

# California Lutheran University

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## Bachelor's Degree for Professionals

REL 300 – Exploring Biblical Traditions

California Lutheran University / Winter 2015-16 / HUM 118 / T 6-9:30pm

November 23, 2015 – February 18, 2016

Drop Dates:

December 7 –last day to add/drop

January 19 –Last day to drop without a “W” or financial penalty

Dr. Sam Thomas

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Office Hours: M/W 1:00-2:00pm // T 5-6pm at Jack's // by appointment

### Course Description

This course will explore the scriptural, historical and theological foundations of Jewish and Christian thought and practice, with some attention also to the relationships and differences among Christianity, Judaism and Islam. Our approach to these topics will be illuminated by consideration of various cultural expressions of Christianity and Judaism, especially in the forms of literature, art, and architecture. The course will provide students with a basic framework for the academic study of religion, and prepare you for further study in this area.

## Course Outcomes

The course will contribute to the following student learning outcomes:

- ◇Develop a vocabulary for critical theological reflection and discussion and become familiar with the academic study of religion
- ◇Use the basic vocabulary and methods of the academic study of religion
- ◇Gain an understanding of the contents and overall framework of the Bible
- ◇Articulate clearly and knowledgeably the nature of biblical texts, the historical contexts in which they arose, and their scholarly interpretation
- ◇Articulate clearly and knowledgeably major theological questions that have emerged in the history of Judeo-Christian tradition and the variety of answers that have been proffered for them
- ◇Write respectfully about different religious traditions
- ◇Articulate clearly and knowledgeably the role of religion in the manifold dimensions of social existence
- ◇Attain an understanding of the basic contours of the history of Christianity, including its major figures and eras

### Course Requirements

\*Regular attendance is crucial to your success in this course—in terms of your grade, and in terms of what you will get out of the course. In the event a student is absent more than two times, the course grade will be dropped one letter grade.

\*Active engagement in classroom discussions and other activities is required, and will be included as part of the final grade. While some people are naturally more talkative than others, even active listening is a form of engagement... Offer comments and ask questions, and attempt to demonstrate careful preparation of course material.

\*You must read all assignments and submit all written work on time. Assignments submitted after the due date will be subject to a grade unit decrease per day late. The success of classroom learning depends upon active preparation ahead of time.

\*You will complete an 8-10 page research paper on a topic of your choice, in consultation with the instructor

\*There will be regular quizzes throughout the term. Quizzes will be delivered on Blackboard. The lowest quiz score will be dropped and not counted toward the final grade.

\*You will participate in weekly Blackboard online activities such as discussion forums, writing blog posts, and journal entries

\*There will be a final exam covering a variety of material from the course.

\*\*\* This is an electronics-free classroom. Cell phones, laptops, tablets, etc. are not allowed without prior consent or unless explicitly approved for particular classroom learning purposes.

The final grades will be calculated according to the following scale:

Research Paper	20%
Quizzes	20% (total)
Final Exam	15%
Weekly online activities	20%
Attendance/Participation	15% - see participation rubric on Blackboard

### Students with Disabilities

California Lutheran University is committed to providing reasonable accommodations in compliance with ADA of 1990 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 to students with documented disabilities. If you are a student requesting accommodations for this course, please contact your professor at the beginning of the semester and register with the Disability Support Services Coordinator, Wendy Jimenez, for the facilitation and verification of need. The Disability Support Services Coordinator is located in the Center for Student Success Office located at 3259 Pioneer Street, and can be contacted by calling 805.493.3260 or emailing [wjimene@callutheran.edu](mailto:wjimene@callutheran.edu).

### University Harassment Policy

Be civil to each other, both on- and offline. For information on the University's **student harassment policy and rights, please go to the following link:**

<http://www.callutheran.edu/students/student-conduct/student-handbook.html>

### Course Evaluations Statement

All course evaluations are conducted online. Your feedback is important to us. You will receive an email message reminding you when the website is open for your feedback. The link is:  
<http://courseval.callutheran.edu>

### Statement on Academic Honesty:

The educational programs of California Lutheran University are designed and dedicated to achieve academic excellence, honesty and integrity at every level of student life. Part of CLU's dedication to academic excellence is our commitment to academic honesty. Students, faculty, staff and administration share the responsibility for maintaining high levels of scholarship on campus. Any behavior or act which might be defined as "deceitful" or "dishonest" will meet with appropriate disciplinary sanctions, including dismissal from the University, suspension, grade F in a course or various forms of academic probation. Policies and procedures regarding academic honesty are contained in the faculty and student handbooks.

Plagiarism, cheating, unethical computer use and facilitation of academic dishonest are examples of behavior which will result in disciplinary sanctions. Plagiarism includes, but is not limited to:

- word for word copying without using quotation marks or presenting the work as yours
- using the ideas or work of others without acknowledgement
- not citing quoted material. Students must cite sources for any information that is not either the result of original research or common knowledge.

### Pearson Library

Pearson Library provides access to scholarly books, journals, ebooks, and databases of full text articles from scholarly journals. To begin using these materials, visit the library web page

<http://www.callutheran.edu/library>

There are many ways to contact Pearson Library for research assistance, no matter where you are!

- Email Yvonne Wilber (Professionals liaison) at [ywilber@callutheran.edu](mailto:ywilber@callutheran.edu)
- General Library email: [CLUlibrary@callutheran.edu](mailto:CLUlibrary@callutheran.edu)
- Library main phone: 805.493.3250
- Text us your question: 805.493.3867
- Get more help at: <http://www.callutheran.edu/library/help/>

The Information Specialist for the Bachelor's Degree for Professionals program is Madelynn Dickerson (<http://libguides.callutheran.edu/professionals>).

### CLU Writing Center

The California Lutheran University Writing Center believes that it is important to create better writers, not just better papers. Our trained, experienced tutors are happy to help CLU undergraduate, ADEP, and graduate students in all stages of the writing process, from generating ideas to refining final drafts. Tutors are therefore trained to act as interested audience members, rather than as professional editors or proofreaders. They will actively collaborate with students on ways to improve their writing by asking lots of questions, giving feedback, and demonstrating self-editing strategies that can be applied to future writing tasks. Please go to [http://www.callutheran.edu/writing\\_center/](http://www.callutheran.edu/writing_center/) to register and schedule an appointment.

### Sexual Misconduct

California Lutheran University does not tolerate any degree of sexual misconduct on or off-campus. We encourage you to report if you know of, or have been the victim of, sexual harassment, misconduct, and/or assault. If you report this to a faculty member, she or he must notify Cal Lutheran's Title IX Coordinator about the basic facts of the incident. More information about your options for reporting can be found at: <http://www.callutheran.edu/title-ix/>

### Veterans Resources

If you are a veteran, military member, or a family member of a veteran or military member, please refer to Cal Lutheran's Veterans Resources webpage for important information:

<http://www.callutheran.edu/veterans/> Also, if you are a veteran receiving benefits and you are struggling in a class, you most likely qualify for free tutoring. Please contact the Veterans Coordinator,

Jenn Zimmerman, [veterans@callutheran.edu](mailto:veterans@callutheran.edu) or 805.493.3648, for more information.

#### Help Desk

Students may contact the Help Desk about telephone, network, wireless network, software questions password problems, hardware problems, and general consultation (i.e. you cannot log into your MyCLU portal, or you are having problems with Blackboard). Please click on the following link for more information [http://www.callutheran.edu/iss/technology\\_services/helpdesk.php](http://www.callutheran.edu/iss/technology_services/helpdesk.php) or call: 805.493.3698

#### Final Note

This syllabus is subject to change. Every effort will be made to alert students to changes that occur in a timely manner.

Required Texts

\* John Barton, *The Bible: The Basics* (Routledge, 2010)

\* Additional readings will be placed under 'Course Materials' on Blackboard

**CARNEGIE HOURS**

Activity	Instructor-led Hours		Homework hours	
	Weekly	Course	Weekly	Course
Reading			5'30"	60
Quizzes			1	10
"Turning Points"			1	10
Weekly Classes	3'20"	36'40"		
Flipped class	30"	5		
Research meeting		20"		
Blog Post	45"	8'		
Annotated Bibliography			1	10
Exam preparation			1	10
Totals	50		100	

	Reading	Homework Due	In-Class Topics
Week 1 11/24	Kessler, "Thinking about Being a Student of Religion" (BB)	Quiz 1 on BB Short reflection: what is your religious/philosophical story? (1-2 paragraphs)	Studying religion; insiders/outside; critical tolerance
Wk. 2 12/1	Barton, Chapter 1 Genesis 1-3 <i>EnumaElish</i> Excerpts from <i>Gilgamesh</i>	Quiz 2 Online work TBD	Critical and canonical reading of the Bible; the Bible as a cultural artifact of the ancient world
Wk. 3 12/8	Barton, Chapter 2 The Letter of Aristeas Excerpts from <i>Jubilees</i>	Quiz 3 Research paper topic due Online work TBD	Formation & transmission of biblical canons; translation; non-canonical literature
Wk. 4 12/15	Barton, Chapter 3, 48-68 Exodus 19-24 Amos; Isaiah 40 Proverbs	Quiz 4 Online work TBD	Narrative; prophecy; law; wisdom
Wk. 5 1/5	Barton, Chapter 3, 69-78 Gospel of Mark Romans 1-7 Revelation 1-2, 20-22	Quiz 5 Research paper bibliography due Online work TBD	Gospels; epistles; Revelation
Wk. 6 1/12	Barton, Chapter 4, 79-92 John 1 Philippians Job 1-4, 38-42	Quiz 6 Research paper rough draft due Online work TBD	God; Jesus; angels & demons; evil and suffering
Wk. 7 1/19	Barton, Chapter 4, 92-107 1 Enoch 1-10 Daniel 12 Matthew 5-7 Galatians 3	Quiz 7 Online work TBD	Eschatology; ethics; faith & grace
Wk. 8 1/26	Barton, Chapter 6 The Didache	Quiz 8 Online work TBD	Social contexts and social roles, ancient and modern
Wk. 9 2/2	Barton, Chapter 7 Ruether, "God Talk" (BB) Gutierrez, "Liberation" (BB)	Quiz 9 Research paper final draft due Online work TBD	Form criticism; redaction criticism; post-colonial, liberation, & feminist readings
Wk. 10 2/9	TBD	Online work TBD	Synthesis of course material; exam review
Wk. 11 2/16	<b>FINALEXAM</b>		