

Saint Leo University

**REL 470
Christology**

Course Description:

This course will take students on a systematic investigation of the life, person, and work of Jesus of Nazareth. Participants will survey and analyze the revelation of Jesus in scripture, historical perspectives in Christology (including controversies, councils, and significant individuals), and contemporary perspectives.

Prerequisite:

REL 123 or 124 or 201 or 223 and/or administrative approval

Textbooks:

McMahon, Christopher. *Understanding Jesus: Christology from Emmaus to Today*. Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2013. Print. ISBN: 978-1-59982-426-0

A Bible of which the instructor currently approves.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Employ the historical-critical approach while studying scripture and tradition.
2. Examine the revelation of Jesus in the Bible.
3. Explore the important Christological controversies and councils.
4. Explain the development of Christological doctrines in tradition.
5. Distinguish the Christologies of significant historical figures.
6. Analyze contemporary Christological perspectives.
7. Apply the message of Jesus to contemporary life.
8. Assess personal interpretation of Jesus in light of course material.

Core Value:

Personal Development: Saint Leo University stresses the development of every person's mind, spirit and body for a balanced life. All members of the Saint Leo University community must demonstrate their commitment to personal development to help strengthen the character of our community.

Evaluation:

Assessment	Points Each	Points Total	Percentage
Midterm Exam	100	100	30%
Final Exam	100	100	30%
Reaction Papers	10	80	24%
Discussion	10	80	16%
Total		360	100%

Exams. Both the Midterm and Final Exams consist of five (5) essay and five (5) short answer questions. Students should write at least one complete paragraph in response to each of the essay questions. Students must support each response with at least one reference to readings that were required within the modules covered in the exam. Also, each response should total at least 100 words. Students should write one or two sentences to respond to each short answer questions. Students will be allowed two hours to independently complete each exam.

Reaction Papers. Students must submit a written Reaction Paper for each module. Each Reaction Paper must be between 300 to 500 words and address the assigned topic in each module. The paper must be submitted to the Assignment box for that module no later than Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT. (This

Assignment box is linked to Turnitin.) Each Reaction Paper is worth 10 points toward the final grade. The grading rubric for the papers is as follows:

Points	Task
1	Labels as "Module 1 Reaction Paper" with student's name and course code
1	Writes between 300 and 500 words
4	Successfully reacts to assignment questions/challenges
2	Writes mostly original (e.g. paraphrased) sentences
1	Directly quotes and cites only one or two applicable sentences from course text
1	Directly quotes and cites only one or two applicable sentences from a source recommended by the instructor (see syllabus etc. for approved sources)

Discussion. Students will complete one discussion in each module. The discussion grade will depend mostly on how well the original post follows the discussion prompt, and then on the quality of the responses to classmates' postings.

How does a student answer a classmate's post?

Students have to make a substantial contribution to the discussion. Students get credit for showing that they are thinking hard about how to relate the course materials (the readings and activities) to the discussion questions and what their classmates are saying to the content of the module.

Students may agree or disagree with what a classmate is saying, but they always have to justify their reactions, using what is being learned in the course. Other strategies include bringing and discussing valid outside resources to support points (making sure they are referenced appropriately), providing examples, asking questions that push fellow classmates to think further, answering another student's questions, or reacting to others' suggestions.

Students do not get credit for one-sentence posts such as "Good point!" or "I agree." Students do not get credit for disrespectful comments. Students do not get credit for simply copying and pasting paragraphs from a website or from the textbook, even if the source is cited. The above paragraph states that the student has to discuss them, to explain to why he or she thinks they are relevant. Students do not get credit for social posts, such as "Hey man, I didn't know you were taking this class, how have you been?" There is a non-graded discussion for that.

In terms of tone, students need to make sure to respect others, but don't be shy about giving their own opinion. Discussions where everybody just agrees with everybody else are boring, not very informative, and show a lack of depth in thinking. Students should not think that they'll get credit for trying to be nice and conciliatory. If a student disagrees, he or she should say so and do it politely! Students should feel free to use emoticons to add some feelings to what they are saying. Students should avoid offensive language, unless they are quoting from a situation in real life or from a source. Postings that are offensive will be deleted.

Grading Scale:

Grade	Score (%)
A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	60-66
F	0-59

Bibliography:

- Adams, Marilyn McCord. *What Sort of Human Nature?: Medieval Philosophy and the Systematics of Christology*. Marquette: Marquette U, 1999. Print.
- Brown, Raymond E. *An Introduction to the New Testament*. New York: Doubleday, 1997. Print.
- Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Declaration *Dominus Iesus*. Vatican City, 2000. Print.
- Davis, Leo Donald. *The First Seven Ecumenical Councils 325-787: Their History and Theology*. Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1983. Print.
- Gutierrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1988. Print.
- Harrington, Daniel J. *Historical Dictionary of Jesus*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow, 2010. Print.
- John Paul II. Encyclical Letter *Dives in Misericordia*. Vatican City, 1980. Print.
- Karkkainen, Veli-Matti. *Christology: A Global Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2003. Print.
- LaCugna, Catherine M. *God for Us: The Trinity and Christian Life*. San Francisco: HarperCollins, 1991. Print.
- Levine, Amy-Jill. *The Misunderstood Jew: The Church and the Scandal of the Jewish Jesus*. New York: HarperCollins, 2006. Print.
- McMahon, Christopher. *Understanding Jesus. Christology From Emmaus to Today*. Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2013. Print.
- Meier, John P. *A Marginal Jew: Rethinking the Historical Jesus*. New York: Doubleday, 1991. Print.
- Moltmann, Jurgen. *The Way of Jesus Christ: Christology in Messianic Dimensions*. London: SCM, 1990. Print.
- O'Collins, Gerald. *Christology: A Biblical, Historical, and Systematic Study of Jesus*. New York: Oxford U Press, 2009. Print.
- Rahner, Karl. *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*. New York: Crossroad, 1978. Print.
- Schussler-Fiorenza, Elisabeth. *Jesus: Miriam's Child, Sophia's Prophet: Critical Issues in Feminist Christology*. New York: Continuum, 1994. Print.
- Schweitzer, Don. *Contemporary Christologies*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010. Print.

Thompson-Uberuaga, William. *Jesus and the Gospel Movement: Not Afraid to Be Partners*. Columbia, MO: U of Missouri Press, 2006. Print.

Wright, N.T. *The Resurrection of the Son of God*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2003. Print.

Course Schedule:

Module 1 Modern and Contemporary Historical Jesus Research

- Objectives** When you complete this module, you should be able to:
- Identify and evaluate personal assumptions about the Jesus of history.
 - Summarize the three quests for the historical Jesus in modernity.
 - Identify ways in which the third quest is superior.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read the assigned materials	
Review Focus Questions and Key Terms	
Post introduction to the class	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post initial response to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Reaction Paper 1	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 2 Sketching the Historical Jesus

- Objectives** When you complete this module, you should be able to:
- Explain how the Gospels were gradually formed.
 - Define five primary criteria for historical Jesus research.
 - Apply these criteria to Jesus' infancy, family, ministry, and death.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read the assigned materials	
Review Focus Questions and Key Terms	
Post initial response to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Reaction Paper 2	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 3 Jesus' Resurrection

Objectives

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Explain how the Bible's Book of Daniel relates to New Testament writings about Jesus' resurrection.
- Compare and contrast the New Testament accounts of Jesus' resurrection.
- Analyze and evaluate the contemporary theological debate about Jesus' resurrection.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read the assigned materials	
Review Focus Questions and Key Terms	
Post initial response to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Reaction Paper 3	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 4**Christologies in the New Testament****Objectives**

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Describe and contrast titles, roles, and patterns in New Testament Christology.
- Defend the claim that the Gospel of Matthew symbolizes Christianity's beginnings as a movement within Judaism.
- Explain how the Christological content of specific New Testament books differs greatly.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read the assigned materials	
Review Focus Questions and Key Terms	
Post initial response to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Reaction Paper 4	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Midterm Exam (covering Modules 1-4)	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 5**Classical Christological Controversies****Objectives**

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Identify and define Christological heresies that arose between the first and sixth centuries C.E.
- Summarize and assess arguments and results of the First Council of Nicaea.
- Summarize and assess arguments and results of the Council of Chalcedon.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read the assigned materials	
Review Focus Questions and Key Terms	
Post initial response to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Reaction Paper 5	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 6 Christological Doctrines in Tradition

Objectives

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Summarize and assess soteriological doctrines developed by patristic figures.
- Summarize and assess soteriological doctrines developed by medieval figures.
- Summarize and assess soteriological doctrines developed by Protestant figures.
- Identify and defend your favorite traditional soteriology.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read the assigned materials	
Review Focus Questions and Key Terms	
Post initial response to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Reaction Paper 6	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 7 Contemporary Christological Perspectives and Applications

Objectives

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Explain methodological principles common to liberation theologies.
- Compare and contrast liberationist Christologies.

- Assess the orthodoxy and significance of such Christologies.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read the assigned materials	
Review Focus Questions and Key Terms	
Post initial response to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Reaction Paper 7	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

Module 8

Christology Amidst Religious Pluralism

Objectives

When you complete this module, you should be able to:

- Explain and evaluate exclusivist, inclusivist, and pluralist approaches to religious pluralism as taken by contemporary Christians.
- Explain recent Catholic teaching on the difference between faith and belief.
- Explain and evaluate Karl Rahner’s phrase “anonymous Christian.”
- Assess one’s personal interpretation of Jesus in light of course material.

Assignments

Items to be Completed:	Due No Later Than:
Read the assigned materials	
Review Focus Questions and Key Terms	
Post initial response to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Reaction Paper 8	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Final Exam (covering Modules 5 through 8)	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT