given with each set of readings to highlight the material's relationship to the course goals and to facilitate reflection and discussion. Thus, the readings for a given class are to be completed in advance so that all enter class prepared to learn from each other's engagement with the texts and are able to contribute, on a consistent basis, to class discussions. So as to enrich the presence of our conversation with each other, please refrain from using electronic technologies during class time. Please also bring the Bible to every class, as even unassigned passages will at times be referenced. Only two unexcused absences permitted without a resulting loss of grade.

This course component is directed to Learning Objectives #1, #2 and #3.

Midterm Examinations (50% of final grade): There will be two midterm examinations (25% each). Questions will be in essay form and drawn from the readings, the focus questions for class discussion and the lectures. Each essay is scored, with points assigned according to the accuracy of the essay's content as drawn from the readings and lectures; the cogency with which the essay's thesis is argued; and the clarity of presentation within the essay.

This course component is directed primarily to Learning Objective #1.

Text Comparison Paper (25% of final grade): A close, comparative reading of a Gospel parable and a Rabbinic mashal. In this final exercise (4-6 pages typed, double spaced), students integrate a variety of disciplinary approaches to the texts presented to deepen their understanding of the relationship between Church and Synagogue in the early centuries. First, the parable and mashal are examined and compared in light of their literary and folkloric qualities, i.e. with attention to language, rhetorical structure and shared motifs. What aspects of the Gospel and Rabbinic passages suggest shared common sources and audiences? Secondly, the same texts are viewed with attention to major theological concerns of early Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism as discussed in the course. Finally, drawing on all of the foregoing, students are invited to consider how the Gospel passage might have been received by a first or second century Jew, and the mashal by a follower of Jesus.

This course component is directed to Learning Objectives #1, #2 and #3.

Overall Grade Scale:

93.5-100: A	76.7-79.7: C+
90.0-93.4: A-	73.3-76.6: C
86.7-89.9: B+	70.0-73.2: C-
83.3-86.6: B	66.7-69.9: D+
80.0-83.2: B-	63.3-66.6: D
	60.0-63.2: D-

Conferences: After the midterm, each student will meet with the instructor to review his or her performance and to discuss any questions or concerns that may have arisen in the course.

Course Evaluation:

Students will evaluate the success of this course by means of a mid-quarter survey and with narrative and numerical evaluations at the end of the term.

Academic Integrity:

There are probably few, if any, original insights remaining in the study of Scripture. What one does is to enter a conversation, bringing to bear one's own experience and passions on the rich legacy of scholars and sages of the past, and to move the conversation along. Thus, there is nothing wrong with drawing on the work and contributions of others *as long as those contributions are appropriately cited by use of quotation marks, footnotes and bibliographies*. This course fully follows the Academic Integrity Protocol of the University's Office of Student Life.

Disability Accommodation Policy:

To request academic accommodations for a disability, students must contact Disability Resources located in the Drahnmann Center in Benson, room 214, (408) 554-4111; TTY (408) 554-5445. Students must provide documentation of a disability to Disability Resources prior to receiving accommodations.

Calendar

1/7 Overview and Introductions; On the Context of this Course

Selections from *Nostra Aetate* (“Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions” at Vatican II—distributed in class)

1/9 On the Context of this Course

Amy-Jill Levine, “Common Errors Made about Early Judaism” in *The Jewish Annotated New Testament (JANT)*, 501-504;
An exercise in close reading (done in class)

1/14 Biblical Foundations I

Genesis 1-2, 4, 6, 9, 11-12:3, 17, 22

1/16 Biblical Foundations II

Exodus 1-3, 12, 14, 19-20
Leviticus 11, 19

1/21 Biblical Foundations III

Deuteronomy 5-6;
2 Samuel 7
Isaiah 60
Ezra 1, 4, 7
E. P. Sanders, “Judaism as a Religion,” (CANVAS)

Second Temple Judaism

1/23 Ethics in a Jewish Novella

The Book of Tobit (in *NOAB*, 1368-1388)
“Cultural Contexts: The Persian Period” Essay in *New Oxford Annotated Bible (NOAB)*, 2242-2244

1/28 The Encounter with Hellenism

1 Maccabees 1-6; 2 Maccabees 7
“Cultural Contexts: The Hellenistic Period” Essay in *NOAB*, 2244-2247

1/30 Roman Rule

Louis Feldman, “Palestinian and Diaspora Judaism in the First Century” (CANVAS)
Josephus, *Antiquities of the Jews*, on Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes (CANVAS)
Selection from *Lamentations Rabbah* (distributed in class)

Jesus and Judaism

2/4 The Infancy Narratives

Matthew 1-2; Luke 1-2;
Ross S. Kraemer, “Jewish Family Life in the First Century CE” in *JANT*, 537-540

2/6 The Infancy Narratives

Selections from Zeffirelli's *Jesus of Nazareth*, viewed/discussed in class

2/11 Midterm Exam #1**2/13 God's Testing of the Righteous**

Genesis 39; Job 1; The Testament of Joseph (CANVAS);
Matthew 4:1-11; Luke 4:1-13

2/18 Jesus and the Torah

Luke 3-8

Mark 7

Daniel Boyarin, "Jesus Kept Kosher" in *The Jewish Gospels (JG)*, 102-128

2/20 "Who Do You Say That I Am?"

Steven England and Jon Levenson, "Getting Past Supersessionism: An Exchange on Catholic-Jewish Dialogue," in *Commonweal*, February 21, 2014, pp. 13-22.

2/25 Messiah, Son of Man, Son of God

Matthew 16:13-23;

Daniel 7

Boyarin, *JG*, 25-52

2/27 Messiah, Son of Man, Son of God

First Enoch, excerpts (CANVAS)

Boyarin, *JG* 53-70

3/4 Passion, Death and Resurrection

Mark 2:1- 3:6; Luke 13:10-17

Luke 19-24

Ellis Rivkin, "What Crucified Jesus?" (CANVAS)

3/6 Midterm Exam #2

Hilton and Marshall Reading distributed (see below)

3/11 The Parable and the Mashal

Michael Hilton and Gordian Marshall, "The Parable and the Mashal"

Passages for Text Comparison Papers Distributed

3/13 The Parable and the Mashal (Continued)

Quo Vadis?

3/20 Text Comparison Papers Due 5pm at Religious Studies Dept. (Kenna 3rd Floor)