

BBL417 New Testament Backgrounds



Pathways

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We're delighted to have you study at RMC! Please note the following policies:

We try our best to ensure you get the most from the courses in which you are enrolled and welcome your feedback!

Online Courtesy

As beings created in the image of God, we all deserve to be treated with the utmost respect whether we are a facilitator or a student. Online courses give us the opportunity to encourage social interaction, relationship building and trust between participants which befits our status as image-bearers. Failure to show respect in course interchange, through emails, announcements, discussion forums or instant chat, whether in the form of racism, chauvinism or simple unkindness is ungracious and inappropriate for the health of Christian community. Where mutual respect exists, the possibility of learning is enhanced for all.

Therefore, please remember that there is a person behind every comment on the course website – when you respond, be gracious, give the benefit of the doubt and ask for clarification. Review your comments in the discussion forums for tone before submitting them – sarcasm and jokes often do not translate well in the online environment. Be sure your messages are clear – it is tempting to quickly write a response and submit it but this can lead to confusion if your thoughts are a bit jumbled – take time to polish your remarks. Remember that your comments, whether in emails or discussion forums can become public so act accordingly.

RMC Grading Policy

Grade GradePoint

A+	4.0	
A	4.0	A = Excellent - superior performance showing comprehensive understanding of subject matter.
A-	3.7	
B+	3.3	
B	3.0	B = Good - clearly above average performance with knowledge of the subject matter generally complete.
B-	2.7	
C+	2.3	
C	2.0	C = Satisfactory — basic understanding of subject matter.
C-	1.7	
D+	1.3	
D	1.0	D = Inferior work which falls below the expectations of the course but which is of passing quality.
D-	0.7	
F	0.0	F = Failure to meet the minimum standards required for a passing grade.
P	Pass	P = Represents satisfactory work. Given only in courses specially designated for Pass /Fail grading.
IN	Incomplete	
VW	Voluntary Withdrawal from a course before the course withdrawal deadline.	
AU	Audit - No grade awarded. Indicates that a minimum of 75% of classes have been attended.	

Grading Scale

A+ 97-100	A 93-96	A- 89-92
B+ 85-88	B 80-84	B- 76-79
C+ 72-75	C 67-71	C- 60-66
D 55-59	F 0-54	

Plagiarism & Academic Misconduct at Rocky Mountain College

A. Plagiarism Defined

Plagiarism - involves submitting or presenting work in a course as if it were the student's own work done expressly for that particular course when, in fact, it is not. Plagiarism exists when:

1. the work submitted was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting the work,
2. parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author,
3. the whole work is copied from another source, and/or
4. a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted.

Plagiarism is an extremely serious academic offence.

B. Penalties

1. **Failing Grade** - a student may be given a failing grade in either the assignment or course in which that student is found guilty of plagiarism. Except in circumstances in which leniency is warranted, this penalty will be applied in conjunction with one or other of the other penalties mentioned below.
2. **Disciplinary Probation** - when a student is placed on disciplinary probation, he or she is entitled to proceed with their academic program. If the student is found guilty of a further academic offence the student will be suspended or expelled.
3. **Suspension** - suspension takes place when a student is denied continuance at the college for a specified period of time. A student who has been placed under suspension is eligible to reapply for admission after the end of that specified period of time. Suspension does not imply automatic readmission; a student must satisfy the dean of his/her eligibility for readmission.
4. **Expulsion** - a student who is expelled is dismissed permanently from the college with no right to apply for readmission.

C. Penalties and Their Application

1. In cases in which the dean is satisfied that a student is guilty of a clear intention to deceive, the normal penalty will be either suspension or expulsion from the college.
2. In cases in which the dean is satisfied that an offence has been committed, but doubt is left as to the existence of a clear intention to deceive, the normal penalty will be disciplinary probation.
3. In cases where a student is found guilty of more than a single offence, the normal penalty will be expulsion from the college.

Copies of the official policy regarding Plagiarism and other academic crimes can be found on the RMC website. If charged with plagiarism, it would be wise for a student to familiarize themselves with the RMC policy, "Plagiarism, Cheating & Academic Misconduct."

This policy is based on the University of Calgary policy "Plagiarism, Cheating & Academic Misconduct - 1996-97" Copyright © 1998 University of Calgary

BBL417 New Testament Backgrounds
Rocky Mountain College
Credits: 3

Course Description & Purpose

A study of the historical, cultural, religious, and political backgrounds of the New Testament. Students will become better acquainted with Jewish history, institutions, literature, and religious sects during the second temple period, and (to a lesser extent) with the Greco-Roman context of early Christianity.

Course pre-requisites: BBL211 and BBL220

Texts

Coogan, Michael D. ed. *The New Oxford Annotated Apocrypha: New Revised Standard Version*, 4th ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
Maier, Paul L (translator). *Josephus: The Essential Writings*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1988.
Scott, J. Julius. *Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2001.
Vermes, Geza. *The Complete Dead Sea Scrolls in English*, 7th ed. Toronto: Penguin Books, 2012.

Course Objectives

By the end of this course students will be able to:

1. Explain the events that affected Judaism and Christianity in Palestine and the Mediterranean world especially between 200 BC and 100 AD;
2. Demonstrate knowledge of Jewish literature from that period;
3. Articulate a range of Jewish religious beliefs and practices from that period;
4. Explain the place of Judaism and Christianity from that period within the Greco-Roman world;
5. Interpret New Testament texts based on the historical, cultural, and religious context of that period.

Course Outline

<i>Module</i>	<i>Topic</i>	<i>Time Expectations</i>	<i>Textbook Reading</i>	<i>Assignment Due</i>
1	<i>Background and Setting</i>	8 hours	<i>Scott, ch 1-5 Apocrypha: 1 Maccabees</i>	<i>Quiz</i>
2	<i>Crises and Responses I</i>	6 hours	<i>Scott, ch 6-8 DSS: Community Rule</i>	<i>Quiz</i>
3	<i>Crises and Responses II</i>	7.75 hours	<i>Scott, ch 9-11, appendices F,G Apocrypha: 2 Esdras</i>	<i>Quiz</i>
4	<i>Common Life/Religious Thought</i>	7 hours	<i>Scott, ch 12-13 DSS: Thanksgiving Hymns</i>	<i>Quiz</i>

5	<i>The Final Age/Kingdom of God</i>	7.5 hours	Scott, ch 14-15 <i>Apocrypha: Wisdom of Solomon; DSS: Biblical commentary</i>	Quiz
6	<i>Messianic Hope</i>	6.5 hours	Scott, ch 16 <i>Josephus: Intro, p9-15, ch 15-19</i>	Quiz
7	<i>Covenant and Law</i>	9.25 hours	Scott, ch 17 <i>Josephus, ch 20-27</i>	Quiz Video report
8	<i>View of Gentiles</i>	5.75 hours	Scott, ch 18 <i>Apocrypha: Tobit DSS: Damascus document</i>	Quiz
9	<i>Further Apocrypha I</i>	5 hours	<i>Apocrypha: Sirach, 4 Maccabees</i>	
10	<i>Further Apocrypha II</i>	26 hours	<i>Apocrypha: Judith</i>	Research paper
		88.75		

Course Requirements and Grading

1. Video report on primary source (video, 10 minutes) 35%

Students will present a recorded report selected from the primary documents listed below. This report should include introductory comments regarding such matters as the date of the document, authorship, and place of origin. The report should also include comments regarding such matters as special emphases of the writing, and its views concerning God, salvation, Israel, Gentiles, religious observances, ethical instructions, eschatology, etc. Students will want to give some illustrative examples of some of these matters from the document that is studied. In some cases, students may not be able to read the lengthier writings in detail, but may have to concentrate on a significant portion of the writing (approximately the equivalent of 20 chapters of the Bible in length). Students will submit a one page, double-spaced point form outline of their presentation as well. Include a title page and bibliography

Choose from this list:

- Rabbinic Writings:
 - Mishnah
 - Babylonian or Jerusalem Talmud
 - Rabbinic Midrashim
- Writing by Philo of Alexandria
- Old Testament Pseudepigrapha:
 - 1 Enoch
 - Testament of 12 Patriarchs
 - Letter of Aristeas
 - Jubilees
 - Martyrdom and Ascension of Isaiah
 - Joseph and Aseneth
 - Psalms of Solomon
- Writing from the Nag Hammadi Library (Gnostic)

2. Research paper (3000 words) 35%

Papers may be written on any topic within the area covered by this course. Following is a list of potential paper topics:

- Pontius Pilate
- Flavius Josephus
- Judas Maccabeus
- Mystery religions
- Epicureanism
- Biblical Interpretation
- Antecedents to Baptism
- Sadducees
- Social classes
- Emperor cult
- Education
- Common Life in first-century
- Qumran, the Essenes
- Antiochus IV Epiphanes
- Jewish High Priesthood
- Stoicism
- Godfearers and Proselytes
- Philo of Alexandria
- Pharisees
- Samaritans
- Economic Life
- Synagogue
- Apocalypticism
- Jewish views of salvation
- Masada
- Tax collectors
- Messianic expectations
- Zealots
- Roman military
- Place of Women
- Temple in first-century Judaism
- Herod the Great

3. Quizzes (definition, short answer) 30%

RMC uses APA style for all courses. Our latest style guidelines are available on our website (rockymountaincollege.ca under “Resources” – “RMC Writing Support”)

Technical Competencies

Students need access to video recording equipment (smartphone is sufficient); video editing software is an asset

Facilitator Expectations of Students

What is expected of the student who wishes to succeed in this course.

- Effective time management
- Regular participation in discussions;
- regular logging in to course webpage to:
 - check due dates,
 - keep up with readings/videos
 - check messages and announcements;
- seek feedback or clarification from facilitator regarding questions about assignments, extensions, technical difficulties etc.;
- ability to communicate effectively in writing
- ability to regularly access the internet

Student Expectations of Facilitators

What students can expect from you.

- Prompt response to email messages
- Clear communication about your availability for consultation
- Timely turn around for assignment grading
- Constructive feedback on assignments
- Regular communication
 - Personal emails
 - Bulletins about recent advances in the field of study

Bibliography

- Abegg, Martin, Jr., Peter Flint, and Eugene Ulrich. *The Dead Sea Scrolls Bible*. New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1999.
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- Bruce, F. F. *New Testament History*. New York: Doubleday & Company, 1980.
- Davies, W. D. *Paul and Rabbinic Judaism: Some Rabbinic Elements in Pauline Theology*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980.
- Derrett, J. Duncan M. *Jesus=s Audience: The Social and Psychological Environment in Which He Worked*. New York: Seabury Press, 1973.
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- Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity (Third Edition)*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003.
- Hengel, Martin. *Judaism and Hellenism: Studies in Their Environment in Palestine during the Early Hellenistic Period*, 2 vols. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1974.
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For a more complete listing of sources, see the bibliography in the textbook by J. Julius Scott.