

CARLETON UNIVERSITY

College of the Humanities - Religion Program

CHRISTIANITY (An introductory course in Religious Studies)

RELI 2200A – (Fall 2024)

Professor: Johannes C. Wolfart

Lectures on Wednesdays and Fridays from 8:35 to 9:55

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COURSE OBJECTIVES: This course is an introductory survey of Christianity from (roughly) the time of the earliest Christian communities to the present (approximately). The aim is to introduce key concepts, practices, and teachings of Christianity in their historical contexts. Due to the nature of the survey, as well as the size complexity of its subject, this course can only address a very small sample of materials from a few of the many Christian traditions. However, a major aim of this course is to suggest frameworks for understanding Christianity historically (i.e., for locating, arranging, or organizing further bits of Christian history one might encounter and want to study, including in more advanced university courses). **At the very least this course should offer an appreciation of the diversity of historical Christianity.** Please note, finally, that while some of the worldviews studied in this course are explicitly theological, the academic procedures and critical methods employed in Carleton's Religious Studies programme are not. This course presupposes your acceptance of the principles of the modern research university. Your understanding of these, especially as they pertain to the study of religion, will undoubtedly develop further during this course.

EVALUATION – GENERAL INFORMATION: Your performance and progress in this course will be assessed cumulatively. There will be three **in-class quizzes** and three **in-class short essays** in this course. These will take place at the end of the class period on days indicated in the schedule below. Your **best five of six** results on these items will be counted towards your final grade (i.e., each one is worth 20%). **Normally, there will be no make-ups for in-class quizzes or assignments missed. Exceptions will only be made in unusual circumstances and, where possible, by prior arrangement.**

EVALUATION -- QUICK REFERENCE SCHEDULE:

13 September – Quiz #1

27 September – Quiz #2

11 October – Short essay #1

1 November – Short essay #2

15 November – Quiz #3

29 November – Short essay #3

LECTURES: This is a lecture course, which means that my oral presentation is a primary mode of communication. Nevertheless, a certain amount of time will also be devoted to discussion and question periods. **Materials posted to Carleton's LMS Brightspace are a prerequisite and not a substitute for lecture material.** You can expect the quizzes, short essays, and exam to be based primarily on material presented in class. Therefore, attendance is not optional but obligatory in this course. Late arrivals are very distracting to both your fellow students and to me, so please be punctual. Finally, please be advised that audio or visual recording of lectures, either in whole or in part, is not permitted. PLEASE switch off all electronic communication devices during class.

PREPARATORY MATERIALS or "READINGS" (AND EXPECTATIONS): There is no assigned textbook for this course. Preparatory materials (mostly conventional "readings" such as journal articles, scholarly essays, or primary sources, but also the occasional non-textual object for consideration as a

datum) will be made available via Brightspace. It is expected that you will spend 2 hours for every 1 hour of in-class time preparing for class by engaging with these preparatory materials. Such engagement should take the form of careful consideration rather than line-by-line reading. The point is to introduce you to some primary sources as well as developed scholarships of historical Christianity. All-in-all, you should **expect the total time commitment for this course to be about 6-8 hours per week**. Please note, again, that preparatory materials are a prerequisite rather than a substitute for class attendance. The course has been planned to promote dialogue – between the readings and the lectures, occasionally between several of the readings in “conversation” with each other, and ultimately amongst us all, as active participants in the class. Your ability to follow lectures and to enter effectively in such dialogues will depend on you having considered the preparatory materials in advance of class period. In my experience, student success in this course is directly correlated to regular preparation and class attendance.

OFFICE HOURS: Regular office hours will be held Wednesdays and Thursdays from 11:00am – 12:00 noon.

E-MAIL COMMUNICATION: To ensure compliance with the privacy act commonly known as FIPPA (i.e., for your protection), Carleton communications policy states that faculty must conduct email communications with students only through their Carleton accounts. Please be advised, further, that students can normally expect up to a 24hour turn-around time on e-mail communication, especially during high volume times (e.g., before quizzes, exams, etc.).

A NOTE ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY: All course materials (including lectures, outlines, PowerPoint presentations, handouts, and similar materials) are protected by copyright. I am the exclusive holder of copyright and other intellectual property rights for all course materials. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own educational use. You may not reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for any purpose, commercial or otherwise, without my express written consent. By turn, your work in this course remains your own exclusive intellectual property and will not be shared with anybody without your permission, except in accordance with Carleton University policies, which must conform directives of the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (for example, anonymized student work may be reviewed for the purposes of quality assurance, etc.).

CLASS SCHEDULE AND TOPICS

Week I (4/6 September) Some Basic Vocabularies

Preparatory materials:

- RELI 2200: The essential word list (Brightspace)
- “Introduction” to Aaron Hughes and Russell T. McCutcheon, *Religion in 50 Words: A Critical Vocabulary* (New York: Routledge, 2021).

Key considerations:

- Wrestling with terminology as a condition of (academic) existence
- Borrowing the “in 50 words” approach from McCutcheon and Hughes
- Keywords for the academic study of religion
- Keywords for the study of Christianity

Week II (11/13 September) Who is Christianity?

Quiz #1 at the end of class period on 13 September

Preparatory materials:

- The Apostles' Creed (<http://www.creeds.net/ancient/apostles.htm>)
- The Nicene Creed (<http://www.creeds.net/ancient/nicene.htm>)

Key considerations:

- The difference between ethno-religions and conversion religions

- “Social movement” versus “social formation”
- The diversity of Christian identities...in all ages of history
- The importance of institutional structure and differentiation (“hierarchy” or “office”, for example)

Week III (18/20 September) What is Christianity?

Preparatory material:

- Malcolm Ruel, “Christians as Believers” [1982] in M. Lambek, ed., *A Reader in the Anthropology of Religion* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2002), 99-113.

Key considerations:

- The challenges of defining “Christianity” – from both insider and outsider perspectives
- The deficiencies of “faith,” “belief,” “tradition,” and similar alternatives to talking about religion
- Religion as ideology: matters of class, gender, and race
- Christianity as a cultural or social “practice”?

Week IV (25/27 September) When is Christianity?

Quiz #2 at the end of class period on 27 September

Preparatory materials:

- Christopher Dawson, “The Christian View of History” *Blackfriars* 32 (1951), 312-327 (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/43814186>)
- One example of contemporary Christian historical orientation (<https://www.raptureready.com/>)

Key considerations:

- Periodization – for indoctrination, for easy reference, or for explanation?
- Christian histories (esp. “providential” history, “confessional” history)
- Frameworks of “secular” history (including “triumphalist” or “teleological” ones)
- Some examples: “Christmas tree” and “hourglass” conceptions of formative Christianity; “Reformation” versus “early modern” history; “Christianity and modernity” frameworks...

Week V (2/4 October) Where is Christianity?

Preparatory material:

- 2011 Pew report on global distribution of Christians (<https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2011/12/19/global-christianity-exec/>)
- SIL International website (<https://www.sil.org/>)

Key considerations:

- Patterns of spatial mobility – Christian “spread”
- Patterns of “translation” – the communicability of Christianity (with a nod to the late Lamin Sanneh)
- Patterns of indigenization – something called “missionary euthanasia” and other “agency”
- Patterns of globalization – why, really, is Christianity still considered a “Western” religion?

Week VI (9/11 October) – Christian Spirituality

Short essay #1 at the end of class period on 11 October

Preparatory materials:

- The Journal of George Fox, Chapter 1 (https://flp-assets.nyc3.digitaloceanspaces.com/en/george-fox/journal/original/Journal_of_George_Fox--original.pdf)
- Holy Ghost People – a film by Peter Adair (https://archive.org/details/HolyGhostPeople_201403)

Key considerations:

- Early Christian mystical “reactions” to intellectual and institutional authorities (esp. academic philosophy and imperial rule)
- Medieval mystics (e.g., Brigitte of Sweden and Johannes Tauler)
- Early modern “spiritualists” (e.g., Caspar Schwenckfeld and George Fox)
- Modern movement(s), esp. Pentecostalism

Week VII (16/18 October) – Christian Materiality

Preparatory materials:

- Cynthia Hahn, "The Voices of the Saints: Speaking Reliquaries" *Gesta* 36 (1997), 20-31. (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/767276>)
- Aden Kumler, "Imitatio Rerum: Sacred Objects in the St. Giles's Hospital Processional," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 44 (2016), 469-502.

Key considerations:

- The cult of relics (with a nod to Peter Brown)
- Object and ritual, identity, agency
- Some obvious examples: liturgical objects...
- Some less obvious examples: medieval baby Jesus dolls and cribs, medieval manuscript illuminations, early modern German “grapho-relics,” and Filipino “libritos”

FALL BREAK

Week VIII (30 October/1 November) – Christian Textuality

Short essay #2 at the end of class period on 1 November

Preparatory materials:

- Selections from the Christian textual canon(s) and from non-canonical scripture, TBA...

Key considerations:

- Bible basics
- Text, canon, and authority – a “religion of the book”?
- From interesting anomalies to major departures: apocryphal books and new revelations
- The notion of “practical canon” and the diversity of Christianity

Week IX (6/8 November) – Christianity and Empires

Preparatory materials:

- The Donation of Constantine (<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/donatconst.asp>)
- Henry Mayr-Harting, "Charlemagne, the Saxons, and the Imperial Coronation of 800" *English Historical Review* 111 (1996), 1113-1133. (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/575852>)

Key considerations:

- Roman Empire
- Carolingian Empire
- British Empire
- Russian Empire

Week X (13/15 November) – Christians by “profession”

Quiz #3 at the end of class period on 15 November

Preparatory materials:

- Selections from Benedict’s Rule (<https://gutenberg.org/files/50040/50040-h/50040-h.htm#chapter-1>; <https://gutenberg.org/files/50040/50040-h/50040-h.htm#chapter-55>)
- Jennifer Wynot, “Monasteries Without Walls: Secret Monasticism in the Soviet Union, 1928-39” *Church History* 71 (2002), 63-79. (<https://www.jstor.org/stable/4146691>)

Key considerations:

- Early monastic impulses and their significance
- The rules of the “regular” religious...for example of St. Basil or St. Benedict
- Some better and lesser-known varieties (from anchorites, to beguines, to Skoptsy)
- "Integrated" monasticism (for example, in Coptic/Ethiopian Christianity)

Week XI (20/22 November) – Christianity and Colonialism

Preparatory materials:

- Sarah Kathleen Johnson, "On our Knees: Christian ritual in residential schools and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada" *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 47 (2018), 3-24. (<https://doi.org/10.1177/0008429817733269>)
- Clint Westman, "Pentecostalism among Canadian Aboriginal People: A Political Movement?" in: M. Wilkinson and S.M. Studebaker, eds., *A Liberating Spirit: Pentecostalism and Social Action in North America* (2010), 85-110.

Key considerations:

- The "great commission" and "intrusive altruism"
- "Soldier of Christ" and other moments of militant Christianity
- Some key Christian organizations in Euro-American colonial practice
- Christians and the TRC

Week XII (27/29 November) – The Architecture of Christianity

Short essay #3 at the end of class period on 29 November

Preparatory material: TBA; images of Ottawa churches (via Brightspace)

Key considerations:

- Dedicated ecclesiastical and liturgical spaces of several kinds
- Specialist vocabulary (not too much) for Christian buildings and furniture
- Domestic architectures and Christianity
- The interesting case of bells and their belfries

Make-up day (4 December)

University Regulations for All College of the Humanities Courses (Updated August 20, 2024)

Academic Dates and Deadlines

This schedule contains the dates prescribed by the University Senate for academic activities. Dates relating to fee payment, cancellation of course selections, late charges, and other fees or charges will be published in the Important Dates and Deadlines section of the Registration Website.

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.

Online Learning Resources

On this page, you will find resources collected by Carleton Online to help you succeed in your online courses; Learning Strategies and Best Practices, Study Skills, Technology and Online Interaction and Engagement.

Academic Integrity Policy

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as "*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one's*

own.” This includes 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. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT)
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment
- using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement
- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one’s own
- failing to acknowledge sources with proper citations when using another’s work and/or failing to use quotations marks.”

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course’s instructor.

The Associate Dean of the Faculty follows a rigorous [process for academic integrity allegations](#), including reviewing documents and interviewing the student, when an instructor suspects a violation has been committed. Penalties for violations may include a final grade of “F” for the course.

Co-operation or Collaboration

An important and valuable component of the learning process is the progress a student can make as a result of interacting with other students. In struggling together to master similar concepts and problems and in being exposed to each other’s views and approaches, a group of students can enhance and speed up the learning process. Carleton University encourages students to benefit from these activities which will not generally be viewed as a violation of the Policy. With the exception of tests and examinations, instructors will not normally limit these interactions.

Students shall not co-operate or collaborate on academic work when the instructor has indicated that the work is to be completed on an individual basis. Failure to

follow the instructor's directions in this regard is a violation of the standards of academic integrity. Unless otherwise indicated, students shall not co-operate or collaborate in the completion of a test or examination.

Group Work: There are many cases where students are expected or required to work in groups to

complete a course requirement. Normally, students are not responsible for violations of this policy

committed by other members of a group in which they participate.

More information on the process [here](#).

Academic Accommodations

Academic accommodation refers to educational practices, systems and support mechanisms designed to accommodate diversity and difference. The purpose of accommodation is to enable students to perform the essential requirements of their academic programs. At no time does academic accommodation undermine or compromise the learning objectives that are established by the academic authorities of the University.

Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the *Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances*, are outlined on the [Academic Accommodations website](#).

Requests for Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes can be [found here](#).

Addressing Human Rights Concerns

The University and all members of the University community share responsibility for ensuring that the University's educational, work and living environments are free from discrimination and harassment. Should you have concerns about harassment or discrimination relating to your age, ancestry, citizenship, colour, creed (religion), disability, ethnic origin, family status, gender expression, gender identity, marital status, place of origin, race, sex (including pregnancy), or sexual orientation, please contact the [Department of Equity and Inclusive Communities](mailto:equity@carleton.ca) at equity@carleton.ca.

Grading System at Carleton University

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

Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

[The system of grades used](#), with corresponding grade points and the percentage conversion can be found [here](#).

Course Sharing Websites and Copyright

Classroom teaching and learning activities, including lectures, discussions, presentations, etc., by both instructors and students, are copy protected and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s). All course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and other materials, are also protected by copyright and remain the intellectual property of their respective author(s).

Students registered in the course may take notes and make copies of course materials for their own educational use only. Students are not permitted to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial or non-commercial purposes without express written consent from the copyright holder(s).

[More information](#)

Student Rights and Responsibilities at Carleton

Carleton University strives to provide a safe environment conducive to personal and intellectual growth, free of injustice and characterized by understanding respect, peace, trust, and fairness.

The [Student Rights and Responsibilities Policy](#) governs the non-academic behaviour of students. Carleton University is committed to building a campus that promotes personal growth through the establishment and promotion of transparent and fair academic and non-academic responsibilities.

Deferred Term Work

In some situations, students are unable to complete term work because of extenuating circumstances beyond their control, which forces them to delay submission of the work. Requests for academic consideration are made in accordance with the [Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical or Other Extenuating Circumstances](#).

Students who claim short-term extenuating circumstances (normally lasting up to five days) as a reason for missed term work are held responsible for immediately informing the instructor concerned and for making alternate arrangements with the instructor. If the instructor requires supporting documentation, the instructor may only request submission of the University's self-declaration form, which is available on the

[Registrar's Office website](#). The alternate arrangement must be made before the last day of classes in the term as published in the academic schedule.

1. Normally, any deferred term work will be completed by the last day of term. In all cases, formative evaluations providing feedback to the student should be replaced with formative evaluations. In the event the altered due date must extend beyond the last day of classes in the term, the instructor will assign a grade of zero for the work not submitted and submit the student's earned grade accordingly; the instructor may submit a change of grade at a later date. Term work cannot be deferred by the Registrar.
2. In cases where a student is not able to complete term work due to extenuating circumstances lasting for a significant period of time/ long-term (normally more than five days), the instructor and/or student may elect to consult with the Registrar's Office (undergraduate courses) or Graduate Registrar (graduate courses) to determine appropriate action.
3. If a student is concerned the instructor did not respond to the request for academic consideration or did not provide reasonable accommodation, the student should follow the appeals process described in the [Academic Consideration Policy](#).
4. If academic consideration is granted, but the student is unable to complete the accommodation according to the terms set out by the instructor as a result of further illness, injury, or extraordinary circumstances beyond their control, the student may submit a petition to the Registrar's Office (undergraduate courses)/Graduate Registrar (graduate courses). Please note, however, that the course instructor will be required to submit an earned final grade and further consideration will only be reviewed according to established precedents and deadlines. (More information: [Undergraduate](#) | [Graduate](#)).

Deferred Final Exams

Students who are unable to write a final examination because of extenuating circumstances, as defined in the [Academic Consideration Policy](#), may apply for accommodation. Normally, the accommodation for a missed final examination will be granting the student the opportunity to write a deferred examination. In specific cases when it is not possible to offer a deferred examination, and with the approval of the Dean, an alternate accommodation may be made.

The application for a deferral must:

1. be made in writing to the Registrar's Office no later than three (3) working days after the original final examination or the due date of the take-home examination; and,
2. be fully supported by appropriate documentation. In cases of short-term extenuating circumstances normally lasting no more than five (5) days, students must include the University's self-declaration form, which can be found on [the Registrar's Office website](#). Additional documentation is required in cases of

extenuating circumstances lasting longer than five (5) days and must be supported by a medical note specifying the date of onset of the illness, the (expected) date of recovery, and the extent to which the student was/is incapacitated during the time of the examination. The University's preferred medical form can be found at the Registrar's Office [here](#).

3. **Financial vs. Academic Withdrawal**

Make sure that you are aware of the separate deadlines for Financial and Academic withdrawal!

Making registration decisions in Carleton Central involves making a financial and academic commitment for the courses you choose, regardless of attendance. If you do not attend, you must withdraw in Carleton Central within the published deadlines to cancel your registration. A fee adjustment is dependent on registration being canceled within the published [fee deadlines](#) and dependent on your course load. A course dropped after the deadline for financial withdrawal will receive a grade of Withdrawn (WDN), which appears on your official transcript.

Even if you miss the deadline for financial withdrawal, you might decide to drop a course to avoid a failure or a poor grade showing up on your student record and bringing down your CGPA. It is your responsibility to drop the course via Carleton Central within the published [deadlines](#) (see Academic Withdrawal).

If you are considering withdrawing from a course, you may want to talk to an advisor first. Course withdrawal may affect your student status, as well as your eligibility for student funding, immigration status, residence accommodation and participation in varsity sports, etc. Additionally, remember that once you choose your courses, you must use the “Calculate amount to pay” button to determine the correct amount of fees to pay.

Carleton Central is your one-stop shop for registration activities. If you are interested in taking a course, make sure to complete your registration. Simply attending a course does not mean you are registered in it, nor is it grounds for petition or appeal.

Mental Health and Wellness at Carleton

As a student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and

off-campus to support you. For more information, please consult <https://wellness.carleton.ca/>”

Emergency Resources ([on and off campus](#))

- Suicide Crisis Helpline: call or text 9-8-8, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- For immediate danger or urgent medical support: call 9-1-1

Carleton Resources

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: call 613-238-3311, text 343-306-5550, or connect online at <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: call 613-722-6914 or toll-free 1-866-996-0991, or connect online at <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me Counselling Service: call 1-844-741-6389 or connect online at <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: call 1-866-925-5454 or connect online at <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: for online or on-site service <https://walkincounselling.com>

The Centre for Indigenous Support and Community Engagement

The Centre for Indigenous Initiatives is proud to offer culturally centered individual counselling to students who self-identify as First Nation, Metis or Inuk. Through this service, Indigenous students [can access confidential, individual sessions for support with personal, mental health or academic challenges.](#)

Department Contact Information

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