



BIBL 7190: Special Topics in Biblical Studies
*Exegesis of the Book of Ruth
as Scriptural Accompaniment*

North Park Theological Seminary
2026 Summer, Online Asynchronous
3 credit hours

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course the instructor and the students will approach the Book of Ruth with a biblical exegetical approach of scriptural accompaniment. Looking at English versions of the text and consulting the texts in the original languages [Hebrew (MT) & Greek (LXX)], both students and instructor will use the Book of Ruth as a specific case study of this inductive and relational method of biblical interpretation. The goal of this course is to help integrate exegetical approaches to Biblical Studies with the spiritual and intersectional formation of the exegete.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this course students will:

1. Understand and articulate inductive practices and hermeneutical tendencies in the academic study of the Bible as well as from within a diverse array of cultural context(s). [Knowledge]
2. Apply inductive methods of biblical exegesis and prioritize the study of the first context(s) of the biblical texts as a foundation for intentional and responsible readings of the biblical texts within the current contexts of the students. [Application & Analysis]
3. Interpret key biblical texts in the book of Ruth in intentional and responsible dialogue with their own respective cultural & theological traditions and contexts. [Comprehension]
4. Create a project (academic paper, sermon, & curriculum) that reflects the academic biblical exegesis as well as the cultural & theological traditions and formational practices of the student. [Synthesis]
5. Evaluate and appreciate their own contextualized treatments of the texts presented in their projects along with those of their learning community. [Evaluation]

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. English translation of the book of Ruth. [An interlinear or a Hebrew/Greek translation will benefit but is not mandatory].
2. Course Reader (Provided on Canvas).

Course Reader will include excerpts from the following commentaries (300 pages):

- Campbell, Edward F., trans. 2021. *Ruth: A New Translation with Introduction, Notes and Commentary*. New Haven &, London: Yale University Press; Bloomsbury Publishing. (187 pages)
- Laffey, Alice L., and Mahri Leonard-Fleckman. 2017. *Wisdom Commentary: Ruth*. Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press. (134 pages)
- Oden, Thomas C., and John R. Franke. *Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture - Old Testament - Volume IV: Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1-2 Samuel -*. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2005.

Course Reader will include excerpts from the following articles (85 pages):

- Berman, Sidney K. 2023. “The Effects of Displacement on Rural Women’s Lives: The Case of Ukraine and the Book of Ruth.” *HTS Theological Studies* 79 (3): 1–10.
- Hwang, Jerry. 2023. “Who Is the Real ‘Model Minority’? An Asian American Reading of Ruth and Ebed-Melech in the Hebrew Bible.” *Biblical Interpretation* 31 (4): 457–72.
- Masenya, Madipoane J. 2023. “A Woman with Multiple Identities: Reading the Ruth Character in Post-Apartheid South Africa.” *Old Testament Essays (New Series)* 36 (1): 189–201.
- Mo, Zhengyi. 2023. “Women and Aged Disability: A Study of Naomi’s Gender Identity and Its Transformation in the Book of Ruth.” *国学与西学 国际学刊* 25 (December): 99–112.
- Mtshiselwa, Ndikho. 2016. “Reading Ruth 4 and Leviticus 25:8–55 in the Light of the Landless and Poor Women in South Africa: A Conversation with Fernando F. Segovia and Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara.” *HTS Theological Studies* 72 (1): 1–5.
- Odo, Damian O, and Favour Chukwuemeka Uroko. 2023. “Ruth 1:1-5 Read in the Context of Challenges of the Migration of Nigerians.” *Verbum et Ecclesia* 44 (1): 1–5.
- Russaw, Kimberly D. 2024. “Traveling with Ruth: Using the Green Book to Navigate the Route from Moab to Bethlehem.” *Encounter* 84 (3): 1–25.

RECOMMENDED READING LIST

- Ago, Sarah. 2023. “The Book of Ruth as a Journey: A Devotional.” *Africanus Journal* 15 (2): 32–37.
- Anzi, Achia. 2021. “Migration, Exile, and Homecoming in the Book of Ruth.” *Open Theology* 7 (December): 514–30.
- Bonanno, Beatrice. 2025. “A ‘Different’ Ruth? A Study of the Textual Variants Related to the Character of Ruth in the Greek Text of the Book of Ruth.” *Annali Di Storia Dell’Esegesi* 42 (1): 13–28.
- Cohen, Jeffrey M. 2021. “The Romance of Ruth, the Ruse of Boaz, and the Go’el’s Real Fear.” *Jewish Bible Quarterly* 49 (3): 180–86.
- Dickie, June Frances. 2021. “Performance of the Story of Ruth to Promote Healing from ‘Township Trauma.’” *Scriptura* 120 (1): 1–13.
- Gatti, Nicoletta. 2022. “From Alien to Neighbor: The Journey of Ruth.” *Bulletin for Biblical Research* 32 (1): 1–16.

- Ho, Andy C. 2024. “The Acts of חֲסֵד in Ruth 3:10 as Acts of Situational Strength.” *Jian Dao* 61 (December): 29–50.
- Hutton, Erin Martine. 2024. “‘Where You Go, I Will Go and Where You Stay, I Will Stay’: How Exegetical Poetry Enriches Our Understanding of Ruth 1:16-17 and 1:20-21.” *Religions* 15 (11): 1–16.
- Jacobson, Gilad A. 2025. “The Divergent Poetics of Ruth and Job and Their Corresponding Ethics.” *European Judaism* 58 (1): 34–51.
- McNinch, Timothy, and Tyne Parlett. 2025. “‘What’s Love Got to Do with It?’: Necropolitics and Agency for Biblical Ruth and Queer Black Women in the United States.” *Encounter* 85 (2): 3–42.
- Krisel, William. 2021. “The Place of Ruth in the Hebrew Canon: A New Hypothesis.” *Estudios Biblicos* 79 (1): 63–76.
- Kugler, Gili, and Ohad Magori. 2023. “Hesed in Ruth: A Frail Moral Tool in an Inflexible Social Structure.” *Religions* 14 (5): 1–13.
- Lear, Joseph M. 2020. “Liturgy with Ruth: Immigration and the Problem of Anti Eucharist.” *Journal of Pentecostal Theology* 29 (2): 194–205.
- Odo, Damian O, and Collins I Ugwu. 2022. “‘I Will Marry Ruth so That the Name of the Dead Will Not Be Blotted out’: Exploring חֲסֵד (Hesed) in Ruth 4:1-13.” *Verbum et Ecclesia* 43 (1): 1–6.
- Palmer, Carmen. 2023. “Naomi the Nurse: Obed’s Ambiguous Identity Transmission’.” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 47 (3): 277–88.
- Strollo, Megan Fullerton. 2025. “Giving God the Cold Shoulder? Naomi’s Theological Perspective in the Book of Ruth.” *Review & Expositor* 122 (1–2): 17–28.
- Thambyrajah, Jonathan A. 2021. “Israelite or Moabite? Ethnicity in the Book of Ruth.” *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 46 (1): 44–63.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The major North Park Theological Seminary degree learning outcomes this course intends to address are:

MACF: “Interpret Scripture with historical and theological integrity in relation to Christian formation.”

MACM: “Interpret Scripture with historical and theological integrity in relation to one’s ministry.”

MATS: “Interpret Scripture with historical and theological integrity for diverse communities and contexts.”

MDIV: “Interpret Scripture with historical and theological integrity for diverse churches, communities, and contexts.”

ASSESSMENTS AND GRADING SCALE

The specific learning outcomes noted above will be assessed through the following methods:

1. Bi-Weekly Reading Forums (Weeks 1-5-odd): 15%

Students will complete the course reading according to the schedule below. On a bi-weekly basis, students will engage in discussion with each other concerning the assigned reading on the Reading Forums. Participation in this activity will count as 15 % of the student's grade.

[CLO #1, Knowledge]

2. Bi-Weekly Exegetical Forums (Weeks 2-6- even): 15%

Students will interpret key biblical passages using the OIR Inductive Method of Exegesis according to the schedule below. On a bi-weekly basis, students will engage in discussion with each other concerning the assigned passages on the Exegetical Forums. Participation in this activity will count as 15 % of the student's grade.

[CLOs #1-2, Comprehension, Application, & Analysis]

3. Weekly Asynchronous Video Lecture Quizzes (Weeks 1-6): 20%

Every week, students will watch video lectures asynchronously and will have an online quiz to assess their engagement and understanding of that video lecture.

[CLO #1, Knowledge]

4. Review of Three Articles from Recommended Reading List (Week 7): 20%

Students are to pick 3 articles from the **Recommended Reading** list and give a critical review of each article in 200-400 words (x 3 = 600-800 words altogether) and a personal response to all articles together in 200-400 words.

[CLO #1 & 5 Knowledge & Evaluation]

5. Integrative Project (Week 8): 30%

Students will pick one of the passages from their exegetical forums so that they may write an academic paper, sermon, or curriculum that reflects the academic biblical exegesis as well as the cultural & theological traditions and formational practices of the student.

[CLO #4-5, Synthesis & Evaluation]

GRADING

The final grade for this course will be calculated according to the following percentages:

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| 1. Bi-Weekly Reading Forums (Weeks 1-5-odd): | 15% |
| 2. Bi-Weekly Exegetical Forums (Weeks 2-6- even): | 15% |
| 3. Weekly Asynchronous Video Lecture Quizzes (Weeks 1-6): | 20% |
| 4. Review of Three Articles (Week 7): | 20% |
| 5. Integrative Project (Week 8): | 30% |

North Park Theological Seminary grading scale:

A	95-100	C	80-83
A-	93-94	C-	78-79
B+	91-92	D+	76-77
B	88-90	D	72-75
B-	86-87	D-	70-71
C+	84-85	F	0-69

ADDITIONAL COURSE GUIDELINES*Late turn-in policy for the integrative project:*

The exegetical paper is due Friday, July 3, midnight central time. I will accept the integrative project, with a late penalty, up until Friday, July 10, midnight central time. For each day that the project is late after July 3 (and up until Friday, July 10), I will deduct 2% from the paper's grade. I will *not* accept the project *after* Friday, July 10.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park University is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating will receive a failing grade on the assignment and are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion. Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

- Plagiarism – the use of another's work as one's own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
- Copying another's answers on an examination.
- Deliberately allowing another to copy one's answers or work.
- Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.
- Use of ChatGPT or other AI composition software to impersonate individual assignments.
- For additional information, see the Seminary Academic Catalog.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Your experience in this class is important to me. North Park is committed to creating inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established your accommodations, please share your accommodation letter with me so we can discuss how your accommodations will be implemented in this course. If you have not yet established services and have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations, please email the Disability Access Specialist or contact by phone (773-244-5737). Student Engagement facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations.

TITLE IX

Students who believe they may have experienced sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, or stalking should contact the Title IX Coordinator (773) 244-5664 or TitleIX@northpark.edu to learn more about reporting options, resources, and support services.

As members of the North Park faculty, we are concerned about the well-being and development of our students and are available to discuss any concerns. Faculty members are private resources meaning we are legally obligated to share information about the behavior reported above with the University's Title IX coordinator. If you are unsure whether you want your concerns disclosed to the Title IX Coordinator, we encourage you to contact Counseling Support Services at (773) 244-4897 or counseling@northpark.edu.

Please refer to North Park's [Safe Community](#) site for reporting, contact information, and further details.

INCOMPLETE GRADES

If, due to extenuating circumstances (specifically, pregnancy, illness, personal and family issues, military assignment, etc.), a student anticipates they will be unable to complete course work within the allotted time, that student may request a grade of incomplete from the course instructor before the last week of class clearly stating the reason(s) for this request.

Overscheduling and/or lack of self-discipline are not considered extenuating circumstances. If the request is timely and meets the criteria, student and instructor will submit the incomplete grade form and the grade for that class will be listed as "I" until the last day of the following semester. If coursework is not submitted by the last day of the following semester the listing of "I" will automatically be changed to "F." For the full policy, see the Seminary Academic Catalog.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week	Topic	Reading	Assignments Due
1 (May 18-22)	Introduction to the Book of Ruth, its Structure, and the History of Interpretation	Anchor Bible Commentary, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Introduction (p.1-41) Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Origen and Spiritual Exegesis ○ Major Christian Interpreters ○ Commentary on Ruth 	Video Lecture Quiz #1 Reading Forum #1
2 (May 25-29)	Exegesis of Ruth 1-2	Wisdom Commentary, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ruth 1: Finding Alternatives ○ Ruth 2: Gleaning Anchor Bible Commentary, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ruth 1 (p. 48-84) ○ Ruth 2 (p. 85-113) 	Video Lecture Quiz #2 Exegetical Forum #1
3 (Jun 1-5)	Further Scholarship in Ruth 1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>HTS Theological Studies</i> 79 (3): 1–10. • <i>Biblical Interpretation</i> 31 (4): 457–72. • <i>Verbum et Ecclesia</i> 44 (1): 1–5. • <i>Encounter</i> 84 (3): 1–25. 	Video Lecture Quiz #3 Reading Forum #2

4 (Jun 8-12)	Exegesis of Ruth 2-3	<p>Wisdom Commentary,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ruth 3: Searching for Rest ○ Ruth 4: Preserving Loyalty <p>Anchor Bible Commentary,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ruth 3 (p. 114- 138) ○ Ruth 4 (p. 139- 174) 	<p>Video Lecture Quiz #4</p> <p>Exegetical Forum #2</p>
5 (Jun 15-19)	Further Scholarship in Ruth 2-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Old Testament Essays (New Series)</i>, 36(2), 412–427. • 国学与西学 国 际学刊 25 (December): 99– 112. • <i>Old Testament Essays (New Series)</i> 36 (1): 189–201. • <i>HTS Theological Studies</i> 72 (1): 1–5 	<p>Video Lecture Quiz #5</p> <p>Reading Forum #3</p>
6 (Jun 22-26)	<i>Picking a Passage for further Exegetical Engagement and Personal Accompaniment</i>	Consult 3 other commentaries that deal with your passage of choice.	<p>Video Lecture Quiz #6</p> <p>Exegetical Forum #3</p>
7 (Jun 29-Jul 3)		Choose 3 articles from Recommended Reading List	Review of Three Articles
8 (Jul 8-10)			Integrative Project