



**East China Normal University
International Summer Session
REL 12: Introduction to Christianity**

Term: July 5th -August 8th, 2018

Time: 13:35- 15:25

Instructor: Thomas Michael

Home Institution: Beijing Normal University

Office hours: TBD

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Teaching Assistant: TBD

Course Overview

Christianity is the largest religion in the world, and it's impact is felt in every country, including China. Since more than 85% of Americans identify themselves as Christian, everybody who spends time in America (including foreign students!) will encounter this religion. Besides, there are Christians in virtually every country throughout the entire world, including China!

Christianity is a large and complex tradition of religion that is based on the figure of Jesus Christ who promises eternal life in Heaven if you live your life in a certain way. In this class, we will study the rise of Christianity from its roots in the more ancient religion of Judaism, spend time reading the two most important gospels of the Bible that present the life of Jesus, and analyze how he came to be believed in as both God and human. We will study some of the major events that defined Christianity, and also look at some important figures including emperors, mystics, singers, and missionaries. We will also study the one great separation in Christianity between Catholics who believe in the Pope and Protestants who do not. We will also study the rituals, holidays, and cultural attitudes of Christians in the modern world.

Course Goals:

A student who satisfactorily completes this course should:

1. Summarize a brief history of Christianity
2. Summarize the relation between the Old Testament and New Testament
3. Summarize the basic Christian beliefs and doctrines
3. Summarize Christian rituals and sacraments
4. Summarize famous figures from Christian history
5. Demonstrate mastery of class readings and lectures at 75%



Required readings and are taken from the following sources:

1. *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, ed.'s Bruce Metzger, Roland Murphy, 1994.
2. All other readings are taken from scholarly editions available from various web-sites; on-line references will be provided before the start of class upon request.

Course Hours

The course has 25 class sessions in total. Each class session is 110 minutes in length, for a total of 2750 minutes of in-class time. The course meets from Monday to Friday from July 3 to August 4. ECNU awards 4 credits for this course. Different universities may count course credits differently. Consult officials at your own home institution.

Attendance

Summer school is very intense and to be successful, students need to attend every class. Occasionally, due to illness or other unavoidable circumstance, a student may need to miss a class. ECNU policy requires a medical certificate to be excused. Any absence may impact on the student's grade. Moreover, **ECNU policy is that a student who has more than 3 absences will fail the course. Arriving late or leaving early will count as a partial absence.**

Grading Policy

ECNU awards grades of A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D, and F. Most colleges and universities do not award transfer credit for grades of D or F.

In this course, grading will be based on the following:

- 40% Midterm exam
- 50% Final exam
- 10% Classroom engagement (attendance, attention, participation in discussions)

General expectations:

Students are expected to:

- *Attend all classes and be responsible for all material covered in class and otherwise assigned. Any unexcused absence may impact a student's grade. Moreover, ECNU policy is that a student who has more than 3 absences will fail the course. Arriving late or leaving early will count as a partial absence.*
- *Complete the day's required reading and assignments before class.*
- *Review the previous day's notes before class; make notes about questions you have about the previous class or the day's reading.*
- *Participate in class discussions and complete required written work on time.*
- *Refrain from texting, phoning or engaging in computer activities unrelated to class during class. Students who do not do this will be asked to leave the class.*
- *While class participation is welcome, even required, you are expected to refrain from*



private conversations during the class period.

Course Schedule

The planned schedule sketched out below may be modified to suit the interests or abilities of the enrolled students or to take advantage of special opportunities or events that may arise during the term.

WEEK ONE:

Thurs: Introductions:	
Fri: Creation and the Garden of Eden	Book of Genesis
Mon: Abraham and the Covenant	Book of Genesis
Tues: Moses and the Ten Commandments	Book of Exodus
Wed: Job and the Question of Suffering	Book of Job

WEEK TWO:

Thurs: Jesus as Man	Gospel of Matthew
Fri: Jesus as God	Gospel of John
Mon: St. Paul and Salvation	The Epistles of Paul
Tues: Constantine and Toleration	Edict of Milan
Wed: Jesus as God and Man	The Nicean Creed

WEEK THREE:

Thurs: Mid-term Review	
Fri: Mid-term Assigned	Due Monday, July 23
Mon: St. Francis and the Franciscans	Canticle of the Sun
Tues: Hildegard of Bingen	Canticles of Ecstasy
Wed: Matteo Ricci and China	The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven

WEEK FOUR:

Thurs: Angels and Demons	
Fri: The Seven Catholic Sacraments	The Council of Trent
Mon: Martin Luther and the Protestants	The 95 Theses
Tues: Protestant Sects Today	
Wed: Catholicism and the Pope, part 1	Vatican I

WEEK FIVE:

Thurs: Catholicism and the Pope, part 2	Vatican II
Fri: Christianity in China Today	
Mon: The Future of Christianity	



Tues: Final Review
Wed: Final Assigned

Due Friday, August 10

Academic Honesty

Students are expected to maintain high standards of academic honesty. Specifically, unless otherwise directed by the professor, students may not consult other students, books, notes, electronic devices or any other source, on examinations. Failure to abide by this may result in a zero on the examination, or even failure in the course.

Students are also expected to adhere to appropriate scholarly conventions in essays and research papers. This class includes paper assignment(s) in which students must give credit to all outside sources used by means of citations and a bibliography. Failure to do so may result in a zero on the paper assignment, or even failure in the course.

Also note that everything you will need to do great on the mid-term and final comes exclusively from our class readings and lectures, therefore avoid the Internet at all costs—I can easily see, and the consequences will be harsh.