



REL 1200

Introduction to Christian Scripture

Section: RVC

Internet/Fully Online

Fall Term 2026

Course Time Zone | Eastern Time (ET). Course due dates are according to this time zone.

Professor Information

Joseph Holbrook

Roles: Primary Instructor

Email: jholbroo@fiu.edu

Response Time: 48 hours

Phone: (786) 395-5402 (only Texts, and only between 9 am and 9 pm).

Office Hours: by appointment

Office Location: Vicki's bakery, Starbucks on campus or zoom.

Website: https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLNQvOQW2aM_x-qspo8XCd4r-dVhRStWZU

Department or Academic Unit: Department of Religious Studies

Additional Notes

The lectures for REL1200 are found in a playlist on my YouTube channel. I have

the URL for the playlist above under 'website.' The URL for my YouTube channels is:

<https://www.youtube.com/@MrJosephholbrook>

Course Prerequisites

Course prerequisites, if any, are listed below.

Course Description

Introduction to the Christian Scriptures will encourage the study of the entire body of the Christian canon. The course offers an overview of the Christian scriptures, from the Jewish Torah through the New Testament canon. It is intended to provide students with introductory knowledge writing, development and collection of the modern Bible, emphasizing its diversity, complexity, and its influence on Western culture.

Introduction to the Christian Scriptures will also encourage the study of the entire body of the Christian canon as well as a critical examination of contemporary Christian textual study and interpretations using a variety of social science disciplines and methods. In addition, with the rise of politicized religious movements in many if not most world religions, it becomes more important than ever to provide balanced, academic analysis in the study of the Christian scriptures in all of its myriad interpretations, and its influential role in the public sphere.

In summary, the course will cover the following topics:

- How shall we read the Bible?
- The Old Testament world.
- Primeval History.
- Ancestral Stories.
- The Composition of the Pentateuch.

- Exodus and Covenant
- Sojourn in the Wilderness
- The Reformation and the origins of Protestantism.
- Historical and Social Contexts of the Prophets
- Settlement in the Land
- Movement to Monarchy
- The Latter Prophets
- Exile and Beyond
- The Context of the Writings
- The Psalms
- The Wisdom Books
- Daniel
- The Five Scrolls
- Between the Testaments
- Sociohistorical Developments
- Jewish Beliefs and Religious Practices in Antiquity
- Greek and Roman Beliefs and Religious Practices in Antiquity
- The World of the Gospels
- The Genre and Literary Tradition of the Gospel
- The Acts of the Apostles
- Paul's Life, Ministry, and Letters
- The Pauline Tradition
- The Contours of Paul's Theology
- The General Letters and Revelation
- The World of Early Christians
- Overarching Story of the Christian Scriptures.

Textbook and Course Materials

Engaging the Christian Scriptures**Required/Recommended:** Required**Authors:** Arterbury, Bellinger, and Dodson.**Publisher:** Baker Academic, Second Edition, 2021.**Publication Date:** 2021**Copyright Date:** 2021**ISBN 10:** 1540962253**ISBN 13:** 9781540962256**Notes:** You may purchase your textbook online at the FIU Bookstore

Description: This is an online course, which means most (if not all) of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same as a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students.

Chapters/Pages: 336**Panther Book Pack**

Get all required course materials for \$22 per undergrad credit hour through Panther Book Pack. You'll be charged automatically unless you opt out within 3 days after the add/drop deadline.

For more details, to compare costs, and to learn how to access your course materials, visit the [Panther Book Pack information page on FIU OneStop](#).

Student Learning Outcomes/Objectives

Examine the historical stages in the development of the Christian scriptures.

Evaluate the wide variety of approaches to the study and interpretation of the Christian scriptures.

Differentiate between various methods for dating and determining the authorship of portions of the Christian canon.

Contribute to the course community in a scholarly manner through critical analysis and professional writing.

Expectations of this Course

This is an online course, which means most (if not all) of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same as a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students.

Students are expected to:

- **review the getting started** page located in the course modules;
- **introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion;
- **take the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with the learning management system, Canvas;
- **interact** online with instructor and peers;
- **review** and follow the course calendar and weekly outlines;
- **log in** to the course **4 times** per week;
- **respond** to discussions by the due date specified. **No late work will be accepted without a late penalty.**
- **respond** to **emails** within **3 days**;
- **submit** assignments by the corresponding deadline.

The instructor will:

- log in to the course **6 times per week**;
- respond to **emails** within **24 hours**;
- grade assignments and/or provide feedback within 3 **days** of the assignment deadline.

Course Communication

Communication in this course will take place via the Canvas Inbox. Check out the [Canvas Conversations Tutorial](#) or [Canvas Guide](#) to learn how to communicate with your instructor and peers using Announcements, Discussions, and the Inbox. I will respond to all correspondences within 24 hours.

Policies & Resources

Before starting this course, please review the Policies & Resources Page in Canvas which includes comprehensive information on various University and Course Level Policies such as:

- University Policies
- Accessibility and Accommodations
- Online Etiquette
- Technical Requirements and Skills
- Computer & Digital Literacy Skills
- Course Technology Accessibility Statements and Privacy Policies
- Academic Integrity
- Copyright Statement
- Core Principles of This Course
- Nondiscrimination Statement
- Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS)
- Fair Use Policy

Assignments & Assessments

Discussion Forums

Keep in mind that your discussion forum postings will likely be seen by other members of the course. Care should be taken when determining what to post.

General Guidelines for Forum Discussions

- *Initial Response*: These should be around 200-300 words in length (about 3 paragraphs).
- *Responses to Peers' Posts (3)*: Respond to the posts of at least three of your fellow classmates. Each response should be between 50-100 words in length (about 1 paragraph). **Please do not use subheads, numbered paragraphs, or bullet points.** If you use ChatGPT, please rewrite it in your own words and provide a citation.

The discussions will be graded 20% summary, 20% personal and critical reaction, 20% on analysis and discussion of how it relates to the course themes, and 20% on length, content, grammar and punctuation.

Another 20% of the grade will be for at least three REPLIES of a minimum of 50 words or 3 complete sentences to other students. At the end of the semester, the two lowest discussion grades will be dropped.

Rubric for forum discussions - Minimum word count for posts: 300 words.
Minimum of 3 replies.

Online Forum Discussions Rubric (40 Points)

Required elements	Poor (1-3)	Fair (4-5)	Good (6-7)	Excellent (8)	Total
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Required elements	Poor (1-3)	Fair (4-5)	Good (6-7)	Excellent (8)	Total
(20%) Brief Summary	Missing forum post or is less than 50% of the minimum word count.	Too short, fails to meet the minimum word count. Factual errors,	Factually accurate but too long and wordy. Shows that the student read or viewed the source.	Factually accurate, concise and brief. Shows that the student read or viewed the source.	
(20%) Significance and relevance and reaction.	No mention of significance or relevance	Significance mentioned in passing but minimally.	Significance mentioned but could be amplified.	Good clear explanation of importance of topic.	
(20%) Personal and critical reaction.	No reaction is mentioned	Brief and indirect mention of reaction.	Brief but clear mention of reaction.	Good, clear statement of reaction.	

Required elements	Poor (1-3)	Fair (4-5)	Good (6-7)	Excellent (8)	Total
(20%) Mechanics-grammar, word choice, spelling, sentence structure	Unacceptable.	Many errors of grammar, spelling, word choices, vague or confusing sentences	Some few errors of grammar, spelling, word choices, poor sentence structure.	No errors of grammar, spelling, word choices or sentence structure.	
(20%) Replies.	No reaction is mentioned	Only one reply.	Only two short replies.	3 substantial replies of more than 50 words.	
Total score					40

- Forum discussions will be open for several weeks. After the first week grace period, 10 percent will be deducted each week after that until it closes.
- See the rubric (above) for criteria for evaluating the originality and quality of students' comments and grade credit expected
- Forum discussions will be graded within 3 days.

Written Assignments

Two major essays of 1,100 to 1,200 words each and one essay revision will be required regarding a topic chosen from the provided options. Both essays together constitute 20 percent of your final grade. The essays should be 3 or 4 pages double-spaced, or about 1,100 to 1,200 words in length, and submitted to Turnitin via Canvas (no written assignments will be accepted or graded through

email).

Detailed essay instructions will be provided in the *Assignments* course section.

Each writing assignment needs to cite sources in footnotes (or properly formatted 'short form' in-text citations) according to the Chicago Manual of Style format, and follow the layout specifications provided on the assignment prompts.

Technical issues are not acceptable excuses for failing to submit papers by the deadline, which means that you must leave yourself enough time to successfully submit your paper with extra time to account for technical problems. Always double check to ensure that you successfully submitted your assignment.

[always keep the receipts!] Note: all writing assignments must be submitted in either Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF format (.docx, .doc, or .pdf) Submissions of any other file type will not be accepted and will be counted as missing with appropriate late penalties applied until the correct format is submitted.

Documents from Apple products such as Pages are not compatible with Canvas and will not open for grading.

Essays or other assignment will not be accepted by email, and must be uploaded properly in the appropriate drop box to receive a grade.

General Guidelines

- Each essay must be written with a thesis statement and supported with evidence.
- Each essay should draw evidence from primary sources, secondary sources, and class lectures.
- All source material must be cited correctly using MLA or Chicago Style and long quotes should be avoided.
- You may use ChatGPT as part of your research as long as you write the ideas in your own words and provide citations as well as a citation and reference for ChatGPT.
- **DO NOT use subheads, numbered paragraphs, or bullet points.** Points will be deducted for posts with flawless writing and any of the above-

mentioned formatting elements. ChatGPT or other AI programs can be used to seek helpful information as long as you do not copy and paste but rather write the information in your own words, and provide citations and a reference source.

- The essay must follow proper formatting guidelines. It is standard for college essays that body text be double spaced, there must be a proper title page with complete information such as author, course number and name, names of the institution (or department) and instructor. Also, the semester or date.
- The essay must draw from at least four sources (including the textbook and YouTube videos) and provide properly formatted in-text (short form) citations or footnotes, and a properly formatted List of References at the end of the essay.
- Writing should demonstrate knowledge and awareness of standard written English.
- Essays must be submitted in the Assignments section. No essays or written work will be accepted via email. If you have technical difficulties, document your issue and contact the student help desk or your professor immediately for assistance.

Essay Rubric

Category (10 points each)	Exceeds Standard (10-9)	Meets Standard (8-7)	Nearly Meets Standard (6-5)	Poorly Meets Standard (4-3)	Does Not Meet Standard (2-0)	Score (total of 100 pts)
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Category (10 points each)	Exceeds Standard (10-9)	Meets Standard (8-7)	Nearly Meets Standard (6-5)	Poorly Meets Standard	Does Not Meet Standard	Score (total of
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				(4-3)	(2-0)	100 pts)
Cover page	(10-9) Clearly and concisely presents the date, the name of the course, the name of the professor and the student's name with a cover page.	(8-7) date, the names of the course, professor and student name are included at the beginning of essay.	(6-5) Most pertinent (date, names, course information) information is included.	(6-5) Some information is included.	(2-0) No information is included.	

Follows instructions	(10-9) Clearly and accurately follows all instructions regarding word count, format, subject matter and due date.	(8-7) adequately follows most instructions regarding word count, format, and due date.	(6-5) nearly follows most instructions.	(4-3) does not follow most instructions.	(2-0) Did not follow instructions.	
Thesis Statement	(10-9) Clearly and concisely states the paper's purpose in a single engaging and thought provoking sentence.	(8-7) Clearly states the paper's purpose in a single sentence.	(6-5) States the paper's purpose, though unfocused and not in a single sentence.	(4-3) The thesis statement is incomplete and/or unfocused.	(2-0) The thesis statement is missing	

Introduction	(10-9) The introduction is engaging and thoughtful; states the main topic (thesis statement) and introduces the structure of the paper and supporting evidence.	(8-7) The introduction states the main topic but poorly introduces the structure of the paper and supporting evidence.	(6-5) The introduction rambles and does not introduce the structure of the paper and/or supporting evidence.	(4-3) There is no clear introduction or main topic and the structure of the paper is missing.	(2-0) Missing, no introduction	
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Organization and Development of Main Idea	(10-9) Demonstrates logical sequencing of supporting evidence through well-developed paragraphs and sentences that support the main idea; good transitions	(8-7) Organization and development are present and sufficient supporting evidence is provided.	(6-5) There is some logical organization, but insufficient supporting evidence is provided.	(4-3) Lacks structure and organization. Poor development of the main idea.	(2-0) No evidence of structure or the organization and development of the main idea.	
Body	(10-9) A dear topic sentence provided. Each paragraph includes supporting evidence that develops and supports the thesis statement.	(8-7) Includes topic sentence paragraph development. Paragraphs transition from one to the next.	(6-5) Topic sentence is not clear. Paragraphs do not transition from one to the next.	(4-3) Missing topic sentence. Paragraphs lack sentence structure and flow. Supporting evidence missing.	(2-0) Paragraphs fail to develop the thesis statement.	

Grammar, Writing Mechanics	(10-9) No errors in punctuation, spelling sentence structure, and word usage. Exceeds the minimum word count.	(8-7) Minimal errors in punctuation, spelling sentence structure, and word usage. Meets the minimum word count	(6-5) Several errors in punctuation, spelling sentence structure, and word usage. Falls short of the minimum word count.	(4-3) Numerous and distracting errors in punctuation, spelling sentence structure and word usage.	(2-0) Did not provide enough information to evaluate. Less than 50% of the minimum word count.	
Conclusion	(10-9) The conclusion is engaging and restates the thesis and supporting evidence presented.	(8-7) The conclusion restates the thesis argument and supporting evidence.	(6-5) The conclusion does not adequately restate the thesis or supporting evidence.	(4-3) The conclusion is incomplete and/or unfocused.	(2-0) Missing	
Citation	(10-9) All ideas and sources are cited correctly in one consistent format with no errors.	(8-7) Some ideas and sources are cited correctly and follow a consistent format.	(6-5) Inconsistencies evident. Citations are missing throughout and/or lack a consistent format	(4-3) Little or few citations were provided and they were in the wrong format.	(2-0) No citations at all.	

Bibliography or works cited)	(10-9)	(8-7)	(6-5)	(4-3)	(2-0)	
	Consistent formatting with no errors. Includes at least 6 major references	Consistent formatting with few errors. Includes at least 5 major references (journal articles, books, videos, music, etc.).	Done in a consistent format with some errors. Includes at least 4 major references (e g. journal articles, books, etc.)	Use of a format is present and/ or with many errors. Includes 2 major references	Missing or the only references are internet sites.	
TOTAL SCORE						100

Quizzes and Exams

In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the Practice Quiz from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes and exams. Assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and should not be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet.

- There will be **15 weekly quizzes** on assigned readings. The Quiz questions are randomly selected multiple choice questions. I leave the quizzes open for a few days grace period but **once the quizzes close, I will not reopen quizzes for late submission for any reason (including DRC)**. You will have 30 minutes to answer 10 multiple-choice questions for each quiz.

The Midterm Exam will cover the first eight quizzes and will use the same multiple-choice questions from the quizzes. You will have 120 minutes to complete the exam.

The Final Exam will be comprehensive and will cover all the quizzes from modules 1-15 weekly readings. The final will also use the same multiple-choice questions from the quizzes. You will have 180 minutes to complete the exam.

Quizzes and exams are automatically graded and results will be available immediately after completion. The midterm and final will be worth 10 percent each of the final grade.

In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the Practice Quiz from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes and exams. Assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and should not be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet.

Assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and should not be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet. If you need further assistance please contact [FIU Online Support Services](#) .

For more information, please review the [important information about quizzes](#) page.

Proctored Exams

Please note that the information contained in this section applies only if your course requires a proctored exam.

Through a careful examination of this syllabus, it is the student's responsibility to determine whether this online course requires proctored exams. Please visit our [Student Proctored Exam Instructions](#) webpage for important information concerning proctored exams, proctoring centers, and important forms.

Zoom Video Conference

Zoom is a video conference tool that you can use to interact with your professor

and fellow students by sharing screens, chatting, broadcasting live video/audio, and taking part in other interactive online activities.

Zoom meetings can be accessed via the Zoom link in the course navigation menu. Once you click on the Zoom link, it will route you to join the meeting for the respective class session. You will also be able to view upcoming meetings, previous meetings that you have already joined, and meeting recordings. Before joining an actual class session:

Reference the [Zoom Student Tutorials](#) to learn about the tool, how to access your meeting room, and share your screen.

Access the [Zoom Test Meeting Room](#) to test out the software before joining an actual session.

If you encounter any technical difficulties, please contact the [FIU Canvas Help Team](#). Please ensure you contact support immediately upon the issue occurring.

Grading

Course Grades Distribution Table

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Points of Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Discussion Forums	16	40	400	40%
Writing Assignments	2	100	200	20%
Exams	2	100	200	20%
Participation	6	20	100	10%
Reading Quizzes	15	10	100	10%

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Points of Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Total	10	N/A	1000	100%

Letter Grade Distribution Table

Letter Grade	Sample Range %
A	95 - 100
A-	90 – 94.99
B+	87 – 89.99
B	83 – 86.99
B-	80 – 82.99
C+	77 – 79.99
C	70 – 76.99
D	60 – 69.99
F	0 – 59.99

Schedule of Topics

Module 1	Introduction	• Arterbury Ch1 Places to begin. Genesis 1-11.
Module 2	Part One: The Old Testament-Pentateuch	• Arterbury Ch2, pp. 25-37, • Genesis 12-50
Module 3	The Old Testament-Pentateuch	• Arterbury Ch2, pp. 37-67, • Exodus
Module 4	The Old Testament, Prophets: Judges, Amos, Hosea.	• Arterbury Ch3, pp.69-89, • Judges, Amos, Hosea.
Module 5	The Old Testament, Prophets: Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zephaniah.	• Arterbury Ch3, pp.89-109, • Isaiah, Jeremiah, Zephaniah
Module 6	The Old Testament, Writings: Psalm 118, Proverbs.	• Arterbury Ch4, pp.111-123 • Psalm 118, Proverbs.
Module 7	The Old Testament, Writings: Daniel, Ruth.	• Arterbury Ch4, pp.124-135 • Daniel, Ruth.
	Spring Break - University Closed	
Module 8	The Intertestamental period Midterm Exam	• Arterbury Ch5, pp.135-153

Module 9	Part Two, The New Testament – The Gospels and Acts of the Apostles	• Arterbury Ch6, pp.155-180 • Matthew and John
Module 10	The New Testament – The Gospels and Acts of the Apostles	• Arterbury Ch6, pp.180-205 • Luke and Acts
Module 11	The New Testament – The Pauline Tradition	• Arterbury Ch7, pp.207-228 • Galatians, 1 Thessalonians
Module 12	The New Testament – The Pauline Tradition 2	• Arterbury Ch7, pp.228-249 • Corinthians, Philippians
Module 13	The New Testament – General Letters	• Arterbury Ch8, pp.251-261 • Hebrews, James, First Peter
Module 14	The New Testament – General Letters	• Arterbury Ch8, pp.261-272
Module 15	Conclusion: Overarching Story of the Christian Scriptures	• Arterbury Conclusion, pp.273-
Module 16	John and Revelation Final Exam	• Jude, the Johannine letters • Review and final exam

Course Awards



Quality Matters: This certification mark recognizes that this course met Quality Matters review standard

Nondiscrimination Statement

The **Office of Civil Rights** (OCR) is responsible for ensuring that FIU maintains a workplace and learning environment free from discrimination, where current and prospective faculty, staff, and students are treated equitably. If any student, employee, or applicant has a sincere and reasonable belief that they have been discriminated against or harassed based on age, color, disability, marital status, ethnic or national origin, race, religion, retaliation, sex, or any other protected category, they can report their concerns to the OCR team through report.fiu.edu.