

Early Christianity

RELI 2220A (Fall 2011)

Religious Studies

College of Humanities

Tue + Thu. 11:30am-1:00pm; Room TBA

Professor Z.A. Crook

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Office phone: 520-2600, ext. 2276

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Course Website: <http://www.carleton.ca/~zcrook/RELI2220.htm>

Course Objective: This course introduces you to some of the historical methods used by academics in the study of Christian origins and the writings of the New Testament. These methods, and their results, will be illustrated by focusing on selected kinds of writing that appear in the New Testament. In all, we seek not only to understand the writings of the New Testament, but also to understand what social, historical, cultural, and communal forces created them. The approach of this course is entirely historical and never faith-based. The truth or divine inspiration of the writings is never presupposed and in no way governs how we approach them; rather the writings are approached in the same spirit as one would approach other ancient writings – Homer, Aristotle, the Epic of Gilgamesh. These were once religious texts for people, but we do not simply accept their truth claims because of that.

My Commitments to You:

1. To represent the secure results of 150 years of academic and historical work on the New Testament and Christian Origins, and the sorts of questions academics ask of the New Testament.
2. To guide you through the material and through the implications of academic work on the New Testament, either by way of my lectures, through questions and discussions in class, or by way of office visits and conversations. But my job here is NOT to defend the academic study of the New Testament in the face of approaches you might prefer.

Your Commitments to Me: If you cannot commit to the following, you will probably not enjoy this course, and might find it very difficult even to pass it.

1. Although I may not yet be in a position to understand why academics draw the conclusions they do on every matter we will encounter, I am open to this intellectual adventure. I always retain the right to challenge my professor, but I will do so on the basis of the academic methods to which we are being introduced in this class, and not through appeals to religious authority, family or church teachings, or personal religious convictions. I am open to learning new things, even if they pose a challenge to positions I have long held.
2. I understand that my writing skills should be up to university standards. I should be able to write grammatically correct English sentences and paragraphs in structured essays. If written expression is a difficult area for me, I will do whatever is necessary to bring my writing up to university standards (such as visit a writing tutor). I will not blame my professor for expecting university-level work, nor complain that “This is not supposed to be an English class.”

Evaluation

Map Quiz – 10% (Sept 26, last 20 mins of class)
Synoptic Problem Work Group 10% (Oct 17) (see on-line syllabus for PDF)
Midterm – 15% (Oct 31, in class)
Fulfillment of Scripture Work Group 10% (Nov 14) (see on-line syllabus for PDF)
Research Report – 20% (5 pages, Nov 23)
Translation Comparison 10% (3 pages, Dec 5) (see on-line syllabus for PDF)
Final Exam – 25% (2 hours)

Texts

Bart D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings*, 2011 (5th edition).

Harper Collins Study Bible New Revised Standard Version with Apocryphal / Deuterocanonical Books

On-line readings available on the website syllabus.

- **Warning:** if you are looking for 2nd hand versions of Ehrman, beware that there are many editions of this books now, and that the 5th edition is the first that is markedly different. Make sure to buy the 5th edition for this course.

Weekly Lecture Outline and Required Readings

- lectures are delivered in such a way as to reward those who have done the required reading. The reading load for this course is *not* heavy overall. Though some days are heavier than others, I have tried to time heavy reading days to follow breaks from class.

Sept 12	Introduction to the course (Ehrman Chapter 1)
Sept 14	Diaspora Judaism (Ehrman Chapter 3)
Sept 19	No class (Conference)
Sept 21	Ancient Judaism (Ehrman Chapter 4)
Sept 26	Social World (Honor and Shame, Patronage) (no reading) + Map quiz (first 20 mins)
Sept 28	The Manuscripts of the New Testament (see on-line syllabus for readings)
Oct 3	Textual Criticism (Ehrman Chapter 2)
Oct 5	Gospel Genre and Transmission of Material (Ehrman Chapter 5-6)
Oct 10	No Class (Thanksgiving)

Oct 12	Markan Themes, Issues, and Ending (Gospel of Mark + Ehrman Chapter 7)
Oct 17	Synoptic Problem Work Group
Oct 19	Synoptic Problem (Ehrman Chapter 8)
Oct 24	Editing Mark (Ehrman Chapter 9)
Oct 26	Matthean Themes and Issues (Gospel of Matthew)
Oct 31	Midterm (no additional lecture)
Nov 2	Canonical vs. Extra-Canonical Jesuses (Ehrman Chapter 14)
Nov 7	History of the Quest for the Historical Jesus (Ehrman Chapter 15)
Nov 9	Jesus as the Fulfillment of Scripture Work Group
Nov 14	Life of Paul (Ehrman Chapter 20)
Nov 16	Ancient Letter Writers (no reading)
Nov 21	No Class (Conference)
Nov 23	1 Corinthians (Ehrman pp. 339-49 + 1 Corinthians) Research Reports Due
Nov 28	Paul and His Opponents (Ehrman pp. 354-63 + Galatians)
Nov 30	Pseudepigraphy (Ehrman Chapter 25)
Dec 5	Apocalyptic Literature (Ehrman Chapter 30 + Revelation) + Translation Comparison Due

Email Communication

- Carleton's Connect Mail is the official mode of email communication for all matters having to do with the university and with this course. All communications sent by connect are official, and you are expected to get them. It is not an option to claim you did not get some announcement or request because you have another email address. You can configure your connect account to forward university emails to another address, but you must be reachable through your connect account.

Map Quiz (Sep 26)

- Quiz takes place from 11:35-11:55 in class time. Quiz ends at 11:55, even if you are late to class.
- You will be provided with maps to study from and on which you will be tested. Study and exam maps will be identical.
- The quiz will involve two types of questions – you will be asked to identify items that I have marked the map (i.e., identify what a, D, P, 2, and 8, etc. refer to on the map); you will also be asked to mark certain items on the map (i.e., place Qumran and the Sea of Galilee on the map).

Midterm (Oct 31): (one hour time limit)

- On the midterm there will be 10 short-answer definition questions.
- These questions will appear in the form of terms or names, which you will define as fully as possible. These questions will be marked out of 5, and should take no more than 4 minutes to answer.
- Your answers will be high quality if they are detailed and accurate, and if you can show why the term is important in the context of this course, or why, in other words, the term appeared on the quiz at all.
- I will go over examples of good and poor answers in class before the midterm.

Work Groups

- On the website syllabus, there are PDFs of the exercises to be done. Print them, follow the instructions.
- Students will submit them for assessment. Where questions want answering, it is expected that you spend **NO MORE** than a page of double spaced writing. These exercises are designed more to make you think, and the writing is to give me a view of your thinking. They are not intended to dramatically increase your writing load in this class.

Research Report (due Nov 23):

Suggested Topics (69 in total)

Apocalypticism	Banditry
Second Temple	Taxation
Covenant	Money/Standard of living
Pharisees	Literacy
Sadducees	Humour
Zealots/Sicarii	Sickness and Disease
Messiah	Healing
Resurrection	Magic
Son of Man	Travel
Son of God	Purity
Honi the Circle Drawer	Leprosy
Hanina ben Dosa	Poverty and Wealth
Apollonius of Tyana	Dining
Pontius Pilate	Honour and Shame
Flavius Josephus	Kinship/Family
Philo of Alexandria	Fictive Kinship
James the Brother of Jesus	Patron-Client Relations
Parables	Benefactions
Herod the Great	Mark's Messianic Secret
Corinth	The Cynics
Thessalonica	Logos

Rome	Paul vs. Peter
Caesarea Maritima	Emperor Cult
Sepphoris	Mystery Religions
Philippi	Sacrifice
Ephesus	Voluntary Associations
Thessalonica	The Synagogue
Alexandria	The practice of Pseudepigraphy
Galatia	Pseudepigrapha
Qumran	Apocrypha
Jerusalem between 30BCE – 70 CE	Scroll and Codex
Women in Early Christianity	Non-Canonical Writings about Jesus
Women in the Ancient World	Non-Canonical Writings about other
“Homosexuality” in the Ancient World	early Christian characters
Burial Practices	Allegorical Interpretation
Slavery in the Ancient World	

NB: You may come up with a topic on your own, but if you do not clear it with me first, you risk choosing an inappropriate topic and doing poorly because of it.

- This is a background report on some topic that helps us to understand earliest Christianity, but it will make your paper stronger if you can tie your topic to specific passages in the New Testament, or to specific people who appear there. In other words, being able to illustrate why your topic is interesting in the context of a course in Christian Origins or New Testament Studies will make your paper stronger and more interesting.
- This paper is historical and not theological. You cannot write this paper from the perspective of a modern Christian, but rather must treat your topic in the context of the ancient world before there was anything called Christianity (~ the end of the 1st century CE). It might help you, if you are Christian, to write the paper as if you are not a Christian in order to save yourself from presupposing positions of Christian faith that will undermine your attempt to understand these topics historically. This is a common practice among scholars of all religions who are also followers of that religion – it is called “bracketing” religious faith: acknowledging that one’s faith can govern one’s view of history, and acknowledging that this does not result in a proper historical investigation.
- You must use and consult at least 6 sources for this paper, not including the textbook or Bible.
- You may not, under any circumstances, use material from the WWW. Full text articles accessed through the library web-site do not count as WWW material, and are fine to use.
- For almost any topic, start with the Anchor Bible Dictionary (a 6 volume encyclopedia with introductory essays and good bibliographies on myriad topics) – BS 440 .A54 Ref.
- Learn to use the ATLA Religion Database (available on the Carleton Library Website: go to <Online Resources>, then choose <Journal Article and Other Databases>, then under Subject choose <Religion>). The librarians can help get you started. This is a search-engine that allows you to find articles and essays in religion and theology.

- Get started on your paper early. Carleton Library does not have a large collection for Biblical Studies; expect to have to use Interlibrary Loan, or to go to St. Paul's (223 Main Street). If you leave your research to the last minute, you may find items taken out already and you may not be able to get them in time. This will reflect in your mark, since it will affect the quality of your research. St. Paul's is a non-circulating library, which means nothing can be signed out; but Carleton Students are allowed to use the library. Students who come to my office at least once to talk about their papers as they're writing them always do better than they do alone.

*Papers cannot be submitted electronically.

- All written assignments must be double spaced (not 1 or 1.5), must have default margins (usually 2.5cm), must not appear in a font size smaller than 12 point, and must include page numbers. The absence or manipulation of any of these things will result in a lower mark.
- All citations, notes, and bibliographies must be carried out according to the Chicago Manual of Style. We have electronic access to the whole work through the library, but there is also this short guide on-line: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html. NB: There are two Chicago systems: be sure to follow the conventions for "Notes and Bibliography" not "Author-Date". Your ability to reproduce this proper style will factor into the marking of your written work.
- Papers that venture too far from these requirements and limits may be returned ungraded for resubmission (and late penalties will accrue retroactively from the due date).
- Late Penalties: Written assignments are due on the specified date. There will be a penalty of 2% per day (including weekends) until the penalty reaches 100%. Extensions will only be granted for personal medical and family emergencies (for which documentation must be provided); extensions are not granted because of essay conflicts, work schedules, or the like. Late papers must be placed in the Religion and Classics Drop Box (beside the door of 2a39 Paterson Hall). Do not slip papers under my door; do not hand them to anyone else.
- All papers will be returned at the final exam.
- Proofread your work several times carefully before handing it in, or ask someone whose writing skills are strong do it. Needless and countless errors of spelling, grammar, and syntax are a serious impediment to effective writing and communication, and these will affect your grade.
- Retain Copies of Work Submitted: It is crucial that you retain a hard copy of all assignments/take home tests submitted in every course. Also remember to do a computer/disk back-up frequently.

Final Exam

- Final exam will be 2 hours in length

The final will involve a selection of short-answer questions, passage identifications, and long-answer questions. The precise layout of the exam will be made clear to the class well before the final exam.

REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL HUMANITIES COURSES

COPIES OF WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in “*substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.*”

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course

GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100 (12)	B = 73-76 (8)	C - = 60-62 (4)
A = 85-89 (11)	B- = 70-72 (7)	D+ = 57-59 (3)
A- = 80-84 (10)	C+ = 67-69 (6)	D = 53-56 (2)
B+ = 77-79 (9)	C = 63-66 (5)	D - = 50-52 (1)

F	Failure. Assigned 0.0 grade points
ABS	Absent from final examination, equivalent to F
DEF	Official deferral (see “Petitions to Defer”)
FND	Failure with no deferred exam allowed -- assigned only when the student has failed the course on the basis of inadequate term work as specified in the course outline.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

The last date to withdraw from **FALL TERM** courses is **DEC. 5, 2011**. The last day to withdraw from **FALL/WINTER (Full Term)** and **WINTER** term courses is **APRIL 5, 2012**.

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by Nov.11, 2011 for the Fall term and March 7, 2012 for the Winter term. For more details visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

PETITIONS TO DEFER

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a **FINAL** assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply a deferral of examination/assignment.

If you are applying for a deferral due to illness you will be required to see a physician in order to confirm illness and obtain a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination or assignment deadline. This supporting documentation must specify the date of onset of the illness, the degree of incapacitation, and the expected date of recovery.

If you are applying for a deferral for reasons other than personal illness, please [contact](#) the Registrar’s Office directly for information on other forms of documentation that we accept.

Deferrals of assignments must be supported by confirmation of the assignment due date, for example a copy of the course outline specifying the due date and any documented extensions from the course instructor.

Deferral applications for examination or assignments must be submitted within **5 working days** of the original final exam.

ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)

College of the Humanities 520-2809	300 Paterson
Greek and Roman Studies Office 520-2809	300 Paterson
Religion Office 520-2100	2A39 Paterson
Registrar's Office 520-3500	300 Tory
Student Academic Success Centre 520-7850	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre 520-6608/TTY 520-3937	501 Uni-Centre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-2600 Ext. 1125	4 th Floor
Library	
Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125	4 th Floor
Library	