

THEO1000 Approaches to Christian Studies

基督教基本研究方法 (2023-2024, term1)

Course Outline

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Tuesday, 2:30 p.m.-5:15 p.m.

1. Course Overview:

Christianity is a religion with more than two-thousand-year history, and throughout this period various approaches are used to understand and to practice this long-standing religion. The purpose of this course is to introduce some basic methods to study such multi-perspective religion so that students can comprehend and critically evaluate the main features and the core values of Christianity.

2. Learning outcome:

After the course, students are expected to be equipped with

- i) a basic understanding of the history and development of the religion.
- ii) a critical understanding of the theology and content of the Christian faith.
- iii) a critical reflection on how Christianity could be manifested and understood from different cultural and social perspectives.

3. List of Topics:

Topic	Content
Bible as an ancient text, its study method, and some key texts that form the foundation of Christianity	A brief introduction to the nature of the bible, especially the New Testament, and how to study it as a contemporary and critical reader.
History of Christianity	A brief introduction to the history and development of Christianity from a Jewish sect to a world religion.
Christian theological thought	Key Christian theological thoughts will be introduced.
The Cultural and Social Influence of Christianity	Understand the influence of the religion through some cultural and social phenomena.

4. Assessment Scheme

i) Assessment Parts

Assessment (% Share)	Main Criteria	Deadline
1. Attendance (10%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full attendance: 10% • One mark deducted for missing one lesson, two marks for two lessons, etc. • One mark deducted if being late or leaving earlier for more than 30 minutes in each lesson. 	/
2. Group Presentation or Group Response and Class Discussion of Assigned Readings (20%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The assigned reading of each lesson is about the content of the last lecture. • All students must read the assigned reading before the class starts. • Students are divided into groups with each group of 4-5 students, and they are either responsible for delivering a short presentation of the assigned reading (no more than 15 minutes) or giving response to the presentation. • The presentation should have two components: a summary of the reading and two or three questions for class discussion. • All students should participate in the discussion after the two groups finish their parts. 	
3. Group Presentation of a Topic (30%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each group presents a self-designed topic related to <u>any one of the perspectives</u> come across in this course. (no more than 15 minutes with maximum ten-page ppt) • Students are encouraged to consult Dr. Ho's opinion. 	
4. Individual Paper on the Presentation Topic/Other Topics. (40%)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students either extend their studies in the group topical presentation or choose another topic. Both should be related to any one of the perspectives learned in the course. • The paper should contain at least <u>two references</u> listed below. 	<u>Proposal:</u> <u>28/11</u> (tentative) <u>Paper:</u> <u>12/12</u> (tentative)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Each student should write a proposal in an A4 paper in one page and in point form and meet Dr. Ho for consultation. The proposal and the comment of it are not counted in the final mark, but they would affect the grading of individual paper. • The meeting arrangement will be announced in the first lesson. • Each paper should contain <u>no more than</u> 3,000 words in English or 4,000 words in Chinese. 	
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ii) Assessment policy: All works must be submitted through the Blackboard. Mark will be deducted unless approval is granted before the deadline. One mark for each day for the first five days (1,2,3,4,5). Two Marks will be deducted (7,9,11,13,15) after the fifth day till the tenth day. Deferred work will be accepted only with the teacher's approval.

iii) About AI Tools

Using AI tools to produce content of your work is prohibited. AI software is only allowed for polishing your work or increasing your working efficiency, e.g. grammar checking and literature reviewing.

iv) Topical Presentation and Individual Paper

a) Biblical Perspective:

Choose a text in the Scripture and interpret it in light of the relevant context. (The method of interpretation will be introduced in the lecture)

b) Historical Perspective:

Choose an important historical event (e.g. Constantine's turn to Christianity or World War II), and do a detailed investigation and reflection on its impact on the development of Christianity.

c) Doctrinal Perspective

Explain and reflect on a Christian theologian's view on a Christian doctrine (e.g. Augustine's thought of original sin)

d) Cultural and Social Perspective:

Choose a Christian organization (NGO or Social Enterprise) or a social or cultural

phenomenon, do a detailed investigation on it, and reflect on it with respect to relevant Christian values and beliefs.

*Free topic to be approved by Dr. Ho. Please consult Dr. Ho. before starting your work.

5. Learning Schedule

Date	Main Lecture Topic (2 hours)	Group Discussion (2:30-3:30p.m.)	Remarks
5/9	Course Introduction and Basic Concepts of Faith, Religion, and Religious Studies	/	
12/9	Basic Features of Christianity	/	
19/9	Scripture—An Overview	/	Groups and the Assigning of Readings Finalize
26/9	Introduction to New Testament (Guest Speaker)	Essay 1	
3/10	Church History 1	Essay 2	
10/10	Church History 2	Essay 3	
17/10	Doctrinal Approach 1	Essay 4	
24/10	Doctrinal Approach 2	Essay 5	
31/10	Doctrinal Approach 3	Essay 6	<u>Deadline of Consultation of Group Topical Presentation</u>
7/11	Cultural and Social Approach 1	Essay 7 or 2 Group Topical Presentations	
14/11	Cultural and Social Approach 2	2 Group Topical Presentations	
21/11	Group Topical Presentation	4-6 Group Topical Presentations	
28/11	Group Topical Presentation and Summary of the Course	3 Group Topical Presentations	<u>Deadline of Proposal of Individual Paper</u>

6. Rubric of Assessments

i) Group Presentation of and Respond to Essays (20%)

	Excellent (17-20%)	Good (13-16%)	Fair (9-12%)	Fail (0-8%)
Criteria: 1. Understanding of the key ideas	Fully	Fully	Fairly	Not
2. Critical thought	Well demonstrated	Critical thought shown but not enough	Barely shown a critical thought	No critical thought shown

ii) Group Topical Presentation (30%)

Topic: Clearly defined and Interesting	5%
Argument support: Coherence, substantial, relevant to the question	20%
Presentation: Clarity, Creativity and Corporation	5%

iii) Individual Paper (40%)

	Excellent (36-40%)	Good (27-35%)	Fair (21-26%)	Fail (below 20)
Criteria: 1. Content: Provide relevant points and information to support the argument (50%)	Strong arguments are well presented.	Relevant arguments are well provided. May have weaknesses in some points.	Some arguments provided but not substantial enough.	Only weak and incomplete argument provided.
2. Logically sound of argument and critical thought reflected (25%)	Well and clearly argued. Critical thought demonstrated.	Well and clearly argued.	Overall a logical presentation provided but no critical thought shown.	Cannot provide a logical argument throughout the paper.
3. Coherence: the question is clear and the flow of the paper is addressing the question (25%)	Tightly connected and argued throughout the paper.	Coherently argued overall with some parts may not be totally. connected with the flow.	Either the question is not clear enough or the structure of the answer is not totally connected.	Simply incoherent because of unclear question or bad structure of answer.

7. Major References to the Course:

i) Biblical Perspective

Cox, Harvey. *How to Read the Bible*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2015. (哈維·考克斯。《新世代來了，我們該如何讀聖經？》。香港：基督教文藝，2017。)

Theissen, Gerd. *Fortress Introduction to the New Testament*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2003. (戴歌德。《新約導論》。孫秀貞和曾景恆譯。香港：道聲出版社，2012。)

ii) Historical Perspective

González, Justo L. *Church History: An Essential Guide*. Abingdon essential guides. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996. (岡薩雷。《教會歷史要點指南》。新北市：聖經資源中心，2011)

白德培。《分久必合，合久必分：從耶穌時代到改革前夕的西方基督教批判史》。香港：明風。2016年。

iii) Doctrinal Perspective

McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. Sixth Edition. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell, 2016. (麥葛福。《基督教神學手冊》。劉良淑、王瑞琦譯。台北：校園，1998。)

Olson, Roger E. *The Mosaic of Christian Belief: Twenty Centuries of Unity and Diversity*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2002. (奧爾森。《統一與多元的基督教信仰》。李金好譯。香港：基道，2006。)

iv) Social and Cultural Perspective

Schmidt, Alvin J. *Under the Influence: How Christianity Transformed Civilization*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001. (施密特。《基督教對文明的影響》。台北：雅歌，2006。)

Stark, Rodney. *The Victory of Reason: How Christianity Led to Freedom, Capitalism, and Western Success*. New York: Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2006. (羅德尼·斯塔克。《理性的勝利：自由、科學、資本主義，以及進步的理性神學》。蔡至哲譯。新北市：八旗文化，2021。)

8. Recommended Books

Collins, John J. *Introduction to the Hebrew Bible*. Third edition. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2018. (約翰·柯林斯。《希伯來聖經導論》。伍美詩譯。香港：道聲出版社，2013。)

Cox, Harvey. *When Jesus Came to Harvard: Making Moral Choices Today*. 1st Mariner books ed. Boston: Mariner Books, 2006. (哈維·考克斯。《耶穌在哈佛的26堂課：現代人的道德啟示錄》。林師祺譯。台北：啟示出版社，2006。)

Gillespie, Michael Allen. *The Theological Origins of Modernity*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. (米歇爾·艾倫·吉萊斯板：《現代性的神學起源》。張卜天譯。長沙：湖南科學技術出版社，2008。)

Gunton, Colin E., ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. (根頓等。《劍橋基督教教義手冊》。根頓編。石彩燕譯。香港：天道，2006。)

Holland, Tom. *Dominion: How the Christian Revolution Remade the World*. New York: Basic Books, 2019. (湯姆·霍蘭。《宗教統治：基督宗教如何塑造世界，一部橫跨兩千五百年的人類史》。蔡台佳、陳正熙和陳愷析譯。台北：啟示出版社，2022。)

Kelly, John N. D. *Early Christian Doctrines*. Revised Edition. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 1990. (凱利。《早期基督教教義》。二版。康來昌譯。台北：中華福音神學院，1988。)

Lewis, C. S. *Mere Christianity*. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001. (魯益士。《返璞歸真》。余也魯譯。香港：海天書樓，1995。)

McGrath, Alister E. *Mere Theology: Christian Faith and the Discipleship of the Mind*. London: SPCK, 2010. (麥格夫。《純粹神學》。郭淑儀譯。香港：天道書樓有限公司，2012。)

Riches, John Kenneth. *The Bible: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000. (里奇斯。《聖經》。梁工譯(香港：牛津大學出版社，2000。)

Theissen, Gerd. *The Bible and Contemporary Culture*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press,

2007. (戴歌德。《聖經，一本怎樣的書？》。譚偉光譯。香港：基道，2013。)

Wilson, Jonathan R. *A Primer for Christian Doctrine*. Grand Rapids, MI: W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co, 2005. (約拿單·威爾遜。《基督教教義淺析》。李金好譯。香港：基道，2011。)

Wright, N. T. *Simply Christian: Why Christianity Makes Sense*. New York: HarperOne, 2006. (賴特。《純·基督教》。魏詩韻譯。香港：天道書樓有限公司，2008。)

吳國傑：《奠基立柱：初期教會縱橫談》。香港：基道，2006。

《溯源追本：基督教會古今巡覽》。香港：基道，2007。

《築樓蓋頂：中世紀教會縱橫談》。香港：基道，2011。

《拆壁重修：宗教改革縱橫談》。香港：基道，2018。

漢斯·昆。《基督教大思想家》，二版。香港：道風書社。2014。

橋爪大三郎和大澤真幸。《基督教如何創造西方世界》。陳嫻若譯。台北：如果出版社，2014。

賴品超、高莘。《誰的宗教？何種改革？：十六世紀宗教改革的多元性與政治性》。香港：明風。2017年。

9. Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Attention is drawn to University policy and regulations on honesty in academic work, and to the disciplinary guidelines and procedures applicable to breaches of such policy and regulations. Details may be found at <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/policy/academichonesty/>. With each assignment, students will be required to submit a signed declaration that they are aware of these policies, regulations, guidelines and procedures. In the case of group projects, all students of the same group should be asked to sign the declaration, each of whom is responsible should there be any plagiarized contents in the group project, irrespective of whether he/she has signed the declaration and whether he/she has contributed directly or indirectly to the plagiarized contents. For assignments in the form of a computer-generated document that is principally text-based and submitted via VeriGuide, the statement, in the form of a receipt, will be issued by the system upon students'

uploading of the soft copy of the assignment. Assignments without the properly signed declaration will not be graded by teachers. Only the final version of the assignment should be submitted via VeriGuide. The submission of a piece of work, or a part of a piece of work, for more than one purpose (e.g. to satisfy the requirements in two different courses) without declaration to this effect shall be regarded as having committed undeclared multiple submission. It is common and acceptable to reuse a turn of phrase or a sentence or two from one's own work; but wholesale reuse is problematic.

10. Feedback for evaluation

Feedback and recommendation are welcome. Students are advised to either give feedback during lecture or through email. Response will be made promptly based on the need of students.