

# Early Christianity

RELI 2220 (Fall 2020)

Religion

College of the Humanities

Tue + Thu 10:00-11:30am

Professor Z.A. Crook

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“I would rather have questions that can't be answered  
than answers that can't be questioned.”

**Richard Feynman**

In these unsettled and unsettling times, we will not meet in person for this class. But we will frequently meet “live” on-line. This is a “blended” course, which means lectures will be recorded and then posted to cuLearn for you to watch, but there will also be some live discussion-groups which will meet on-line during the scheduled class time. In addition, I will be available to you during class times to answer questions about the lecture being presents.

**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, divine inspiration, or inerrancy of the writings is never considered as a possibility 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 too were once religious texts for people, but we do not simply accept their truth claims because of that.

**My Commitments to You** (aka: if I'm not doing these, things, I'm not doing my job as a professor)

1. To represent the non-controversial, consensus 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. 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** (aka: if you're not doing these things, you're not doing your job as a student)

1. Although you may not yet be in a position to understand why I draw the conclusion I do on every matter we will encounter, you will be open to this intellectual adventure. You always retain the right to challenge me but will do so on the basis of the academic methods to which we are aspiring in this class, and not through appeals to religious authority, family or church teachings, or personal religious convictions/opinions/commitments/experiences. You are open to learning new things, even if they pose a challenge to positions you have long held.

2. You understand that your writing skills should be up to university standards. You should be able to write grammatically correct English sentences and paragraphs in structured papers. If written expression is a difficult area for you, you should do whatever is necessary to bring your writing up to university standards (such as visit a writing tutor).

## Course Learning Objectives

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

- to demonstrate their knowledge of the field of New Testament Studies, including this history of the text itself, the social and historical setting of the earliest Christ-followers;
- to approach the New Testament like scholars, showing they understand the jargon and categories that scholars work with;
- to speak in a nuanced manner about religion as a human, that is social, historical, and cultural phenomenon.

## Religion Program Learning Objectives

This course contributes towards the Program Learning Objectives for Religion. By the end of a degree in Religion, students who took this course would:

- be able to employ the methods of the academic study of religion, which stresses outsider discourse, methodological atheism, and the ability to differentiate between advocacy and the critical study of religion
- be able to examine characteristic features and experiences of religious people in a global environment
- be able to describe the integral role of religion as a category helping to shape cultures, identities, political systems, and public life
- be able to demonstrate religious literacy, which includes facility in terminology native to religions as well as to the discipline

## Course Evaluation

Chapter Quizzes – 15% + potential bonuses

Discussion Group Preparation – 5% x 3 (Oct 8, Nov 5, Dec 8) = 15%

Research Report – 30%

- Project Stages
  - Topic, What you hope to learn, and why – 5% (Due Sept 29)
  - Annotated Bibliography – 5% (Due Oct 20)
  - Detailed Outline – 5% (Due Nov 5)
  - Final Research Report – 15% (Due Nov 19)

Midterm – 15% (Nov 3)

Take Home Final Exam – 25% (Due on the last day of exam period)

## Textbooks

Bart D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings* (7<sup>th</sup> edition)

A Bible

- Any version is fine, with the exception of the King James Bible, New King James, and Good News Bible. Some Bibles, however, are more useful than others for academic study: Harper Collins Study Bible and the Oxford Study Bible are among the best.
- **Warning:** if you are looking for 2<sup>nd</sup> hand versions of Ehrman, beware that there are many editions of this book now. I am not sure how different the 7<sup>th</sup> edition is from the 6<sup>th</sup>, but the 6<sup>th</sup> is *very* different from the ones before it. Therefore, be sure to buy the 7<sup>th</sup> edition for this course.

## Weekly Modules, Readings, and Due Dates

- Recorded lectures will be posted to cuLearn by the start-time of each class (10am Tuesday and Thursday).
- If you watch the lecture during the official “class time” for the course, I will be available for discussion and questions about that day’s lecture and reading. If you are watching the lectures at a different time or watching a different lecture from the one assigned to the date below, you would need to email me your questions (or post them in the forum and wait for me to answer). So, there is something to be gained from watching the lectures during “class.”

<b>Sept 10</b>	Introduction (Ehrman Chapter 1)
Sept 15	Diaspora Judaism (Ehrman Chapter 3)
<b>Sept 17</b>	Ancient Judaism ( <u>Ehrman Chapter 4</u> )
Sept 22	The Manuscripts of the New Testament ( <u>Ehrman Chapter 2</u> )

<b>Sept 24</b>	Practice of Textual Criticism
Sept 29	Social World (Honor and Shame, Patronage) (no assigned reading)
	Research Report: Topic + What do you hope to learn?
<b>Oct 1</b>	Gospel Genre and Transmission of Material ( <u>Ehrman Chapter 5-6</u> )
Oct 6	Markan Themes, Issues, and Ending (Gospel of Mark + Ehrman Chapter 7)
<b>Oct 8</b>	Discussion Group: Synoptic Problem (see cuLearn PDF)
Oct 13	Synoptic Problem ( <u>Ehrman Chapter 8</u> )
<b>Oct 15</b>	Editing Mark (Ehrman Chapter 9)
Oct 20	Matthean Themes and Issues (Gospel of Matthew)
	Research Report: Annotated Bibliography Due
<b>Oct 22</b>	History of the Quest for the Historical Jesus ( <u>Ehrman Chapters 14-15</u> )
Oct 27	Fall Break (no new video)
<b>Oct 29</b>	
Nov 3	<b>Midterm Exam</b>
<b>Nov 5</b>	Discussion Group: Fulfillment of Scripture (see cuLearn PDF)
	Research Report: Detailed Outline Due
Nov 10	Non-Canonical Jesus (Ehrman Chapter 13)
<b>Nov 12</b>	Life of Paul ( <u>Ehrman Chapter 20</u> )
Nov 17	Ancient Letter Writers (no reading)
<b>Nov 19</b>	Research Report: Final Version Due
Nov 24	1 Corinthians (Ehrman pp. 369-79 + 1 Corinthians)
<b>Nov 26</b>	Paul and His Opponents (Ehrman pp. 383-92 + Galatians)
Dec 1	Pseudepigraphy ( <u>Ehrman Chapter 25</u> )
<b>Dec 3</b>	Apocalyptic Literature (Ehrman Chapter 30 + Revelation)
Dec 8	Discussion Group: Translation (see cuLearn PDF)

## 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 through 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.

## Chapter Quizzes (together the quizzes are worth 15% of the course mark + potential bonuses)

- cuLearn, multiple-choice, open-book quizzes on specified chapters (double-underlined above and listed in cuLearn)
- There are seven quizzes in all, but only the best **FIVE** count, 3% each = 15% total
- Quizzes will be available for three days, closing at 11pm the night before the lecture they go with
- You have three hours to complete the 15 questions once you open the quiz
  - *Bonus Opportunity 1*: if you score 11/15 or better on all 7 quizzes, 2% will be added to your final mark for the course
  - *Bonus Opportunity 2*: if you score 15/15 on all 7 quizzes, 5% will be added to your final mark for the course
- So many quizzes looks like a lot of work, but these are intended as easy and more or less free marks to encourage you (and reward you) for doing the assigned readings. Though I *know* you were planning to do the reading anyway...

## Discussion Group Preparation (5% each, 15% total)

- In cu-Learn there are PDFs of the three exercises to be done. Print them, follow the instructions, complete them before our Zoom meetings: Oct 8, Nov 5, Dec 8
- Also, you must submit your work into cuLearn before your Zoom session. I will mark it (out of 5 each) as evidence of preparation for the discussion.

## Research Report (30%; due Nov 13) (see Research Report Brief in cuLearn)

Your term paper for this course, a short research report, will be completed in stages. Writing always happens in stages, especially good writing. The goal is not only to get you to write a good paper, but also to learn the process.

- Topic, What you hope to learn – 5% Sept 29
- Annotated Bibliography – 5% (Oct 20)
- Detailed Outline – 5% (Nov 5)
- Final Version – 15% (Nov 19)

- **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.
- **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. You might also consider making use of the
- **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.

### **Midterm (15%): 10:00-10:45am, Nov 3**

- cuLearn quiz; short answer definitions
- These questions will be marked out of 5, and should take no more than 4-5 minutes each 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
- Quiz starts at 10am and closes at 10:45am. Just as if we were in class. Coming late to the exam means getting less time for it.
- I will go over examples of good and poor answers in a video lecture before the midterm happens

### **Final Exam (25%; Due December 23, 10am)**

- Take home exam
- The precise layout of the exam will be made clear to the class well before final exam period.



## University Regulations for All College of the Humanities Courses

### Academic Dates and Deadlines

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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.

### Online Learning Resources

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While online courses offer flexibility and convenience, they also present unique challenges that traditional face-to-face courses do not. [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.

### 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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The University Senate defines **plagiarism** as “*presenting, whether intentionally 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 that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts 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

[Academic Integrity Policy](#)

[Academic Integrity Process](#)

## Academic Accommodation Policy

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### Academic Accommodation

Carleton University is committed to providing access to the educational experience in order to promote academic accessibility for all individuals.

**Parental Leave:** The Student Parental Leave Policy is intended to recognize the need for leave at the time of a pregnancy, birth or adoption and to permit a pause in studies in order to provide full-time care in the first year of parenting a child or for health-related parental responsibilities.

**Religious obligation:** Carleton University accommodates students who, by reason of religious obligation, must miss an examination, test, assignment deadline, laboratory or other compulsory academic event.

### **Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:**

Academic accommodation of students with disabilities is available through the [Paul Menton Centre](#) by evaluations that are carried out on an individual basis, in accordance with human rights legislation and University policy, and with the support of relevant, professional/medical documentation.

### **Survivors of Sexual Violence**

Individuals who disclose that they have experienced sexual violence will be provided support services and will be treated with dignity and respect at all times by the University and its representatives. A person affected by sexual violence is not required to report an incident or make a complaint about sexual violence under the formal complaint process of the Sexual Violence Policy in order to obtain support and services, or in order to receive appropriate accommodation for their needs.

[Supports and services available at the University to obtain information about sexual violence and/or 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. [More information.](#)



## 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. 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, is listed below. Grade points indicated are for courses with 1.0 credit value.

## 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).

[More information](#)

## Student Rights and Responsibilities at Carleton

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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.

[7 Student Rights and Responsibilities](#)

## 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.

1. 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. 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 illness or injury for a significant period of time/or long term, 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.

[More information of deferred Term Work](#)

## 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.

The application for a deferral must:

1. be made in writing 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 [here](#).

[More information on Final Exam Deferrals](#)

## Financial vs. Academic Withdrawal

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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](#). 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. You can do this via the [MyCarleton Portal](#). A fee adjustment is dependent on registration being canceled within the published [fee deadlines](#) and dependent on your course load.

## Department Contact Information

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*Bachelor of the Humanities* 300 Paterson Hall [CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca)

*Greek and Roman Studies* 300 Paterson Hall [GreekAndRomanStudies@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:GreekAndRomanStudies@cunet.carleton.ca)

*Religion* 2A39 Paterson Hall  
[Religion@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:Religion@cunet.carleton.ca)

*Digital Humanities (Graduate)* 2A39 Paterson Hall  
[digitalhumanities@carleton.ca](mailto:digitalhumanities@carleton.ca)

*Digital Humanities (Undergraduate Minor)* 300 Paterson Hall  
[digitalhumanities@carleton.ca](mailto:digitalhumanities@carleton.ca)

*MEMS (Undergraduate Minor)* 300 Paterson Hall  
[CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca](mailto:CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca)