

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

# RELS205

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## Course Summary

**Course :** RELS205 **Title :** Christianity

**Length of Course :** 8

**Prerequisites :** none **CreditHours:**3

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## Description

### Course Description:

An introduction to Christianity as a world religion — with origins, history, beliefs, literature, ritual and practical ethics as points of departure — this course places emphasis on understanding the multiple and complex global interpretations of Christianity as expressed by the great church traditions (including Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Protestant denominations, and traditional churches of the Middle East and Africa) and in regional variations worldwide.

Students will study key events in the history of Christianity, such as the iconoclasm and the rise of Islam, schism between East and West, Crusades, Reformation, and the role of the Enlightenment with attention paid to key councils, authoritative decisions of historic church leaders, and the writings of some the most influential global Christian voices. For each of the focal points we will consider the historical, geographic and cultural contexts, and listen to the various participants in key debates —winners and losers. Students will have an opportunity to examine Christian influence on art, literature, science, intellectual movements, and politics through the history.

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## Objectives

1. Identify the origins and basic beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity
  2. Critically evaluate the challenges that Christianity encountered throughout history
  3. Differentiate the role of Scripture (The Holy Bible) among different branches, sects and denominations globally.
  4. Recognize the diversity of Christian beliefs and practices as expressed in various denominations, and as related to geographical and cultural settings.
  5. Explore Christianity as both an intellectual and artistic tradition as well as a confessional faith.
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## Outline

**Week 1:** Origins and Beginnings

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Learning Objectives:

This week you will:

1. Explore key beliefs and theological positions fundamental to the definition of "Christian".
2. Discuss what Christian approach to life looked in the first three generations of its followers including its challenges & diversity.
3. Explore theological terminology & perspective tied to the "Doctrine of God".

Reading(s)

See [https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course\\_id=81076](https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course_id=81076)

Assignment(s)

- Week 1 Discussion
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## **Week 2: Encountering Islam, responses of Church councils**

Learning Objectives:

This week you will:

- 2.2 Discuss how heresy & theological drift leads to schism
- 3.2 Summarize the rise of Islam and its impact on Christian practice
- 4.1 Explore the unique history of the Ethiopian church
- 5.1 Discuss how architecture can be an expression of and inspiration for faith.
- 5.2 Research the didactic value of architecture in the light of faith.

Reading(s)

See [https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course\\_id=81076](https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course_id=81076)

Assignment(s)

- Week 2 Discussion
  - Week 2 Assignment "People and Places"
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## **Week 3: Iconography and Slavic Churches**

Learning Objectives:

This week you will:

1. Identify the rise of the Slavic church as unique in practice
2. Compare Eastern modes of worship
3. Discuss the role of iconography in the Slavic tradition

Reading(s)

See [https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course\\_id=81076](https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course_id=81076)

Assignment(s)

- Week 3 Discussion
- Week 3 Assignment "Historic Advice"

#### **Week 4: The Great Schism**

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##### **Learning Objectives:**

This week you will:

1. Explore the history and transmission of scripture
2. Explore the fundamental theological arguments leading to schism
3. Identify the three new branches of Christianity from the Great Schism forward.
4. Discuss the implications of the schism for denominationalism.
5. Demonstrate a fundamental understanding of the “Doctrine of Salvation”

Reading(s)

See [https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course\\_id=81076](https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course_id=81076)

Assignment(s)

- Week 4 Historic Advice Assignment
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#### **Week 5: Crusades**

##### **Learning Objectives:**

This week you will:

1. Explore the Crusades as a political phenomenon and a clash of cultures vs. a war of ideology
2. Examine the crusades from the perspective of Portugal

Reading(s)

See [https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course\\_id=81076](https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course_id=81076)

Assignment(s)

- Week 5 Discussion (optional)
  - Week 5 Denominations Assignment
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#### **Week 6: Christian Reformation**

##### **Learning Objectives:**

This week you will:

1. Explore the intersection of the printing press and the Protestant Reformation
2. Research the intersection of belief, culture, language, and practice of a denomination of interest.

Reading(s)

See [https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course\\_id=81076](https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course_id=81076)

Assignment(s)

- Week 6 Assignment [post it in the discussion area, not the “assignments” tab]
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## Week 7: Enlightenment

### Learning Objectives:

This week you will:

1. Discuss the impact of a religious faith on world view
2. Illustrate how American secular culture is rooted in a spiritual ethos (i.e. individuals have value, life has meaning)

### Reading(s)

See [https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course\\_id=81076](https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course_id=81076)

### Assignment(s)

- Week 7 Discussion
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## Week 8: Modern Christianity

### Learning Objectives:

This week you will:

1. Evaluate the suitability of open web resources for academic study related to topics discussed in this course.
2. Discuss the ways this course connects to other opportunities for learning here at APUS.

### Reading(s)

See [https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course\\_id=81076](https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course_id=81076)

### Assignment(s)

- Week 8 Assignment and Discussion [posted in the discussion space, NOT in “assignments”]

## Evaluation

Category	Weight
Discussions	40%
Assignments	60%
<i>Total</i>	<i>100%</i>

## Materials

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Dowley, Tim. *A Brief Introduction to Christianity*. Edited by Christopher Partridge, vol. 2, 1517 Media, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv47w46q>.

Tallon, Phil. *The Absolute Basics of the Christian Faith, Illustrated Video Series*. Andrew

Chandler, Artist. Seedbed 2021. (ABC's)

Ayer, Joseph Cullen. "A Source Book for Ancient Church History, from the Apostolic Age to the Close of the Conciliar Period." *The American Historical Review*, vol. 19, no. 4, July 1914, p. 850. DOI.org (Crossref), <https://doi.org/10.2307/1836837>.

\*NOTE: All materials are provided in the classroom within the weekly lesson resources, available here: [https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course\\_id=81076](https://apus.libguides.com/er.php?course_id=81076)

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## Course Guidelines

Please review the "Course Overview and Introduction" in your classroom, by visiting the Content tab, and clicking "Course Overview and Introduction." In this section, you will find the *Guidelines and Resources*, and the *Discussion Guidelines*.