

## PMIN 210: Contextual Introduction to the New Testament

### Course Description:

This course offers a culturally grounded introduction to the New Testament, interpreting its writings as dynamic expressions of communities negotiating identity, power, and hope within the multicultural and contested world of the Roman Empire. Using cultural studies approaches—such as postcolonial criticism, borderlands theory, performance studies, and analyses of hybridity and identity formation—students explore how issues of migration, trauma, gender, ethnicity, class, and empire shaped early Jesus-believing communities and their texts. At the same time, the course foregrounds the reader's own social location, inviting students to examine how their cultural backgrounds, linguistic identities, and lived experiences inform how they read the New Testament. Engaging **Catholic Social Teaching**, the course emphasizes human dignity, solidarity, the common good, and the preferential option for the marginalized, encouraging students to discern how New Testament authors confronted injustice and envisioned alternative social imaginaries grounded in liberation and communal transformation. Designed for students preparing for **pastoral ministry**, the course equips learners to interpret Scripture in ways oriented toward justice, compassion, and effective ministry in diverse contemporary contexts.

### Instructor Information

Instructor: Dr. Roberto Mata  
Time/Location: TBD  
Office Hours: By appointment  
Email: [rmata@scu.edu](mailto:rmata@scu.edu)

### Learning Objectives

- Describe the historical and cultural worlds of the New Testament.
- Interpret NT texts using historical-critical, literary, and cultural methodologies.
- Evaluate how empire, trauma, diaspora, and marginality shape NT writings.
- Apply NT insights to pastoral, liturgical, and justice-centered ministries.
- Demonstrate graduate-level research, writing, and synthesis.

### Required Texts

- Raymond E. Brown, *An Introduction to the New Testament*\* (Doubleday, 1997).

### Assessment & Evaluation

- Attendance & Participation – 20%
- Assessments (weekly quizzes) – 20%
- Critical Dialogues– 20%
- NT Book Group Presentation – 20%

- Exegetical Paper (10–12 pages) – 20%

### **Course Policies**

- Attendance: Required; up to three excused absences permitted with documentation.
- Late Work: No late work accepted.
- Academic Integrity: Students must follow SCU's academic integrity code.
- Disability Resources: Contact the DRC for accommodations.
- Title IX: SCU prohibits all forms of harassment and discrimination.
- Diversity Statement: All identities valued; inclusive classroom community.
- Land Acknowledgment: SCU occupies the unceded land of the Ohlone and Muwekma Ohlone peoples.

## **Course Schedule**

### **Week 1 — Introduction: Canon, Methods, and Cultural Context**

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#### ***Primary Readings Bible Reading***

- Daniel 7; Psalms of Solomon; Mark 1

#### ***Secondary Readings***

- Readings (Brown): Brown pp. 1–34
- Readings (Brown): Brown pp. 35–72

### **Week 2 — Synoptic Framework: Sources & Development**

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#### **Primary Readings**

- Bible Reading: Matthew 5; Luke 6; Mark 4–5

#### **Secondary Readings (Brown):**

- Mark: 157–163
- Matthew: 194–204

- Luke: 232–238

## Week 3 — Mark & Matthew

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Primary Sources: Apocalyptic Prophet and Suffering Messiah

- Bible Reading: Mark 1–8; Matthew 5–7; 13

Secondary Readings:

- Readings (Brown): 157–197
- Readings (Brown): 194–232

## Week 4 — Luke–Acts: Mission and Migration

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Primary Readings

- Bible Reading: Luke 1–4; Acts 1–5

Secondary Readings: Early Christian communal formation

- (Brown): 232–272
- (Brown): 272–310

## Week 5 — Gospel of John

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Primary Source Readings: Logos as divine revelation

- Bible Reading: John 1–12

**Secondary readings: Passion, Resurrection, Johannine Community**

- (Brown): 330–358

**Readings (Brown): 358–382**

## Week 6 — Paul I: Life, Mission, Theology

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**Primary Readings:**

- Galatians; Romans 1–4

**Secondary Readings:**

- Brown 407–420
- Brown 420–444, Galatians: 472–487

## Week 7 — Paul II: Corinthian Correspondence

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**Primary Readings: Charism and Community**

- Bible Reading: 1 Corinthians 1–15

**Secondary Readings:**

- (Brown): 492–
- Brown): 528–562

## Week 8 — Hebrews & Catholic Epistles

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## **Part A: Hebrews**

### **Topics/Themes:**

- Christ as high priest
- New covenant theology
- Heavenly sanctuary
- Perseverance under pressure

**Readings (Brown): 693–719**

## **Part B: Catholic Epistles**

### **Topics/Themes:**

- Jewish-Christian diaspora identity
- Faith and works (James)
- Leadership & false teachers (2 Peter, Jude)
- Johannine theology of love, anti-Docetism, schism (1–3 John)

**Readings (Brown):**

- James: 720–732
- 1 Peter: 732–745
- 2 Peter & Jude: 745–760
- 1–3 John: 382–407

**Bible Reading: Hebrews 1–10; James; 1 Peter**

# **Week 9 — Revelation: The Migration of God's People**

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## **Part A: Apocalyptic Imagination**

### **Topics/Themes:**

- Literary genre & symbolism
- Cosmic conflict
- Judgment language
- Prophetic critique

**Readings (Brown): 663–690**

## **Part B: Empire, Trauma, Hope**

### **Topics/Themes:**

- Roman imperial ideology
- Lamb Christology
- Heavenly liturgy & resistance
- New heaven and earth

### **Readings (Brown): 690–707**

**Bible Reading: Revelation 1–5; 21–22**

## **Week 10 — NT Theology for Ministry**

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### **Part A: NT Theological Synthesis**

#### **Topics/Themes:**

- Jesus and the reign of God
- Church and community ethics
- Suffering, hope, and mission
- Kingdom, discipleship, liberation

### **Part B: Pastoral Application**

#### **Topics/Themes:**

- Preaching the NT in diverse communities
- Migration, justice, and Gospel ethics
- Ignatian discernment in ministry
- Integrating Scripture with pastoral identity

**Bible Reading: Student choice for Capstone Essay preparation**