

**IPS 416-001: Christian Origins**  
**An Exploration of the New Testament**  
**Fall Semester, 2010**

**Instructor:** Robert Ludwig, Ph.D., Lewis Suite #630, 312/915-7467  
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**Dates and Time:** Mondays, 4:15-6:45 PM — August 30 –December 6

**Required Texts:**

- Russell Pregeant, *Encounter with the New Testament: An Interdisciplinary Approach* (Fortress Press, 2009)—ISBN 978-0-8006-6348-3
- Ludwig, Robert, *Instructor's Essays* [Available at the cost of duplication from the IPS office by contacting Susan Ozuk (312/915-7400 or [sozuk@luc.edu](mailto:sozuk@luc.edu))]
- New Testament Texts (Any Contemporary Translation—New American Version is highly recommended)

**Course Description:** This course serves as an introduction to and overview of the New Testament. Students explore the world of Jesus and his interpreters from both an historical and a biblical perspective and learn about the religious and cultural world of Palestinian Judaism during the Roman occupation. The course considers the life and teachings of Jesus in Galilee in the twenties; the beginnings of the Christian movement in the revelatory experience of Christ risen, the experience of the Spirit sent, and the preaching of the gospel focused on his life, death, and resurrection; the missionary movement of the Church into the Greco-Roman world (the life and writings of the apostle Paul); and finally the development of the four canonical gospels, each with their unique portrait of Jesus Christ and the path of discipleship. Throughout the course, students make connections between then and now, Christian origins and our world of faith, practice, and ministry today.

**Instructor's Expectations/Course Requirements/Grading Standards:**

• **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

- The most important learning outcome: **Spiritual insight into what happened in Galilee in the twenties**—the experience that Jesus provoked among some in the occupied Jewish homeland. Gaining insight into “the event of Jesus of Nazareth” by getting factual knowledge about that time and culture and “reconstructing Jesus in Galilee” with that knowledge—this is the critical learning for students.
- In order to accomplish the above, students will need to develop some strategic and procedural knowledge. They will **learn to think about the world of Jesus before Christianity and churches existed**—before doctrine like the Incarnation and the Trinity were developed, and before the assumptions and presuppositions of Catholic/Christian faith took root. They will discover the tools of historical studies and textual criticism—the dynamic of the historical-critical method of biblical study and the process of biblical hermeneutics (understanding texts in their original contexts—and translating their meaning into present contexts).
- Utilizing these methods, students will **gain a sense of the evolution of Christian faith from Jesus in Galilee, to Paul and churches that grew up in the Jewish Diaspora, to the particular communities that shaped the present NT gospels**. Here they will see an evolution of faith according to changing contexts—a picture of Jesus and the patterns

of discipleship that changes depending on the world of the people who embrace belief in Jesus risen and the Spirit present.

- Finally—and not unimportantly—**students will learn to “translate” New Testament faith into their own contexts** by thinking about their own experience and the world of the faith communities in which they minister or plan to minister.

<b>Thinking about Competencies</b>	
<p><b>Strategic Knowledge</b> The thinking strategies and processes students will need to develop in this course</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>The strategy of “forgetting present presuppositions and assumptions about Jesus</u>: How to think like a first-century Jew in the occupied Jewish homeland</li> <li>• <u>The strategy of reconstruction</u>: How to “reconstruct” the life and teachings of Jesus in that context—and reflect on the ways he might have been perceived by others in that world</li> <li>• <u>The strategy of translation</u>: How to connect the meanings and values manifested in Jesus to the present day contexts of faith and ministry</li> </ul>
<p><b>Procedural Knowledge</b> Procedures, techniques, and methods taught in this course</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Historical-critical interpretation, textual criticism, and the science of hermeneutics (Don’t panic—these will be explained!)</li> <li>• Mining the Gospel stories for spiritual wisdom (Jack Shea’s methodology)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Factual Knowledge</b> Knowledge of facts, details, concepts, and terminology that students will become familiar with in this course</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The consensus factual understandings of current biblical scholars: the history of Jewish faith, especially after the Exile (538 BC), the probable dates and authorship of NT writings, the patterns of NT theologies</li> </ul>

- **EVIDENCE:** Students will demonstrate these competencies through their active participation in class, through their in-class presentations, in their written assignments, and in the final take home exam.
- **Class Attendance:** It is very important that students be here for every class meeting, that you are here on time so that we can start class promptly and stay for the entire class period. If you need to absent yourself due illness or other important reasons, you need to call the instructor’s voice-mail (312/915-7467) prior to the class you miss and provide him with an explanation. If a student does need to be absent from class, the student is responsible for getting the class lectures and discussion notes from other students—as well as getting class notes, handouts, and announcements from fellow-students or the instructor following any missed class. If there is a written essay due at the missed class, the student must do that writing assignment (in addition to the other five essays). Attending class and participating actively in the discussions contribute 10% to your final

grade. Unexcused absences and lack of participation in class discussions can seriously affect your final grade. **[10 points]**

- **Assignments:** In addition to the reading assignments, there are a number of written assignments due, usually one each week:
  - **Summary and Questions Assignment** (September 6 and 13) – Students summarize the key points from the texts and pose 1-3 real questions. **[2.5 points each—total of 5 points on final grade]**
  - **Research on Galilee in the 20s Assignment** (September 20) – Students come to class ready to present the results of their research on the social, political, and economic situation in Galilee under Roman rule: What were the socio-economic conditions in the world of Jesus? **[5 points on final grade]**
  - **Contemporary Parable Assignment** (September 27) – Students write an original parable (2-3 pages), keeping in mind that parable reverses expectations but does so in a credible way. Identify the audience with a clear description, then write the parable. **[5 points on final grade]**
  - **Adult Ed Presentation on Easter Faith** (October 4) – Outline with some detail a presentation that you would do in a parish/congregation explaining what it means to embrace the risen Christ: what is the meaning of resurrection faith? (2-3 pages) **[5 points on final grade]**
  - **Student Presentations on Paul** (October 18 and 25) – Student Groups present an expository of the Apostle Paul and his Letters. These are professional presentations and discussions in which students teach their peers. **[10 points on final grade]**
  - **Major Essay on Paul** (November 1) – Student develop a 5-7 page essay on the core teachings of Paul and their implications for today: How do we translate Paul for the present? **[10 points on final grade]**
  - **Translating the Gospels** (November 8, 15, 22, and 29) – Students write a 2-3 page essay translating each of the gospels into the present context. **[5 points each—total of 20 points on final grade]**
  - **Final Take-Home Exam** (December 6) – Students write essay responses to three questions. Each essay is approximately four pages in length. Questions will be distributed 2 weeks ahead of time. **[10 points each—total of 30 points on final grade]**

**How to Write Essays:** Students are expected to write thoughtful, focused, and well-organized essays. Your writing should be error-free: no misspellings or major grammatical errors.

- You should have a clear focus: what is the main thing you want to say in this essay? You should organize your essay around that focus—without rambling off in tangents. (one-third of the essay grade)
- Your essay should be well-informed by the readings and the class lectures and discussions—and you should refer to these in the essays. (one-third of the essay grade)
- You should also show your own thinking. Finding your own voice is important, so you need to present not just the authors' views or the instructor's, but your own: What do *you* think? (one-third of the essay grade)

- Each essay should have its own title, imaginatively and succinctly stating the essay's focus.
- Use Arial 11 point type face. When referring to the required texts, simply do so parenthetically (author, page numbers)—no lengthy quotes from the texts.
- **Student Presentations:** Each student will prepare a presentation for class. These presentations include three elements: (1) the historical context of the letter and the author's purpose in writing it; (2) identifying the key theological themes in the letter; and (3) suggesting some connections of this letter to Christian faith and practice today. These are not written papers—but presentations in class. You can use handouts, PowerPoint presentations, or simply make your presentation orally. Student groups divide up the presentation which lasts approximately 30 minutes total. One grade per group.

**Grading Grid:** Above 93 points – A  
 92/91 – A-  
 90/89 – B+  
 88-86 – B  
 85/84 – B –  
 83/82 – C +  
 81/80 – C  
 Below 80 – F

## **Statement of Academic Honesty from Loyola University Chicago**

"Academic honesty is an expression of an ethic of interpersonal justice, responsibility and care, applicable to Loyola University Chicago faculty, students, and staff, which demands that the pursuit of knowledge in the university community be carried out with integrity.

Academic dishonesty is characterized by the failure to apply this ethic; *i.e.*, any action whereby faculty, student or staff misrepresents the ownership of academic work submitted in her or his name. A student's failure to practice academic honesty will, depending upon the seriousness of the misconduct, result in a sanction ranging from the grade of *F* for the assignment to expulsion from the university.

*Boundaries of Academic Honesty and Dishonesty:* The following areas are viewed as worthy of consideration by faculty, students and staff as specific expressions of academic honesty and dishonesty:

- **Examinations.** Obtaining or distributing materials prior to the scheduled examination without the intention of the teacher; providing to, or obtaining information from another student during the examination; or attempting to change answers after the examination has been submitted are violations of the examination process.
- **Papers:** Plagiarism is the appropriation for gain of ideas, language or work of another without sufficient public acknowledgement that the material is not one's own. The following acts are regarded as such violations:
  - Submitting another person's work as one's own;
  - Submitting a rewritten or paraphrased version of another person's work;
  - Allowing another or paying another to write a paper for one's own benefit.

**Plagiarism, Cheating, Academic Dishonesty:** Students are hereby advised of the strong sanctions against plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism could result in an automatic "F" in the course and possible expulsion from IPS. If you have any questions about what plagiarism entails or how to properly acknowledge source materials, you should consult the instructor. Proper citation procedures are provided in all standard writing manuals. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please see the instructor.

**Reading/Assignment Schedule:**

**August 30** – Opening Class: Course Overview, Learning Outcomes, Expectations

**September 6** – Pregeant "Introduction" and chapters 1-2  
**[Summary and Questions Assignment #1 Due]**

**September 13** – Pregeant chapters 3-4  
**[Summary and Questions Assignment #2 Due]**

**September 20** – **Students Present Research on Galilee in the 20's**

**September 27** – Instructor's Essays #1 and #2  
**[Contemporary Parable Assignment Due]**

**October 4** – Instructor's Essays, #3  
**[Adult Ed Presentation on Easter Faith Due]**

**October 11** – **No Class (Fall Break)**

**October 18** – Pregeant, Prologue to Part Three and chapters 9-10  
– **Student Presentations on Paul**

**October 25** – Pregeant, chapters 11-12; Instructor's Essays #4 and #5  
– **Student Presentations on Paul**

**November 1** – **Major Essay on Paul Due**

**November 8** – The Gospel According to Mark; Pregeant, "Prologue to part Two," and chapter 5; First Part of Instructor's Essay #6  
– **[Translating Mark for Today Assignment]**

**November 15** – The Gospel According to Matthew; Pregeant, chapter 6; Second Part of Instructor's Essay #6  
– **[Translating Matthew for Today Assignment]**

**November 22** – The Gospel According to Luke and the Acts of the Apostles; Pregeant chapter 7; Third Part of Instructor's Essay #6  
– **[Translating Luke for Today Assignment]**

**November 29** – The Gospel According to John; Pregeant chapter 8; Last Part of Instructor's Essay #6  
– **[Translating John for Today Assignment]**

**December 6** – **Take-Home Final Exam Due at Classtime**