

# **The Historical Jesus**

## **RELI 3230A (Winter 2019)**

Tuesdays 11:30-2:30pm; 314 SA  
Professor Z. A. Crook  
Paterson Hall 2A43  
Office phone: 520-2600, ext. 2276  
Office Hours: Mondays 1:30-3:00pm, or By Appointment  
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### **Course Objective**

- This course is less about Jesus than it is about the search for the Historical Jesus. We will consider the nature of the sources that are used to reconstruct the life and teachings of Jesus and touch on some of the methodological challenges that these sources pose for the modern (and post-modern) historian. We will also consider how early Christian writers developed/alterd the image of Jesus.

### **Learning Objectives**

By the end of the course, students should be able:

- to write in a critical and nuanced manner about the challenges involved in the searches for the historical Jesus.
- to describe the social world of the historical Jesus.
- to describe the history of scholarship on Jesus.
- to advance their ability to write in a clear, forceful, and persuasive way.
- to hone their skills in academic research

### **Evaluation**

15% Participation  
35% Discussion Article Summaries  
25% Research Essay (10 pages; due Mar 26)  
25% Final Exam

### **Text Books**

Anthony Le Donne, *Historical Jesus: What Can We Know and How Can We Know It?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011).

Supplementary Reading, on Reserve at the Library, or still in your collection of textbooks (wishful thinking?)

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- Bart D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings* (4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> edition only).

## Weekly Lecture Topics and Reading Schedule

Date	Lecture Topic	Reading/Discussion/Prep
Jan 8	Mechanics of the Course and Why Jesus Matters	
Jan 15	History and Historiography	Discussion: Kloppenborg
Jan 22	Textual Criticism: Do we have access to the words of Jesus?	Reading: Le Donne "Beginnings" + Part I
Jan 29	A Jewish Jesus or...?	Discussion: Arnal
Feb 35	The Jesus of the Gospels?	Reading: Le Donne Part II
Feb 12	Social Locations	Discussion: Malina
Feb 19	<b>Reading Week</b>	
Feb 26	Israel and its Messiahs	Discussion: Horsely
Mar 5	Parables	Discussion: Hultgren
Mar 12	Birth and Death Narratives	Reading: Le Donne Part III
Mar 19	The Problem of Miracles	Discussion: Craffert
Mar 26	An Apocalyptic Prophet?	Discussion: Allison v. Crossan
Apr 2	Extra-Canonical Jesuses	Discussion: Franzmann
April 9	Whose Historical Jesus?	Discussion: Marsh

### Email Communication

- Carleton Connect is the official mode of email communication for all matters having to do with the university and with this course. All communications sent to your Connect account are considered official by the university, 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. Also, I am forbidden to put into an email any information which could be deemed personal unless it is addressed to a Connect account (because hotmail etc. accounts are not secure, whereas Connect is secure).

### Participation (15%)

- Based mostly on the discussions of the reading, not questions asked during lectures.
- Your participation mark will be an assessment of the *quality* of your participation, not the quantity. By "quality" I mean: did others in the class benefit from your participation, because, for example, you raised excellent points that made for enriching discussion. It is conceivable, therefore, that a person could speak three times in the whole course and get higher participation marks than a person who spoke every day.

### Articles Summaries (35%; 7 summary exercises, worth 5% each; due at the beginning of relevant class)

- Write a 300 word summary for 7/9 of the Discussion Articles (or do more, and I'll count only the 7 highest results).
- It goes without saying that economy of language is key here, since you must accurately summarize papers that are about 10,000 words in 300 words **at most**.

- Please include a word-count at the bottom of your summary. You need only to count the words in the summary itself, not your name or any title information you might provide.

## Research Essay Topics (25%; due Mar 26)

- Page limit: 10 pages (**not including** bibliography or title page, **but including** end/footnotes).

### Topics

- Choose a general topic from below.
- For any topic you choose, please come see me as many times as you can: before choosing a topic, before starting research, before writing a full draft. Consultations with me can save you a lot of wasted effort and disappointment; students who come to my office at least once to talk about their papers **always** do better than they do alone, and unless I've already been cleaned out leave with some of my books too.

1) Choose any story from the gospels, whether found in one, two, three or all of them. Write an essay with any of the following foci: 1) Assess the historicity of the story; 2) If a story is present in more than one source, assess the differences among the stories; attempt to answer the question: Why did the gospel writers change the story? The successful paper will be well-researched, grounded in examples from and analysis of primary texts, and reflect familiarity with the relevant criteria in the search for the historical Jesus.

2) Was Jesus an apocalyptic prophet who believed the end of the world was immanent, or was he a teacher of subversive wisdom (like the Cynics)? The successful paper will be well-researched, grounded in examples from primary texts, and reflect familiarity with the relevant criteria in the search for the historical Jesus.

3) Read any one of the following modern novels about Jesus and write an essay on it:

- Anthony Burgess, *Man of Nazareth* (1979)
- Norman Mailer, *The Gospel According to the Son* (1997)
- Christopher Moore, *Lamb: The Gospel According to Biff, Christ's Childhood Pal* (2003)
- Nino Ricci, *Testament* (2002)
  - Any of these novels can be very inexpensively purchased at [www.abebooks.com](http://www.abebooks.com)
- To give your paper the appropriate focus (Biblical Studies, not Eng Lit) focus your essay on ONE of the following areas:
  - 1) the novelist's use of early Christian sources;
  - 2) meaningful differences or similarities in the way an episode from the gospels has been depicted;
    - NB. This topic should probably be limited to students with experience in literary analysis.

4) Offer an analysis of a film treatment of the life of Jesus.

- To give your paper the appropriate focus (Biblical Studies, not Film Studies) focus your essay on ONE of the following areas:

- 1) the novelist's use of early Christian sources in the making of the film;
- 2) how episodes from the gospels have been depicted, and the affect;
- Be sure to consult some of the recent scholarly writing on Jesus and Film.
  - NB. This topic should probably be limited to students in Film Studies.

5) Discuss the historical value of the Gospel of John. Focus either on a specific passage from John that you want to argue is particularly historical or unhistorical, or on a general explanation for John's different itinerary for Jesus. The successful essay will be well-researched and reflect a very close reading of the gospels in question.

### Other Advice for your essays:

- I will read as many versions of your outline and early drafts as you want. I'll read outlines at any time (even the night before the essay is due) but I will not read drafts after March 23. Sending those to me by email is best (keep in mind the version you hand in for marking must come only in hardcopy).
- The most important feature of your paper is that **you must generate a thesis statement** which you set out in the paper to prove or defend by referring to the extensive research you have done. This is a research essay, not a mini-commentary; do not simply rephrase what the passage says; it is also not a "fishing expedition" to find out what something means. Argue a point, and make that point very clear in your introduction.
- For example, a paper on Luke's Special Songs cannot simply talk about what is in them, or where they come from, or why you like them, etc. etc. The paper must make an argument about the material (i.e., "Luke inherited the songs that appear in his opening chapters, though he edited them slightly").
- Your thesis does not have to be original in the field of historical Jesus studies, but the more interesting and strong it is the better your paper will be. *Weak Thesis*: The author of the Gospel of Matthew is unknown to us (weak because it's too obvious); *Strong Thesis*: The author of the gospel of Matthew was a Jew undergoing a contest over identity with other Jews (strong because it's pointed, and will require a close analysis of the data and presentation of evidence, as well as a strong argument).
- This is a historical class that presupposes a willingness to engage the material critically and dispassionately – I am not interested in reading about what you (or others) believe, and statements of faith in this paper will seriously undermine your work as an historian (which is what you are aspiring to be in this class). Please be very clear that there are places for statements of faith and for approaching these texts in a way that is faithful to a religious tradition, but the university classroom is NOT that place.
- You are expected to consult **a lot** of material in order to draw a responsible conclusion, and one that is in dialogue with the research that has been done (this also means consulting material other than introductory encyclopedia entries, etc.). Writing research papers is about proving what you want to say, and doing research is how you get to do that, or by doing the research you find out that you cannot make the claim you were hoping to.

- You may not under any circumstances use information taken from the World Wide Web (WWW). You are required to use traditional articles, books, encyclopedias, etc. **However**, there is a difference between WWW material and electronic resources. Some encyclopedias now come on CDROM; some journals offer their articles electronically because Carleton Library subscribes to them in electronic form. You can access these on your computer from home or in the library. But just because you're seeing them on your computer, or just because you downloaded them from/through the library website, does not make them WWW sources; it makes them electronic resources. Electronic resources are fine; WWW sources are not; feel free to ask me for clarification at any time.
- **Back up what you say**; you will be penalized for making unsubstantiated statements, *especially* if they are false, and even more so if they are false *and* theologically motivated. You are not, by any means, expected to know everything – that's why we do research, so that we can learn.
- In terms of research, you are expected to consult **at least** 10 items. These items can include a **variety** of articles/essays, books and commentaries. You can also consult dictionary or encyclopedic entries to get you started and to introduce you to a topic, but these cannot form the backbone of your paper. Since commentaries only require you to read a few pages on your given passage, they count for less; be sure to include all the commentaries possible. Failure to consult adequate material will affect your mark.

### **Paper Submission**

- Essays must be **submitted in two forms**: electronic and paper.
- Electronic submission happens by email; I will reply telling you I received it. If you do not hear back from me within a few hours, it's because I did not receive your paper, and you need to be concerned about that. Try again.
- Electronic submission is strictly procedural; the electronic copy is NOT marked.
- **ONLY** the paper version of your essay is marked and returned to you with comments and grade.
- However, the paper version will not be marked until the electronic version has been received. Both are due on the due date. Therefore, if I have the paper version of your essay on the due-date (because you handed it in at class), but not your electronic version, the paper is late. Late penalties will accrue until I have both copies.
- The electronic version and the paper version must be identical.
- Please name your file: 3230Lastname (e.g., 3230Crook).

### **General Rules for Papers**

\*Papers cannot be submitted electronically.

All written assignments must come close to the page limit, 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 manipulation of any of these things in order to make a shorter paper appear longer or a longer paper appear shorter will be noticed. Efficiency of language and focus on a task are required for working within assigned page or word limitations.

The Religion Program has adopted the Chicago Manual of Style (17<sup>th</sup> Ed) for all papers in Religious

Studies. There is an on-line guide here:

[https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html](https://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html). Please use the Notes and Bibliography style, not the Author-Date style. 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 limitations may be returned unread and ungraded for resubmission; late penalties are retroactive to the due date, regardless of when I discover the problem.

**Late Penalties: Written assignments are due on the specified date.** There will be a penalty of 2% per day (including weekends) which builds 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 can be brought to me directly or they can 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. Late papers will not necessarily be marked in an expeditious manner (depending on my schedule).

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.

Always keep a copy of your paper in multiple computers if you can (emailing it to yourself is an excellent way of backing something up that is almost totally secure).

## **Final Exam** (25%)

The Final Exam will consist of 2 essays in three hours on themes, information and skills drawn from the lectures. Much more will be said about the exam as the exam period approaches.



## 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.](#)