

College of the Humanities  
Carleton University  
RELI 2225

**Medieval Christianity**  
**Winter 2019**

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Office hours: TBD

**Course Description:**

Medieval Christianity is a “house of many mansions” (as the Gospel of John has Jesus say of the kingdom of heaven). So vast, complex, and diverse is this ‘house’ that our aim in this course must remain modest: to acquaint ourselves with a small but representative sample of its treasures. Thus, over the course of this semester, we will learn about many – but by no means all – of the doctrinal debates, popular beliefs, political conflicts, institutional developments, forms of piety, and modes of artistic expression that characterized Christianity during the middle ages. Because of the dizzying scope of the course’s topic, decisions must be made as to our focus. Accordingly, in this course, we will be focussing almost exclusively on Christianity in the Medieval Latin world. Furthermore, while we will never lose sight of their historical context, and quite a few lectures will be of a purely historical tenor, our primary *modus operandi* in this course will be to glean our understanding of the many currents of Medieval Christianity through the close study of some of the most significant written works of the period. Intellectual history and historically informed exegesis will thus be privileged over certain other forms of history (for example material history), though not to their total exclusion and certainly not out of any lack of appreciation for them. Choices simply have to be made. Authors studied will most notably include: Augustine, Anselm, Bernard of Clairvaux, Francis of Assisi, Thomas Aquinas, and Dante. Topics will include, among many others: the existence and nature of God; the nature of human salvation and Christ’s role in it; the nature of sin; biblical hermeneutics; the relation between secular and sacred authority; the role of art in religious worship; the theory and practice of monasticism; the doctrine of purgatory; heresies and their repression; and the relation between reason and revelation.

**Lectures:** Mondays and Wednesdays, from 1:05pm to 2:25pm, in 517 Southam Hall

**Required Texts:** The following texts are available at Singing Pebble Books (206 Main Street, across from Saint-Paul's University and a few doors down from the Green Door restaurant; tel. 613-230-9165).

- Anselm. *Basic Writings*. Ed. and Tr. T. Williams. Indianapolis: Hackett Press, 2007.
- Augustine. *Confessions*. Tr. H. Chadwick. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Bernard of Clairvaux. *Selected Works*. Tr. G.R. Evans. New York: Paulist Press, 1987.
- Dante. *Purgatorio*. Trs. Jean & Robert Hollander. New York: Anchor Books, 2003.

*All other readings will be posted on cuLearn.*

**Grades:** Grades will be based solely on individual, academic merit as judged against absolute standards. Grades will not be adjusted to achieve a supposedly normal distribution or manipulated in any other way.

Grades for the course will be based on the following:

- (1) Class participation, for a total of 10% of the final mark;
- (2) Two short assignments, each approximately 5 double-spaced pages in length, and each worth 15% of the final mark (**see the schedule of lectures and readings for their respective due dates**);
- (3) One term paper, approximately 10 double-spaced pages in length, worth 30% of the final mark, **due on April 8<sup>th</sup>**; and
- (4) A three-hour examination written in the formal, April examination period and worth 30% of the final mark.

- I will distribute separate handouts describing my expectations for: (1) class participation; (2) the two short assignments; (3) the term paper; and (4) the final examination.
- At the end of the course, you will be assigned a letter grade corresponding to your final percentage, according to the standard Carleton University grading scale (which can be found in the Undergraduate Calendar online here:  
<https://calendar.carleton.ca/undergrad/regulations/academicregulationsoftheuniversity/acadregsuniv2/>).

**Learning Outcomes:**

- First and foremost, students will come away from the course with a basic grasp of many of the most important forms of thought, piety, worship, art, and political/institutional organization that characterized Christianity in the Latin Middle Ages. They will also be able to appreciate how ideas, beliefs, forms of ritual and religious practice, relations of power, and religious and secular institutions evolved (or did not evolve) throughout the period we will have covered.
- Our study of Medieval Christianity will be centred on primary texts and resolutely interdisciplinary. Students can thus expect to finish the course with a deeper understanding of not only the methods of textual analysis deployed by scholars today in the study of historical works within disciplines like literature, philosophy, and religion, but also the methods that would have been employed by individuals at various points in the Middle Ages. Of course, students can also expect to make progress in their own ability to perform such textual analyses.
- Students will gain an appreciation for how works within very different media and disciplines can influence each other within a cultural tradition. They will learn how to read such works in light of each other, and how to identify long-term trends, affiliations and influences, departures, conflicts, novelties, and so on, within a relatively cohesive cultural tradition.
- Students will be introduced to various databases, collections, and research tools relevant to the study of medieval Christianity or widely used in the study, more specifically, of medieval literature, theology, philosophy, *et alia*.
- Finally, students will gain experience formulating a research hypothesis on a topic of their choosing, conducting the research needed to confirm or alter it, and presenting and arguing for a clear and creative thesis concerning the topic of their choosing in a research paper.

**Course Requirements at a Glance:**

- To pass this course, you will have to:
  - Regularly attend, and do the readings assigned for, the course lectures;
  - Complete all of the course assignments; and
  - Complete the final examination
- Failure to complete *all* of the course assignments and/or the final examination and/or attend course lectures regularly will result in the grade 'FND'.

**Attendance:**

- *Attendance and participation are critical components of all courses in the liberal arts. Thus, a pattern of non-attendance will in and of itself constitute sufficient grounds for my awarding a final course grade of 'F'.*
- This means that you must attend lectures regularly or you will fail the course automatically. If you find yourself having to miss more than two or three sessions, you will have to justify your absences, and the onus will be on you to do so (I will not chase after you). You will not be penalized if there are legitimate reasons for your repeated absences.
- Furthermore, it is your responsibility to stay on top of any materials covered, to find out about and obtain any materials distributed, and to enquire about any announcements made during lectures you must miss for whatever reason.

**Submission Guidelines:**

- All written assignments for this course are to be uploaded to a file folder prepared for that purpose in cuLearn.
- Your assignment will be considered submitted when it is uploaded.
- All uploaded documents must be in MS Word (i.e., .doc or .docx) format. Documents in any other file format will not be considered submitted, and late penalties will accrue, until the MS Word document is submitted.
- Do not upload your document a second time in order to fix a minor issue since the second submission date and time will replace the original one. If you need to re-submit, do so by emailing the document to me directly at erik.stephenson@carleton.ca

**Late Assignments:**

- Assignments will be docked 3% (or one third of a letter grade) for each calendar day after their due-date. Late penalties on assignments accompanied by a medical certificate or other proof of a legitimate reason for lateness will be adjusted accordingly.
- Late assignments will very quickly sink to a grade of 'F'. Hand in your assignments on time.
- Even an assignment that is so late it will merit a grade of 0%(F) must be completed or you will fail the course.

**Plagiarism:**

- Plagiarism is an academic offence. A professor who suspects a student has plagiarized an assignment is required to turn the matter over to the Dean. Students found guilty of plagiarism can receive a 0% for the assignment or a grade of 'F' for the whole course. In extreme cases, they can even be suspended or expelled from the university.

- If you use ideas or language from secondary sources in your assignments without citing those sources properly, you will have committed plagiarism, and I will have no choice but to hand over your work to the Dean for investigation.
- Submitting the same work as another student also constitutes plagiarism. Therefore, although I encourage you to help each other, if you hand in an assignment that is substantially the same as another student's, I will have to turn both of them in to the Dean to be investigated for plagiarism.
- Please read the full Departmental policy on plagiarism, which can be found on the final page of this course syllabus.

### **Lecture and Reading Schedule:**

#### **Introduction:**

- 7 January: Introduction
  - Topics: The Emperor and the Cross: Constantine and the political ascendancy of Christianity; "The gold of the Egyptians": the legacy of pagan learning; "The desert was made a city": the Desert Fathers and early monasticism

#### **Block 1: Augustine**

- 9 January: Augustine, *Confessions*, Books I and II
  - Topics: two modes of confession; conversion narratives; original sin; sin in general
- 14 January: Augustine, *Confessions*, Books III-V
  - Topics: love of learning; Manichaeism; astrology; Neoplatonism
- 16 January: Augustine, *Confessions*, Books VI-IX
  - Topics: the nature of evil and God; Augustine's final conversion; the religious community in Cassiciacum; a shared mystical ascent at Ostia
- 21 January: Augustine, *Confessions*, Books X-XI
  - Topics: Memory, happiness, time, and the search for God
- 23 January: Augustine, *Confessions*, Books XII-XIII
  - Topics: Commentary on Genesis; principles of biblical exegesis; love as the weight by which we move

#### **Block 2: Anselm**

- 28 January: From Gregory the Great to Gregory VII (no required reading)
  - Topics: Benedict and early monasticism; Gregory the Great as administrator and writer; other transmitters of ancient pagan learning; monastic missionaries; the proprietary church;

Charlemagne and the Carolingian Renaissance; the Gregorian Reforms and the Investiture Controversy

- 30 January: Guest lecture by Prof. John Higney on Medieval music
  - Topics: music and liturgy; music in the monasteries; notation systems; plainchant vs. polyphony
- 4 February: Anselm, *Proslogion*
  - Topics: “Faith seeking understanding”; the “ontological argument” for the existence of God
- 6 February: Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo* (excerpts to be determined)
  - Topics: Christology; soteriology; the Incarnation; the Passion

**Block 3: Bernard of Clairvaux**

- 11 February: The “Twelfth Century Renaissance” (no required reading)
  - Topics: from monastic schools to cathedral schools; the rebirth of historical and legal studies (canon and civil); the school of Chartres and the study of nature; the study of logic and its application to theology (most notably with Peter Abelard and Peter Lombard); monastic reform; courtly love literature and theory
    - **First short assignment due by the beginning of class**
- 13 February: Bernard of Clairvaux, *Apologia* to Abbot William (available on cuLearn)
  - Topics: the character and history of the Cistercian order; Cistercian art; the history and alleged decadence of the order of Cluny
- 25 February: Bernard of Clairvaux, *On Conversion*
  - Topics: monastic theory; the process of salvation
- 27 February: Bernard of Clairvaux, *Sermons on the Song of Songs* (selections to be determined) and Guigo II, *The Ladder of Monks* (available on cuLearn)
  - Topics: reading the Bible in a medieval monastery (“*lectio divina*”); the four levels of medieval biblical exegesis; reading a frankly erotic book of the Bible allegorically/mystically
- 4 March: Bernard of Clairvaux, *In Praise of the New Knighthood* (available on cuLearn)
  - Topics: preaching the Second Crusade; the Templars: the idea of a military religious order

**Block 4: Francis**

- 6 March: Historical background to Francis (no required reading)
  - Topics: demographic and economic changes (urbanization, increased trade, banking, and literacy); associated changes in religious sensibilities; heresies (the Cathars and the Waldenses) and their repression: inquisition and crusade; the poetry of the troubadours

- 11 March: Francis of Assisi, *The Canticle of Brother Sun*; *The Earlier Rule*; *The Testament* (all available on cuLearn)
  - Topics: the life of Francis; innovations in Franciscan spirituality; the emergence and early history of the Franciscan order; controversies over the poverty of Christ; Francis and art

### Block 5: Aquinas

- 13 March: Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 1 (i.e., question 1 of part I; available on cuLearn)
  - Topics: the rise of the universities; introduction to scholasticism
  - **Second short assignment due by the beginning of class**
- 18 March: Guest lecture by Prof. Randi Klebanoff on a topic in medieval Christian art
  - Topics: TBD
- 20 March: Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I, q. 2 (i.e., question 2 of part I; available on cuLearn)
  - Topics: the “five ways” through which it is proven *that* God exists; the limits of our knowledge of *what* God is
- 25 March: Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, IaIIae (first part of the second part), qq. 1-5 (questions 1 through 5; available on cuLearn)
  - Topics: the nature of human happiness; the beatific vision; the relation between nature and grace

### Block 6: Dante

- 27 March: Dante, *Vita Nuova* (excerpts, available on cuLearn)
  - Topics: Andreas Capellanus and the courtly love tradition; icon or idol, symbol or sacrilege?: the Christian elements in Dante’s evolving conception of his love for his Lady
- 1 April: Dante, *Purgatory*, Cantos I-IX
  - Topics: the place of *Purgatorio* in Dante’s *Commedia*; the historical development of the idea of purgatory; natural vs. perfect or “infused” moral virtue; the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity; Aristotle’s influence on Dante’s conception of moral and spiritual rehabilitation; purgatory as a paradigmatic monastery
- 3 April: Dante, *Purgatory*, Cantos X-XXVII
  - Topics: the seven deadly sins; pride as the root of all sin; the religious function of good art; the nature of love; choice and its relation to sin; the proper order between empire and papacy
- 8 April: Dante, *Purgatory*, Cantos XXVIII-XXXIII
  - Topics: the religious function of good poetry; the purification of love/the will; the Garden of Eden and the purification of memory; the active and contemplative lives; the highest earthly good; the pageants of the Churches Triumphant and Militant

- **Term paper due by the beginning of class**





## University Regulations for All Humanities Courses

### Copies of Written Work Submitted

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

### Academic Integrity at Carleton

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Plagiarism is presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas, or work of others as one's own. Plagiarism 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, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, and material on the internet. More information can be found [here](#).

### Academic Accommodation Policy

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#### **Academic Accommodation**

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows:

**Pregnancy obligation:** write to the instructor 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. For more details see the [Student Guide](#)

**Religious obligation:** write to the instructor 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. For more details see the [Student Guide](#)

**Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at

613-520-6608 or [pmc@carleton.ca](mailto:pmc@carleton.ca) for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the [PMC website](#) for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

### **Survivors of Sexual Violence**

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and is survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit: [carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support](http://carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support)

### **Accommodation for Student Activities**

Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor 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. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

## **Grading System at Carleton University**

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Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. Standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points and the percentage conversion is below. Grade points indicated are for courses with 1.0 credit value. Where the course credit is greater or less than one credit, the grade points are adjusted proportionately.

[Grading System](#)

## **Course Sharing Websites and Copyright**

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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).

## Statement on Class Conduct

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The Carleton University Human Rights Policies and Procedures affirm that all members of the University community share a responsibility to:

- promote equity and fairness,
- respect and value diversity,
- prevent discrimination and harassment, and preserve the freedom of its members to carry out responsibly their scholarly work without threat of interference.

## Deferred Term Work

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In some situations, students are unable to complete term work because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control, which forces them to delay submission of the work.

Students who claim illness, injury or other extraordinary circumstances beyond their control as a reason for missed term work are held responsible for immediately informing the instructor concerned and for making alternate arrangements with the instructor and **in all cases this must occur no later than three (3.0) working days after the term work was due.**

The alternate arrangement must be made before the last day of classes in the term as published in the academic schedule. Normally, any deferred term work will be completed by the last day of term. More information is available [in the calendar](#).

## Deferred Final Exams

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Students who are unable to write a final examination because of a serious illness/emergency or other circumstances beyond their control 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. [More information.](#)

The application for a [deferral](#) must:

1. be made in writing or online to the Registrar's Office no later than **three working days** after the original final examination or the due date of the take-home examination; and,
2. be fully supported by appropriate documentation and, in cases of illness, by a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination, or by appropriate documents in other cases. Medical documents must specify the date of the 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 [forms and fees page](#).

Any questions related to deferring a Final Exam or Final Assignment/Take Home Examination should be directed to the [Registrar's Office](#).

## Withdrawal From Courses

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Withdrawn. No academic credit, no impact on the CGPA. WDN is a permanent notation that appears on the official transcript for students who withdraw after the full fee adjustment date in each term (noted in the Academic Year section of the Calendar each term). Students may withdraw on or before the last day of classes.

Important dates can be found [here](#):

## Financial vs. Academic Withdrawal

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**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. [More information](#)

## Department Contact Information

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**College of the Humanities** 300 Paterson Hall (613)520-2809

[CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca)

Drop box for CLCV, HUMS LATN GREK Term Papers and assignments is outside 300 P.A.

**Greek and Roman Studies** 300 Paterson Hall (613)520-2809

[GreekAndRomanStudies@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:GreekAndRomanStudies@cunet.carleton.ca)

Drop Box is outside of 300 P.A.

**Religion** 2A39 Paterson Hall (613)520-2100

[Religion@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:Religion@cunet.carleton.ca)

Drop box for RELI and SAST Term Papers and assignments is outside of 2A39 P.A.

**Registrar's Office** 300 Tory (613)520-3500

<https://carleton.ca/registrar/>

## Student Resources on Campus

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[CUKnowHow Website](#)

[Academics: From registration to graduation, the tools for your success.](#)