

Religions of the Bible REL 311 (ASE 384)

Spring Semester 2018

Instructor:	Mícheál Thompson	
Time:	Tuesday	13:00-14:30
	Thursday	13:00-14:30
Classroom:	MIC 1-421	
Office:	MIC 2-305	
Office Hours:	Thursday	10:00-13:00
	Or Drop by !	
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Required texts: The principal Bible text is "*The Bible in Basic English*". This is available free online. The instructor will provide all other readings and additional material. Video and other material will be used.

Course Description: This course will introduce students to the two great Biblical religions, Judaism and Christianity, by exploring the book, which contains the mythology and history of the two religions -- the Bible. Our focus will be on enjoying the interesting stories and important religious ideas in the Old and New Testaments of the Bible. We will also look at the historical background and development of the two religions. The Bible is the most widely read and widely translated book in the world. It was in many ways the foundational text of the modern world and is of continuing importance in understanding much in the contemporary world as well.

Course Goals/Objectives: The Bible is a collection of documents involving History, Myth, Poetry, Law and many other things. While it can be viewed as a religious text, it is not just for believers. A knowledge of the Bible is central to an understanding of History.

The course has three main goals, to provide an introduction to:

- i) The origins, background, and content of the Old Testament and its various books/genres and teachings.
- ii) The origins, background, and content of the New Testament and its various books and teachings.
- iii) The subsequent history of these (up to about 650 AD) in the development of the various branches of Christianity and Judaism.

This is a lot for one semester but we will do our best! By the end students will have made significant improvements in their understanding of language and in their ability to use and manipulate academic English. They will also be expected to be able to think critically about developments in history and culture.

Topics/Assignments:

Grades and Grading:

Attendance as such is not part of the final grade – BUT participation is!

B If you participate in class and you satisfactorily complete all the class work.

C You can get this in two main ways: If you have three "Unexcused Absences" and therefore cannot participate in class **OR** if you do **NOT** satisfactorily complete a major piece of class work

D You can get this in two main ways: If you have three "Unexcused Absences" **AND** if you do **NOT** satisfactorily complete a major piece of class work **OR** if you do **NOT** satisfactorily complete TWO major pieces of class work

F You have four or more "unexcused absences" and do **NOT** Withdraw from the class

So, how do you get an **A**? You have all of the requirements for a **B** **AND** you demonstrate "excellence" by active **participation** in the class. **Participation** means asking questions, answering questions, and demonstrating the willingness to try to work at a serious level. An **A** is **NOT** for "extra work" - there is no "extra work" required. An **A** is for the ability or willingness to do higher level work within the ordinary class work. This mainly means participation. Ask questions! Answer questions! Volunteer! Make an effort!

Participation Requirements:

Attendance is not part of the final grade but participation is. Participation is **required** at all classes.

Religions of the Bible

Proposed Schedule by Classes.

- 1 Introduction,& Syllabus.
- 2 What is the Bible? Languages, Editions, Variations, Translations.
- 3 The background to the Old Testament: Fertile Crescent
- 4 The Background to the Old Testament: Egypt & Phoenicia
- 5 Genesis
- 6 Exodus & Numbers
- 7 Leviticus & Deuteronomy
- 8 Joshua & Judges
- 9 Samuel + King David & Psalms
- 10 King Solomon & Divided Kingdom
- 11 Prophets: Conquest & Exile
- 12 Post-Exilic Israel & Maccabees
- 13 Inter-Testamental: Greece
- 14 Inter-Testamental: Rome
- 15 The Synoptic Gospels: History
- 16 The Synoptic Gospels: Teachings of Jesus
- 17 The Gospel of John
- 18 The Epistles of Paul: History
- 19 The Epistles of Paul: Teachings
- 20 The Other Epistles
- 21 The Book of Revelations
- 22 The Spread of Christianity & The Book of Acts: Roman Empire
- 23 The Spread of Christianity to Constantine
- 24 The Spread of Christianity outside the Roman Empire
- 25 Creeds, Councils & Heresies
- 26 Rabbinic Judaism
- 27 First Millenium Churches: Catholicism
- 28 First Millenium Churches: Orthodoxy
- 29 First Millenium Churches: Eastern Orthodoxy
- 30 Conclusion

ADDITIONAL

The final examination will be in week 16.

This is a tentative schedule reflecting past experience. Each semester will be different depending on the speed of completion of the units so that not all units will necessarily be taught each semester. There are no required materials, the instructor writes all the non-Biblical material. Additional material will also be used.

Emphasis on in class exercises: problem solving. Feedback for this will be in class. There will also be written assignments and short quizzes. In principle, graded work will be returned within one week of submission with feedback/comments.

Diploma Policy Objectives

1. Advanced thinking skills (comparison, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) based on critical thinking (critical and analytic thought)
2. The ability to understand and accept different cultures developed through acquisition of a broad knowledge and comparison of the cultures of Japan and other nations
3. The ability to identify and solve problems
4. Advanced communicative proficiency in English

All students are expected to work for 45 minutes to one hour before and after each class either in reviewing material or completing homework assignments.

All readings will be: 1) Pre-read; 2) Read aloud in class; 3) Selected vocabulary will be explained with examples of usage

文部科学省から採択された 大学教育再生加速プログラム 		Advanced	Proficient	Developing
Critical Thinking	Ability to Identify & Solve Problems	Insightful comments in class discussions. Student shows proven ability to analyze data, gather and assess resources, and disseminate opinions in a scholarly manner.	Able to contribute to class discussions, and to perform a basic analysis of data, gather and assess resources, and express opinions in an adequate manner.	Beginning to visualize ways in which it can be combined applied to solving problem, but with complete recognizing relationship
	Information Gathering			
	Assessment of Credibility			
Advanced Communication Proficiency	Public Speaking	Speaking is clear, using a broad range of vocabulary and relative jargon. Student uses appropriate social cues and nuance.	Able to create a relevant response when asked to express an opinion or respond to a complicated situation, but pronunciation and grammar can often make responses and explanations unclear to a listener and must be interpreted.	Able to answer and give basic information. However, incorrect pronunciation, and stress may make their responses difficult to understand and c
	Social Skills			
	Professional Skills			
Global Perspectives	Cultural Relevancy	Fully engaged in current events and shows and understanding of social inequalities and cultural differences.	Student is aware of current events and world cultures, but is unable to apply macro-level situations to her/his own life.	Exhibits intelligent intrigue in current and world culture difficulty under relevant
	Awareness of Current Events & Global Issues			
English Language Ability	Reading	Exhibits fluency/near fluency in speaking and writing. Grammar and reading ability similar to native English speaker. Able to use context clues when faced with unfamiliar vocabulary.	Proficient English ability; relies mainly on familiar vocabulary. Should be encouraged to advance beyond comfort zone.	Adequate English must reference often
	Writing			
	Oral Communication			
Japanese Language Ability	Reading	Able to express one's self clearly and succinctly both in writing and orally. Able to use context clues when faced with unfamiliar vocabulary.	Proficient oral and written communication; relies mainly on familiar vocabulary. Should be encouraged to advance beyond comfort zone.	Adequate oral and written communication have difficulty expressing
	Writing			
	Oral Communication			