

Course Syllabus

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REL3403 Fall 2017 (W)

Christianity

Instructor Contact

- Instructor: Jeanine E. Viau, Ph.D.
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***The official modes of communication for this course are external email and internal Canvas messages. The instructor will only respond to external email sent to her @ucf.edu email address (listed above) by students using their @knights.ucf.edu email addresses. Also, please do not expect an immediate response to messages and emails. Forty-eight hours is a reasonable amount of time in which to expect a response.

Course Information

- Course Name: Christianity
- Course ID & Section: REL3403-0W60
- Credit Hours: 3
- Semester/Year: Fall 2017
- Location: Online

Course Description

This course examines the development of Christianity from its emergence as a response to the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth in the first century CE to the great diversity of expressions that make up this tradition in the present. The history of Christianity is fundamentally a series of disagreements and controversies. These conflicts are evident, for example, in the profound differences among the early stories of Jesus' life as recorded in the gospels, as well as contemporary debates about LGBTQ+ inclusion across denominations and global contexts. The movements, key thinkers, and discourses that we will study in this course all represent new visions of the tradition in distinct historical and cultural settings. We will learn and employ multiple methods used in the academic study of religion to facilitate our engagement with Christian thought and practice, including textual analysis, historical studies, ethnography, and ideological critique. A mixed method approach discloses the particularity and variety of Christian beliefs, expressions, and social entanglements, revealing that there is no singular Christian tradition. Rather, there are many people and communities who have related but distinct traditions, and who all call themselves "Christian."

Course Objectives

- To identify and analyze key controversies, thinkers, movements, and teachings in the historical development of Christianity
- To learn and exercise diverse methods of research and analysis integral to the academic study of religion

- To assess the impacts of Christianity across historical and cultural contexts, as well as the affects of time and place on Christian life and thought
- To evaluate a variety of Christian perspectives and strategies as they relate to contemporary political and social challenges, including racism, global capitalism, gender equity, ecological degradation, bioethics, and sexual diversity, to name a few.

Required Texts

- Feldmeier, Peter. *The Christian Tradition: A Historical and Theological Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Weekly primary texts, articles, and/or films that are not in the textbook. These readings will be specified under Modules for each respective week and will be available electronically through Canvas.

Evaluation and Grading

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	100-94%
A-	93-90%
B+	89-86%
B	85-80%
C+	79-76%
C	75-70%
D+	69-66%
D	65-60%
F	59 and below

Assignment	Percentage of Grade
Quizzes	40%
Discussions	30%
Methods Assignments	30%

Total	100%
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Course Requirements

Readings: There are readings, films, and other materials assigned each week in this course. The assigned materials are listed in each weekly overview and on the weekly readings pages available under [Modules](#). Your success in graded discussions and on quizzes will depend on your demonstrating clear understanding and critical engagement with these materials.

Discussions: You are required to participate in a graded discussion in the first week of each module. Your initial posts will respond to a structured prompt. Be sure to answer these prompts in their entirety using direct references to the assigned readings, films, etc. Your initial posts are due by Wednesday at 11:59pm. You are also required to respond to at least two classmates in each discussion before Sunday at 11:59pm. Discussions will be graded based on three criteria: 1) the quality of your initial post, 2) the quality of your responses to classmates, and 3) whether or not you meet the participation requirements. Please review the Discussion Guidelines available under [Course Expectations](#) for more information. Please note that for all written work in this course, you should use either Chicago Manual or Turabian style guidelines for source citations and bibliographies. I will drop the lowest discussion grade.

Quizzes: Quizzes are assigned at the close of each two-week module, including a Syllabus Quiz assigned at the close of the first week. Quizzes are administered through Canvas. Generally quizzes will be 25-30 questions and will combine multiple-choice, matching, and true/false formats. These are open-book assessments. However, you will only have 45 minutes to complete the quiz once you begin the assessment. Each quiz will be available for 24 hours, 12am-11:59pm on the last Friday of each module.

*****IMPORTANT** - As of Fall 2014, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each course. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the Syllabus Quiz no later than Friday, August 25th at 11:59PM. **Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.**

Methods Assignments: There are three assignments in this course corresponding to distinct methods used in the academic study of religion. The first assignment is a worksheet that takes you through some of the initial stages of textual analysis and various resources that scholars employ to interpret texts written in ancient languages. The second assignment is an encyclopedia entry requiring close study of one specific event, movement, thinker, or concept. For the third assignment, you have the choice of completing an ethnographic site visit and write-up, or an essay addressing different Christian responses to a contemporary social or political issue. Specific instructions and requirements for these assignments are available in the respective assignment descriptions in Webcourses. All writing assessment in this course will follow the rubric included below. Please note that for all written work in this course, you should use either Chicago Manual or Turabian style guidelines for source citations and bibliographies. All written work must include a complete bibliography of works cited and consulted. Most of the sources that you use in this course should be peer-reviewed, academic sources.

*****What is 'peer-reviewed'?** A good indicator of academic rigor is that a source is designated "peer-reviewed." This means that the source has been reviewed and approved for publication by other scholars in the field. Academic sources include academic journal articles, books (also, book chapters or essays from collected volumes), and/or peer-reviewed reference texts. Do not rely on online resources! For example, Wikipedia may be a starting point for research, but it is not an acceptable source.

Writing Assessment. The quality of your writing for this course will be evaluated across three criteria categories as indicated in the assessment rubric below and four evaluative classifications. The four evaluative classifications include Unsatisfactory, Satisfactory, Good, and Exceptional. See the second chart below to understand how these categories correspond to particular grades for assignments.

Criteria	U	S	G	E

<p>I. Form</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Language, grammar, and style · Structure and organization · Quality of editing and transitions · Readability or accessibility, clarity, and cohesion 					
<p>II. Content</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Adequate reference to sources and experts · Accuracy · Contextualization and citation style · Efficacy in supporting the project’s arguments and/or objectives 					
<p>III. Objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Satisfies the requirements of the assignment · Execution · Level of daring, creativity, innovation, and/or originality · Contribution to the larger issues and questions that the project addresses 					

Category	Description	Grade Assignment
	· Does not meet assignment	

Unsatisfactory	<p>requirements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Significant grammar and style problems · Inadequate, ineffective and/or inaccurate use of sources · Unsound structure and organization 	D+ and below
Satisfactory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Meets most or all assignment requirements · May have some grammar and style problems · Somewhat adequate, effective and accurate use of sources · May have some problems with structure and organization 	C+, C
Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Meets all assignment requirements · Zero to minor grammar and style errors · Demonstrates adequate, effective, and accurate use of sources · Employs sound structure and organization of ideas and arguments 	B+, B
Exceptional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Satisfies all criteria for a Good evaluation and also shows exceptional creativity, innovation, or insight 	A, A-

Emergencies/Missed Assignments

Emergencies. Make sure that any health or personal emergencies are properly documented, and please contact me **as soon as possible** if difficulties arise during the semester.

Late Work. Ten percent will be deducted for each day an assignment is late. Please pay close attention to the deadlines listed for each assignment in the Course Schedule and Module Instructions. **Please be aware that a broken or malfunctioning computer, or the inability to retrieve, produce, or submit assignments from a computer will not be accepted as a valid excuse for late work.**

*****IMPORTANT** - As of Fall 2014, all faculty members are required to document students' academic activity at the beginning of each semester. In order to document that you began this course, please complete the Syllabus Quiz no later than Friday of the first week of classes at 11:59PM. **Failure to do so will result in a delay in the disbursement of your financial aid.**

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and cheating of any kind on an examination, quiz, or assignment will result at least in an "F" for that assignment (and may, depending on the severity of the case, lead to an "F" for the entire course) and may be subject to appropriate referral to the [Office of Student Conduct \(http://osc.sdes.ucf.edu/faq#students\)](http://osc.sdes.ucf.edu/faq#students) for further action. See the [UCF Golden Rule \(http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/\)](http://goldenrule.sdes.ucf.edu/) for further information. I will assume for this course that you will adhere to the academic creed of this University and will maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. In other words, don't cheat by giving answers to others or taking them from anyone else. I will also adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity, so please do not ask me to change (or expect me to change) your grade illegitimately or to bend or break rules for one person that will not apply to everyone.

In this course we will utilize turnitin.com, an automated system which instructors can use to quickly and easily compare each student's assignment with billions of web sites, as well as an enormous database of student papers that grows with each submission. Accordingly, you will be expected to submit all assignments in electronic format. After the assignment is processed, as an instructor I receive a report from turnitin.com that states if and how another author's work was used in the assignment. For a more detailed look at this process, visit www.turnitin.com.

Accommodations

It is my goal that this class be an accessible and welcoming experience for all students, including those with disabilities that may impact learning in this class. If anyone believes the design of this course poses barriers to effectively participating and/or demonstrating learning in this course, please meet with me (with or without a Student Accessibility Services (SAS) accommodation letter) to discuss reasonable options or adjustments. During our discussion, I may suggest the possibility/necessity of your contacting SAS (Ferrell Commons 185; 407-823-2371; sas@ucf.edu) to talk about academic accommodations. You are welcome to talk to me at any point in the semester about course design concerns, but it is always best if we can talk at least one week prior to the need for any modifications.

R-E-S-P-E-C-T

In order to learn, we must be open to the views of people different from ourselves. Each and every voice in the classroom is important and brings with it a wealth of experiences, values and beliefs. In this time we share together over the semester, please honor the uniqueness of your fellow classmates, and appreciate the opportunity we have to learn from each other. Please respect your fellow students' opinions and refrain from personal attacks or demeaning comments of any kind.

The University of Central Florida recognizes that our individual differences can deepen our understanding of one another and the world around us, rather than divide us. In this class, people of all ethnicities, genders and gender identities, religions, ages, sexual orientations, disabilities, socioeconomic backgrounds, regions, and nationalities are strongly encouraged to share their rich array of perspectives and experiences. If you feel your differences may in some way isolate you from UCF's community or if you have need of any specific accommodations, please speak with the instructor early in the semester about your concerns and what we can do together to help you become an active and engaged member of our class and community.

Tech Concerns

The instructor cannot provide technical support. If students are experiencing problems with myUCF or Canvas, they will need to contact the appropriate department. The Computer Services & Telecommunications Service Desk can be reached at (407) 823-5117,

telecom@ucf.edu, and OTC 550 (Main Campus).

Even though computers and word processing software are marvelous time and energy-saving tools, they can and do cause problems from time to time. **Please be aware that a broken or malfunctioning computer, or the inability to retrieve, produce, or submit assignments from a computer will not be accepted as a valid excuse for late work.** It is advised that students make sure their work is saved appropriately, and in more than one location (such as a USB flash drive, external hard drive, CD/DVD, online storage, or even emailing a copy to oneself).

Copyright

This course may contain copyright protected materials such as audio or video clips, images, text materials, etc. These items are being used with regard to the Fair Use doctrine in order to enhance the learning environment. Please do not copy, duplicate, download or distribute these items. The use of these materials is strictly reserved for this online classroom environment and your use only. All copyright materials are credited to the copyright holder.

Third-Party Software and FERPA

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these could be required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identity-sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

Course Summary:

Date	Details	
Fri Aug 25, 2017	 Syllabus Quiz (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320394)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Aug 30, 2017	 Discussion 1 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320399)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Sep 8, 2017	 Quiz 1 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320393)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Sep 13, 2017	 Discussion 2 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320401)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Sep 20, 2017	 Lost in Translation (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320510)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Sep 22, 2017	 Quiz 2 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320392)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Sep 27, 2017	 Discussion 3 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320402)	due by 11:59pm

Fri Oct 6, 2017	 Quiz 3 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320396)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Oct 11, 2017	 Discussion 4 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320403)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Oct 18, 2017	 Encyclopedia Article (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320519)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Oct 20, 2017	 Quiz 4 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320390)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Oct 25, 2017	 Discussion 5 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320404)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Nov 3, 2017	 Quiz 5 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320395)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Nov 8, 2017	 Discussion 6 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320405)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Nov 17, 2017	 Quiz 6 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320397)	due by 11:59pm
Wed Nov 29, 2017	 Christianity in Context (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320525)	due by 11:59pm
	 Discussion 7 (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320406)	due by 11:59pm
Fri Dec 1, 2017	 Quiz 7: Course Assessment Survey (https://webcourses.ucf.edu/courses/1265786/assignments/5320391)	due by 11:59pm
