

Early Christianity

RELI 2220 (Fall 2021)

Religion

College of the Humanities

Mon + Wed 8:30-10:00am

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 Brightspace for you to watch, but there will also be some live discussion-groups which will meet on-line during the scheduled class time.

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 the 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 (see below)

Discussion Group Preparation – 5% x 3 (Oct 6, Nov 3, Dec 8) = 15%

Research Report – 30%

- Project Stages
 - Topic, What you hope to learn, and Why – 5% (Due Sept 27)
 - Annotated Bibliography – 5% (Due Oct 20)
 - Detailed Outline – 5% (Due Nov 3)
 - Final Research Report – 15% (Due Nov 17)

Midterm – 15% (Nov 1)

Take Home Final Exam – 25% (Due Dec 23)

Textbooks

Bart D. Ehrman, *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings* (7th 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 not because of the translation, but because of the supplementary material they offer.
- **Warning:** if you are looking for 2nd hand versions of Ehrman, beware that there are many editions of this book now. I cannot say how the 7th edition differs from the 6th, but the 6th is *very* different from the ones before it. Therefore, be sure to buy the 7th edition for this course.

Weekly Modules, Readings, and Due Dates

- Recorded lectures will be posted to Brightspace by the start-time of each class (8:30am Monday and Wednesday).

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|----------------|--|
| Sept 8 | Introduction (Ehrman Chapter 1) |
| Sept 13 | Diaspora Judaism (Ehrman Chapter 3) |
| Sept 15 | Ancient Judaism (<u>Ehrman Chapter 4</u>) |
| Sept 20 | The Manuscripts of the New Testament (<u>Ehrman Chapter 2</u>) |
| Sept 22 | Practice of Textual Criticism (no assigned reading) |
| Sept 27 | Social World (Honor and Shame, Patronage) (no assigned reading) |
| | Research Report: Topic + What do you hope to learn? |

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|----------------|--|
| Sept 29 | Gospel Genre and Transmission of Material (<u>Ehrman Chapter 5-6</u>) |
| Oct 4 | Markan Themes, Issues, and Ending (Gospel of Mark) |
| Oct 6 | Discussion Group: Synoptic Problem (see Brightspace PDF) |
| Oct 11 | University Closed (No lecture will be posted) |
| Oct 13 | Synoptic Problem (<u>Ehrman Chapter 7</u>) |
| Oct 18 | Editing Mark (Ehrman Chapter 8) |
| Oct 20 | Matthean Themes and Issues (Gospel of Matthew) |
| | Research Report: Annotated Bibliography Due |
| Oct 25 | Fall Break (no new video) |
| Oct 27 | |
| Nov 1 | Midterm Exam |
| Nov 3 | Discussion Group: Fulfillment of Scripture (see Brightspace PDF) |
| | Research Report: Detailed Outline Due |
| Nov 8 | History of the Quest for the Historical Jesus (<u>Ehrman Chapters 13-14</u>) |
| Nov 10 | Non-Canonical Jesus (Ehrman Chapter 12) |
| Nov 15 | Life of Paul (<u>Ehrman Chapter 18</u>) |
| Nov 17 | Research Report: Final Version Due |
| Nov 22 | Ancient Letter Writers (no reading) |
| Nov 24 | 1 Corinthians (Ehrman pp. 372-83 + 1 Corinthians) |
| Nov 29 | Paul and His Opponents (Ehrman pp. 387-96 + Galatians) |
| Dec 1 | Pseudepigraphy (<u>Ehrman Chapter 23</u>) |
| Dec 6 | Apocalyptic Literature (Ehrman Chapter 28 + Revelation) |
| Dec 8 | Discussion Group: Translation (see Brightspace PDF) |
| Dec 10 | Catch Up |

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)

- Brightspace, multiple-choice, open-book quizzes on specified chapters (double-underlined above and listed in Brightspace)
- 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 will 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
- **Note**: 7 quizzes might look 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.

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 6, Nov 3, Dec 8
- Also, you must submit your work into Brightspace before your Zoom session. I will assess it (out of 5 each) as evidence of preparation for the discussion.
- The class time will be split into two, with half the class meeting in each half. Check your email the night before for information on which half you are attending.

Research Report (30%; due Nov 17) (see Research Report Brief in Brightspace)

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, Why – 5% (10pm Sept 27)
- Annotated Bibliography – 5% (10pm Oct 20)
- Detailed Outline – 5% (10pm Nov 3)
- Final Version – 15% (10pm Nov 17)
- **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 Writing Services at the Carleton Student Academic Success centre (<https://carleton.ca/csas/writing-services/>).
- **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%): 8:30am—9:15am, Nov 1

- Brightspace 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 8:30am and closes at 9:15am. Just as if we were doing it in class. Coming late to the exam means getting less time for it.
- I will go over examples of good and poor answers in the Oct 20 video lecture

Final Exam (25%; Due December 23, 11pm)

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



Humanities

University Regulations for All College of the Humanities Courses

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.

Online Learning Resources

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

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

Academic Integrity Policy (updated June 2021)

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, 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;
- 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; and
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of 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 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

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

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.

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](#).

Requests for Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your [academic obligations](#) during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

Religious Accommodation

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. For more details, please review the [Student Guide to Academic Accommodation](#).

Pregnancy Accommodation

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. . For more details, please review the [Student Guide to Academic Accommodation](#).

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 where 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 the [Equity and Inclusive Communities website](#).

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. For more details, see the [Senate Policy on Accommodation for Student Activities](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC 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 your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. For more details, visit the [Paul Menton Centre website](#).

Grading System at Carleton University

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 can be found [here](#). 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.

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 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) 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.
3. If a student is concerned the instructor did not respond to the request for academic accommodation or did not provide reasonable accommodation, the student should consult with the department/school/institute chair/director. If a mutually agreeable accommodation to complete course requirements prior to the course grade submission deadline cannot be achieved, the Associate Dean will become involved. If academic accommodation is not granted, and the student receives word **after** the academic withdrawal deadline, the student may submit a petition to the Registrar's Office (undergraduate courses)/Graduate Registrar (graduate courses) for a final grade of WDN (Withdrawn) in the course(s). If academic

accommodation is not granted, and the student receives word **prior** to the academic withdrawal deadline, the student may elect to withdraw from the course(s).

4. Furthermore, if academic accommodation 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 of deferred Term Work](#)

Deferred Final Exams

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 Registrar's Office "Defer an Exam" page](#)

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.

Department Contact Information

Bachelor of the Humanities 300 Paterson Hall
CollegeOfHumanities@cunet.carleton.ca

Greek and Roman Studies 300 Paterson Hall
GreekAndRomanStudies@cunet.carleton.ca

Religion 2A39 Paterson Hall
Religion@cunet.carleton.ca

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Digital Humanities (Undergraduate Minor) 300 Paterson Hall
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MEMS (Undergraduate Minor) 300 Paterson Hall
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