**Dr. Adam Wells**

**Wiley 004**

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**Office hours: 10-11 and 12-1 M,W,F**

**Religion 132: New Testament Survey**

This course is an introduction to the origins and earliest history of Christianity, and attends closely to the literature of the New Testament. The main objectives are to comprehend the historical circumstances and causes of the emergence of Christianity, to trace its major early developments, to describe the beliefs and practices of various early Christian groups, and to understand the most important themes in early Christian literature (mainly the literature of the New Testament). The approach is largely historical and analytic, though we will often consider contemporary theological, philosophical and ethical issues. The course will meet three times per week (M, W, F 9-9:50)

**COURSE GOALS:**

Upon successful completion of this course,

1. The student will be familiar with the historical context, literary characteristics and major themes of the New Testament.
2. The student will have an appreciation for the diversity of texts in the New Testament.
3. The student will be able to employ critical thinking skills in evaluating various approaches to biblical interpretation.
4. The student will be able to relate the texts of the New Testament to his/her own tradition (whether that tradition be religious, secular, or otherwise).

**TEXTS** (required, available at the bookstore)

1. *HarperCollins Study Bible*
2. Ehrman, Bart. *A Brief Introduction to the New Testament*, 4th Edition. Oxford and New York: Oxford Uniuversity Press, 2017.

**SCHEDULE OF LECTURE TOPICS AND READING ASSIGNMENTS** \*

\*Readings listed in **bold** should be read beforethe lecture.

**INTRODUCTION**

Jan. 10: Why are we here?

Jan. 12: What is the New Testament? **Ehrman, Ch. 1**

**I. JEWISH AND GRECO-ROMAN CONTEXTS OF THE NT.**

Jan. 15: MLK Day. No Class

Jan. 17: The Greco-Roman Context of the NT. **Ehrman, Ch. 2**

Jan. 19: The Jewish Context of the NT. **Ehrman, pp. 28-38 (QUIZ 1)**

Jan. 22: Jewish Context Continued. **Ehrman, pp. 38-45**

Jan. 24**:** Jesus in the Greco-Roman World. **Ehrman, Ch. 4 (QUIZ 2)**

Jan. 26 : **Exam I**

**II. THE GOSPELS**

Jan 29: What is a Gospel? How do the four canonical gospels relate? **Moodle**: **Van Voorst, pp. 112 – 127**

Jan. 31: The Gospel of Mark (**read the entire Gospel in one sitting**)**.**

Feb. 2: The Gospel of Mark. **Ehrman, Ch. 5**

Feb. 5: The Gospel of Mark Continued (**MARK WORKSHEET DUE**)

Feb. 7: The Gospel of Matthew (**Read Chs. 1-7, 10-11:1, 13-14, 16, 18-19:1, 23-25, 28)**

Feb. 9: The Gospel of Matthew. **Ehrman, Ch. 6**

Feb. 12: The Gospel of Matthew Continued **(QUIZ 3)**

Feb. 14: The Gospel of Luke (**Read Chs. 1-4, 6-8, 9-19, 24)**.

Feb. 16**:** The Gospel of Luke. **Ehrman, Ch. 7**

Feb. 19: The Gospel of Luke Continued **(QUIZ 4)**

Feb. 21: The Gospel of John **(read entire Gospel)**

Feb. 23:The Gospel of John (**Ehrman, Ch. 8)**

Feb. 26: The Gospel of John Continued **(JOHN WORKSHEET DUE)**

Feb. 28: Review/ Catch up

Mar. 2: **Exam II**

**Mar. 4 (Sun) : 7:30 Lyceum—Susan Hylen: Women in the NT**

**Mar. 5: No regular class, 7:30 Lyceum—Susan Hylen: Women in the NT**

Mar. 7: The Historical Jesus. **Ehrman 131-148**

Mar. 9: The Historical Jesus Continued. **Ehrman 148-157 (QUIZ 5)**

Mar. 10-17: SPRING BREAK!!

**III. PAUL AND THE PAULINE TRADITION**

Mar. 19: Acts. **Ehrman, pp. 168-179 +Acts Chs. 1-2, 6-10**.

Mar. 21: Acts. **Ehrman, pp. 179-190+ Acts Ch. 15.**

Mar. 23: Who is Paul? **Ehrman, pp. 190-204**

Mar. 26: I Thessalonians**. Read entire letter + Ehrman, Ch. 13 (QUIZ 6)**

Mar. 28: I Corinthians. **Read Chs 1-7, 11-15**+ **Ehrman, pp. 220-231**

Mar. 30: Good Friday. No Class.

Apr. 2: II Corinthians. **Read Chs 1-7, 10-13 +** **Ehrman, pp. 231-236**

Apr. 4: Galatians**. Read entire letter + Ehrman, pp. 237-245**

Apr. 6:Philippians and Philemon. **Read both letters + Ehrman, pp. 245-253**

Apr. 9: Romans. **Read Chs 1-8+** **Ehrman, Ch 16. (QUIZ 7)**

Apr. 11: **Exam III**

Apr. 13: Deutero-Pauline and Pastoral Epistles**. Read II Thessalonians+ Ehrman, Ch. 17**

Apr. 16: Women in the Church. **Ehrman, Ch. 18**

Apr. 18: Catholic Epistles. **Read James+** **Ehrman, Ch. 20 (QUIZ 8)**

Apr. 20: Ampersand Day. No class.

Apr. 23: Apocalypse. **Read Revelation Chs. 1, 6-8:5, 13-14, 21-22 + Ehrman, Ch. 21 (QUIZ 9)**

Apr. 24: Catch up/ review day.

**TBA: FINAL EXAM**

**Note:** University policy stipulates that final examinations are given **only** during the scheduled examination period. Please review your exam schedule before you make end-of-the-semester plans.

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

1) **Regular attendance** at and informed participation in class meetings (8-8:50 MWF). Every student should try to speak-up regularly!

2) **Quizzes and Short Writing Assignments (15%)**  Throughout the semester I will give a number of quizzes and writing assignments designed to assess your comprehension of the course readings**.** Your lowest quiz grade will be dropped.

3) **Exams (60%)** (in class Jan. 26, Mar. 2, and Apr. 11) Each exam will cover the lectures and reading assignments that precede it..

4) **Final Exam (25%)** (exam schedule TBA). The final exam will be cumulative and comprehensive. To do well you will need to have a thorough grasp of all the material that we have covered during the semester.

**GENERAL GRADING RUBRIC:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **Lower Numerical Cutoff** | **Description** |
| A | 94 | Exceptional work that shows creativity and careful analysis of material. A-level work is sophisticated, well-written, and free from errors in grammar and spelling. |
| A- | 90 | Shows exceptional mastery of concepts, and goes well beyond requirements. |
| B+ | 87 | Work in the B-range is above average. B level work may be excellent work with several small errors or flaws. It is solid work, and shows significant command of concepts. |
| B | 84 |  |
| B- | 80 |  |
| C+ | 77 | Work in the C-range is average and satisfactory. It fulfills the criteria of the assignment, but does not display the same level of analysis, comprehension, and/or creativity as B and A-level work |
| C | 74 |  |
| C- | 70 |  |
| D | 60 | Work in the D-range is substandard. It may have major flaws, or show little mastery of major or minor concepts.  |
| F | 0 | Work in the F-range shows no mastery of relevant material. F-level work fails to complete requirements or is otherwise unacceptable. |

\*\*Letter grades are equivalent to a numerical score 1 point above the lower numerical cutoff. For example, an A paper is equivalent to a numerical score of 95

**ATTENDANCE POLICY**: During your college years, by responsible class attendance you can establish a reputation for reliability that will help your professors to write good reference letters for jobs or programs of graduate study. I value faithful attendance highly, as an indication of your commitment to the course goals.

You are allowed 4 absences. Additional absences (for any reason) will reduce your course average by 1 point per absence.

More than 8 absences will result in an automatic F.

**Note: I do not give make-up quizzes. I only give make-up exams under exceptional circumstances—e.g., hospitalization, documented death in the family.**

**PARTICIPATION POLICY:** Informed participation is expected. You should bring your course packet with you to every class! You should be physically and mentally present and engaged in every class! Your learning process will be helped immensely by participating actively in the course, so don’t be afraid to ask questions, or engage your peers (and me) in discussion. Follow the Apostle Paul’s advice: Be bold.

Non-participation (e.g., sleeping, eating your lunch, staring off in the distance for extended periods of time, disruptive behavior and so forth) will negatively impact your course grade.

**COMPUTER AND CELL PHONE POLICY:** A successful class requires the active participation of everyone involved. Cell phones are distracting and disruptive; they are detrimental to both individual learners and the class as a whole. Consequently, the use of cell phones in class is strictly forbidden. Turn them off or set them to “Do Not Disturb” before class begins—off, not vibrate! If I see your cell phone during an exam or quiz, you will automatically receive a ZERO on that exam or quiz.

The use of laptops in class is prohibited unless you receive an accommodation from the Powell Resource Center.

**EMAIL POLICY:** I would much rather meet with you in person than correspond via email. However, I will make every effort to be available to you by email. I will answer student emails during the workday. If you do not receive a response from me within two working days (note: that does not include weekends), feel free to send me a reminder. I often get 30-50 emails per day. It is easy to overlook one! Keep in mind that I do not have time to answer complex questions by email. If your question requires an answer of more than a few sentences, you should come by my office.

**POLICY ON ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:**

The Emory & Henry College Honor Pledge is as follows:

 I understand that Emory & Henry is a community built on trust. Therefore, as a member of this community, I am committed to tell the truth and to maintain the sanctity of other people’s property, including computer data/access. I will abstain from all fraud in academic work. I will neither give nor receive aid on any form of test or assigned work where such aid is prohibited, nor tolerate this conduct in any member of the Emory & Henry Community. I will deal responsibly with such acts when I observe them. By my conduct and influence, I will endeavor to build a high standard of honesty and truthfulness in all academic work.

Any evidence of academic dishonesty may result in a grade of F for the assignment or failure of the course. Academic dishonesty includes such acts as receiving improper assistance on tests and quizzes. For writing assignments, academic dishonesty includes plagiarism, which is work copied or paraphrased from another source without proper citation, copied from your own work for other classes, or written or revised by someone else. If you refer to another source, you need to give credit directly to that source when you quote directly and when you paraphrase. Any incidents of academic dishonesty will be reported and dealt with in adherence to the College’s Honor System procedures.

**How to Get the Most Out of This Course**

As with any course, what you invest will determine your return, not simply in the grade you earn but in the knowledge and perspectives you take with you. Things to do, more or less in order of importance, are:

1. **Keep up with the assignments**. There is a good deal of reading in this course, and more than in the ordinary 100-level course. Stay current with the reading assignments. If you fall behind you will have a hard time catching up.

2. **Prepare conscientiously for class discussions**. Read closely the texts assigned, ponder the questions provided, make notes, and be ready to participate in discussion in a thoughtful and well-informed manner.

3. **Take advantage of the office hours of the instructor**. My office hours are for your benefit. They provide opportunities for you not only to ask questions and obtain clarifications, but also to get to know me and to let me get to know you.

4. **Familiarize yourself with the specialized vocabulary of the academic study of religion**. There are many technical terms and fifty-cent words: learn what they mean and how to pronounce and spell them. To this end, you should freely and frequently consult the glossary provided at the back of the textbook.

5. **Make use of resources beyond those required for reading or purchase**. There are many, many commentaries, dictionaries, concordances, etc. Don’t be afraid to consult outside sources!