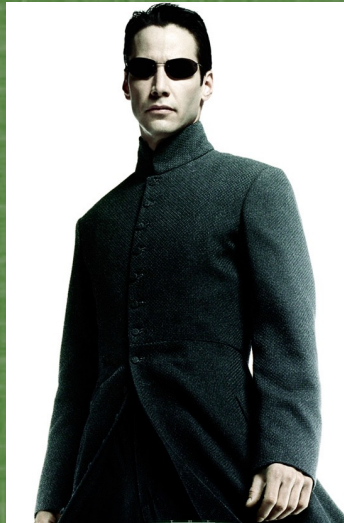


# Jesus in Contemporary Literature and Film

FALL 2017

ENGLISH 2303

SECTION 6



*"You will make my strength  
your own. You will see my  
life through your eyes, as your  
life will be seen through mine.  
The son becomes the father.  
And the father, the son."*

Professor: Dr. C. May

Tuesday/Thursday 2:00-3:20

Office Hours: T/Th 11:00-12:00 pm

Location: Tremble Hall Rm. 20

Office: 605 Carlisle Hall

Office Phone: 272-2692

email: [cedrick.may@uta.edu](mailto:cedrick.may@uta.edu) Faculty Profile: <https://mentis.uta.edu/explore/profile/cedrick-may>

**"I know why you're  
here, Neo... You're  
looking for him. I  
know because I was  
once looking for the  
same thing."**

## Course Description:

In this course we will be exploring contemporary representations of Jesus in fiction and film to consider what this figure has come to mean in both secular and religious thinking today. While Jesus has historically been presented as the ultimate

heroic figure in Western thought, most popular entertainment and some popular fundamentalist movements celebrate violent heroism rather than pacifism--is this new? Or, has there always been this seeming split? We will begin the course by reading the Gospels (including sections of some of the gnostic Gospels) and then look at what writers since Paul have had to say about Jesus as a historical and inspirational figure. We will read **two novels** along with **two films** and **several essays and short stories**, as

**"If you strike me  
down, I shall become  
more powerful than  
you could possibly  
imagine."**

well as **the biblical Gospels** in order to examine how the figure of Jesus seems to change from writer to writer and era to era and what these changes might mean.

**"Yes I am with you always, until the very end of time"**

# Requirements

## Main Texts

King James Version of the  
*Bible*  
(analog or electronic versions)

*Memoirs of Pontius Pilate*  
by James R. Mills

*Dune*  
by Frank Herbert

**(We will also read and discuss a number of stories and critical essays that I will give to you to you in class)**

## Daily Quizzes (25%)

**Each class day there will be a quiz** of 5 to 10 short-answer questions about the readings for the day. The quiz will be given during the first five minutes of the class period. Students who are tardy will not be able to make up the quiz if it is missed.



## Midterm

### Exam (25%)

## Research Essay (25%)

Students will write a final research essay (2,500 words) that proposes an original thesis, is well argued and supported by research. All research materials will come from scholarly books, journals, microfiche, and audio/video recordings that may be found in the library.

## Final Exam (25%)

**“Try not. Do or do not, there is no try.”**

## **Objectives:**

- Through examination, writing assignments, reviews, and class discussions, you will be assessed on your ability to accomplish the following:
- To understand how traditional and modern scholarship interprets texts regarding the historical Jesus.
- To understand how the teachings, deeds, and personality of the historical Jesus have exerted a hold on the imagination of creative writers and filmmakers over time, and in the modern era in particular.
- To understand and be able to critically evaluate the different literary responses to the place of messianic figures in a pluralistic world.

•To develop and be able to critically express scholarly ideas considering the cultural impact of the Gospels in fiction and film.

## **A note on texts:**

You will be expected to have all of the books for this course by the beginning of the second week of classes. All of these books are available at local bookstores and [amazon.com](http://amazon.com).

*Not having a book for class because the university bookstore did not have it when you checked will not excuse you from scheduled assignments.*

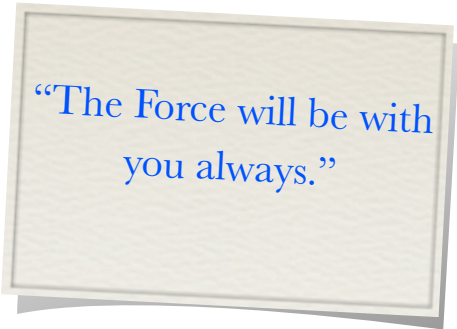
The texts we will be reading are all currently available in print and are widely sold in most bookstores and book websites, as well as downloadable versions for smartphone and tablet devices.

## **Class Policy Statement:**

- Regular attendance and participation in class discussion is expected. You are allowed three (3) excused absences. Upon the fourth absence I will fail you due to absences.
  - Once the door to the classroom closes at the beginning of class, it will automatically lock and I will not open it again until the class is over. So be in class on time!
  - If you are absent the day a paper is due, or you simply fail to turn your paper in by the next scheduled class period, the paper will receive an automatic “F”.
  - Should you be absent due to illness, you must bring documentation showing that you were ill or otherwise legitimately unable to attend class due to hardship the first day you return to class to be counted as excused (I define a hardship as a documented personal illness or death in the family). You must present documentation to me during my office hours before I will mark you as having an excused absence. Under conditions other than those specifically stated here, this class will utilize university policy concerning attendance.
  - Plagiarism will result in an automatic “F” for the entire semester and a report to the office of Student Judicial Affairs
- \*\*\***UT Arlington** encourages qualified persons with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities. If you are in need of any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please contact me, the instructor, as soon as possible.

## Schedule\*\*

TH	8/24	Introduction to course objectives and materials
T	8/29	“Introduction to the New Testament”--Kermode ( <i>Handout</i> )
TH	8/31	<i>Dream of the Rood</i> -- Old English Tale ( <i>Handout</i> )
T	9/5	<i>No Class</i>
TH	9/7	<i>No Class</i>
T	9/12	<i>The Gospel According to Saint Mark</i> (KJV)
TH	9/14	<i>The Gospel According to Saint Mark</i> (KJV)
T	9/19	<i>The Gospel According to Saint Matthew</i> (KJV)
TH	9/21	<i>The Gospel According to Saint Matthew</i> (KJV)
T	9/26	<b><i>The Gospel According to Saint Luke</i> (KJV)</b>
TH	9/28	<i>The Gospel According to Saint John</i> (KJV)
T	10/3	Film— <i>Jesus Christ Superstar</i> (part 1)
TH	10/5	Film— <i>Jesus Christ Superstar</i> (part 2) & Quiz over parts 1&2
T	10/10	<i>Memoirs of Pontius Pilate: A Novel</i> —Mills (75-135)
TH	10/12	<i>Memoirs of Pontius Pilate: A Novel</i> —Mills (136-222)
T	10/17	<b><u>Midterm Exam</u></b>
TH	10/19	<i>No Class</i>
T	10/24	<b>Short Story:</b> “Three Versions of Judas” --Borges ( <i>Handout</i> )
TH	10/26	“ <i>The Pauline Epistles</i> ” --Goulder ( <i>Handout</i> )
T	10/31	<i>Dune</i>
TH	11/2	<i>Dune</i>
T	11/7	<i>Dune</i>
TH	11/9	<i>Dune</i>
T	11/14	Film-- <i>The Matrix</i> (part 1)
TH	11/16	Film-- <i>The Matrix</i> (part 2) & Quiz over parts 1&2
T	11/21	Thanksgiving
TH	11/23	Thanksgiving
T	11/28	<i>Reading Assignment-Handout</i>
TH	11/30	<i>Reading Assignment-Handout</i>
T	12/5	<b>(Last Day of Class)</b> Preparations for Final Exam <b>RESEARCH PAPER DUE</b>



“The Force will be with  
you always.”

**Final exam period: Tuesday December 12 , 2:00 - 4:30 p.m.**

**Boilerplate:**

While UT Arlington does not require instructors to take attendance in their courses, the U.S. Department of Education requires that the University have a mechanism in place to mark when Federal Student Aid recipients “begin attendance in a course.” UT Arlington instructors will report when students begin attendance in a course as part of the final grading process. Specifically, when assigning a student a grade of F, faculty report the last date a student attended their class based on evidence such as a test, participation in a class project or presentation, or an engagement online via Blackboard. This date is reported to the Department of Education for federal financial aid recipients.

**Drop Policy:** Students may drop or swap (adding and dropping a class concurrently) classes through self-service in MyMav from the beginning of the registration period through the late registration period. After the late registration period, students must see their academic advisor to drop a class or withdraw. Undeclared students must see an advisor in the University Advising Center. Drops can continue through a point two-thirds of the way through the term or session. It is the student's responsibility to officially withdraw if they do not plan to attend after registering. **Students will not be automatically dropped for non-attendance.** Repayment of certain types of financial aid administered through the University may be required as the result of dropping classes or withdrawing. For more information, contact the Office of Financial Aid and Scholarships (<http://www.uta.edu/aao/fao/>).

**Disability Accommodations:** UT Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of all federal equal opportunity legislation, including *The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*, *The Americans with Disabilities Amendments Act (ADAAA)*, and *Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act*. All instructors at UT Arlington are required by law to provide “reasonable accommodations” to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of disability. Students are responsible for providing the instructor with official notification in the form of **a letter certified** by the Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD). Only those students who have officially documented a need for an accommodation will have their request honored. Students experiencing a range of conditions (Physical, Learning, Chronic Health, Mental Health, and Sensory) that may cause diminished academic performance or other barriers to learning may seek services and/or accommodations by contacting: **The Office for Students with Disabilities (OSD)** [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability) or calling 817-272-3364. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found at [www.uta.edu/disability](http://www.uta.edu/disability).

**Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)** [www.uta.edu/caps/](http://www.uta.edu/caps/) or calling 817-272-3671 is also available to all students to help increase their understanding of personal issues, address mental and behavioral health problems and make positive changes in their lives.

**Non-Discrimination Policy:** *The University of Texas at Arlington does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, gender, sexual orientation, disabilities, genetic information, and/or veteran status in its educational programs or activities it operates. For more information, visit [uta.edu/eos](http://uta.edu/eos).*

**Title IX Policy:** The University of Texas at Arlington (“University”) is committed to maintaining a learning and working environment that is free from discrimination based on sex in accordance with Title IX of the Higher Education Amendments of 1972 (Title IX), which prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in educational programs or activities; Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII), which prohibits sex discrimination in employment; and the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (SaVE Act). Sexual misconduct is a form of sex discrimination and will not be tolerated. *For information regarding Title IX, visit [www.uta.edu/titleIX](http://www.uta.edu/titleIX) or contact Ms. Jean Hood, Vice President and Title IX Coordinator at (817) 272-7091 or [jmhood@uta.edu](mailto:jmhood@uta.edu).*

**Academic Integrity:** Students enrolled all UT Arlington courses are expected to adhere to the UT Arlington Honor Code:

*I pledge, on my honor, to uphold UT Arlington's tradition of academic integrity, a tradition that values hard work and honest effort in the pursuit of academic excellence.*

*I promise that I will submit only work that I personally create or contribute to group collaborations, and I will appropriately reference any work from other sources. I will follow the highest standards of integrity and uphold the spirit of the Honor Code.*

UT Arlington faculty members may employ the Honor Code in their courses by having students acknowledge the honor code as part of an examination or requiring students to incorporate the honor code into any work submitted. Per UT System *Regents' Rule* 50101, §2.2, suspected violations of university's standards for academic integrity (including the Honor Code) will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Violators will be disciplined in accordance with University policy, which may result in the student's suspension or expulsion from the University. Additional information is available at <https://www.uta.edu/conduct/>.

**Electronic Communication:** UT Arlington has adopted MavMail as its official means to communicate with students about important deadlines and events, as well as to transact university-related business regarding financial aid, tuition, grades, graduation, etc. All students are assigned a MavMail account and are responsible for checking the inbox regularly. There is no additional charge to students for using this account, which remains active even after graduation. Information about activating and using MavMail is available at <http://www.uta.edu/oit/cs/email/mavmail.php>.

**Campus Carry:** Effective August 1, 2016, the Campus Carry law (Senate Bill 11) allows those licensed individuals to carry a concealed handgun in buildings on public university campuses, except in locations the University establishes as prohibited. Under the new law, openly carrying handguns is not allowed on college campuses. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/news/info/campus-carry/>

**Student Feedback Survey:** At the end of each term, students enrolled in face-to-face and online classes categorized as "lecture," "seminar," or "laboratory" are directed to complete an online Student Feedback Survey (SFS). Instructions on how to access the SFS for this course will be sent directly to each student through MavMail approximately 10 days before the end of the term. Each student's feedback via the SFS database is aggregated with that of other students enrolled in the course. Students' anonymity will be protected to the extent that the law allows. UT Arlington's effort to solicit, gather, tabulate, and publish student feedback is required by state law and aggregate results are posted online. Data from SFS is also used for faculty and program evaluations. For more information, visit <http://www.uta.edu/sfs>.

**Final Review Week:** for semester-long courses, a period of five class days prior to the first day of final examinations in the long sessions shall be designated as Final Review Week. The purpose of this week is to allow students sufficient time to prepare for final examinations. During this week, there shall be no scheduled activities such as required field trips or performances; and no instructor shall assign any themes, research problems or exercises of similar scope that have a completion date during or following this week *unless specified in the class syllabus*. During Final Review Week, an instructor shall not give any examinations constituting 10% or more of the final grade, except makeup tests and laboratory examinations. In addition, no instructor shall give any portion of the final examination during Final Review Week. During this week, classes are held as scheduled. In addition, instructors are not required to limit content to topics that have been previously covered; they may introduce new concepts as appropriate.

**Emergency Exit Procedures:** Should we experience an emergency event that requires us to vacate the building, students should exit the room and move toward the nearest exit. When exiting the building during an emergency, one should never take an elevator but should use the stairwells. Faculty members and instructional staff will assist students in selecting the safest route for evacuation and will make arrangements to assist individuals with disabilities.

**Student Support Services:** UT Arlington provides a variety of resources and programs designed to help students develop academic skills, deal with personal situations, and better understand concepts and information related to their courses. Resources include [tutoring](#), [major-based learning centers](#), developmental education, [advising and mentoring](#), personal counseling, and [federally funded programs](#). For individualized referrals, students may visit the reception desk at University College (Ransom Hall), call the Maverick Resource Hotline at 817-272-6107, send a message to [resources@uta.edu](mailto:resources@uta.edu), or view the information at <http://www.uta.edu/universitycollege/resources/index.php>.

**The English Writing Center (411LIBR):** The Writing Center Offers free tutoring in 20-, 40-, or 60-minute face-to-face and online sessions to all UTA students on any phase of their UTA coursework. Our hours are 9 am to 8 pm Mon.-Thurs., 9 am-3 pm Fri. and Noon-6 pm Sat. and Sun. Register and make appointments online at <http://uta.mywconline.com>. Classroom Visits, workshops, and specialized services for graduate students are also available. Please see [www.uta.edu/owl](http://www.uta.edu/owl) for detailed information on all our programs and services.

The Library's 2<sup>nd</sup> floor Academic Plaza offers students a central hub of support services, including IDEAS Center, University Advising Services, Transfer UTA and various college/school advising hours. Services are available during the library's hours of operation. <http://library.uta.edu/academic-plaza>