

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

- A. Department Information:
Division: Humanities and Social Science
Department: Philosophy/Religious Studies
Course ID: RELIG 176
Course Title: Jesus and His Interpreters
Units: 3
Lecture: 3 Hours
Prerequisite: None

- B. Catalog and Schedule Description:
A study of images and interpretations of Jesus with three principle divisions: Jesus and the gospels or biblical tradition; Jesus and the historians including the quest of historians and theologians for the Jesus and history; and Jesus and the arts (Jesus in art, music, film, and the literary arts, such as novels, poems, and plays.)

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: One

III. EXPECTED OUTCOMES FOR STUDENTS:

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- A. Formulate and express a historical, cultural, and/or intellectual matrix within which the concerns and the questions regarding the so-called "historical Jesus" and the "Christs of Faith";
- B. Read and critically evaluate selected primary sources related to the so-called "historical Jesus" and the "Christs of Faith" (including but not limited to Hebrew Scriptures (TANAK), the Christian Scriptures, intertestamental literature, both canonical and noncanonical, early Christian theological literature, nineteenth-century historiography, as well as contemporary literature and the arts);
- C. Respond critically, analytically, and/or synthetically in writing to issues dealing with the identities and interpretations of Jesus (including but not limited to the themes of historiography, hermeneutics, Heilsgeschichte, symbolic language, and the visual images of the Jesus);
- D. Apply the ideas and concepts in the area of interpretations of Jesus to contemporary experience.

IV. COURSE CONTENT:

- A. Introduction
1. Defining Religion
2. Academic Study of Religion
- B. Jesus of History
1. Historical sources
2. Gospel sources
3. Jesus throughout history
4. Nineteenth-century quest for the historical Jesus
5. Twentieth-century quest for the historical Jesus
- C. Christs of Faith
1. Biblical traditions
2. historical traditions
3. literary traditions
4. traditions of the visual arts
- D. Hermeneutics and Religious Studies

V. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. Lecture
B. Discussions (class and group)
C. Audio-Visuals

- D. Reading of texts, both secondary and primary
- E. Writing tasks appropriate for the material
- F. Computer Tutorials (if applicable)

VI. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

- A. Reading: Read Shusako Endo's *Jesus*. Be able to identify the key moments and transitions in this Asian author's "biography-novel" of Jesus. Be able to identify the cultural and religious bases of Endo's interpretation of Jesus. Be able to apply the ideas and images arising in *Jesus* to aspects of your own experience, comparing and contrasting your own experience with interpretations of Jesus with that of Endo.
- B. Writing, critical thinking: Compare the images of Jesus as the Christ arising in the biblical period and in various historical periods of the last 2000 years. After noting the similarities and differences, evaluate the adequacy of each image for a "postmodern" and/or "post-Christian" America using your own experience as well as information gleaned from researching contemporary religious experience, specifically information regarding biblical hermeneutics.

VII. METHODS OF EVALUATION:

- A. Methods of evaluation will vary from instructor to instructor, but may include true-false tests, multiple choice tests, or sentence completion tests. In addition, written components such as essay tests, writing tasks (i.e. journals, summary reviews, interpretive essays, and/or term projects) will be included. Telecomputing can include downloading and uploading reading and writing tasks on-line discussion, and computer tutorials. Grading may be comparative within a class or may be based on an absolute standard.
 - 1. Sample Objective Test Question: According to the Documentary Hypothesis, which of the following is the earliest source of the material found in the Pentateuch?
 - A. J
 - B. E
 - C. P
 - D. D
 - E. Q
 - 2. Sample Subjective Test Question: Based on your viewing of *The Last Temptation of Christ*, identify the key hermeneutical issues in the film that you think caused the public controversy when that film was first released.
- B. While the frequency of evaluation will depend on the type of evaluation (i.e. "objective" or written), evaluation will take place periodically throughout the semester with enough frequency to be sufficient to measure student progress and will be sensitive to the various learning styles of students. The minimum evaluation will consist of at least two evaluative instruments (i.e. papers, projects, portfolios, or tests) chosen by the instructor of record.

VIII. TYPICAL TEXT:

- A. Riley, Gregory J. *One Jesus, Many Christs*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1997.
- B. Borg, Marcus and Wright, N.T. *The Meaning of Jesus: Two Visions*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1997.
- C. Funk, Robert W. *Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium*. San Francisco: Harper San Francisco, 1998.
- D. Pelikan, Jaroslav. *Jesus Through the Centuries*. New York: HarperCollins, 1989.

IX. OTHER SUPPLIES REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:

Supplementary material may include handouts, primary sources, maps, study guides, computer disks, and/or software.