

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.

# RELS206

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## Course Summary

**Course :** RELS206 **Title :** **Length of Course :** 8 **Prerequisites :** N/A **Credit Hours :** 3

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## Course Description

Over the past 2,000 years, the influence of Christianity has grown to impact almost every corner of the world as the largest religion in our time. This course will provide an academic survey of the modern issues that are currently impacting Contemporary Christianity through the study of selected themes, movements, religious contexts, theologies, philosophies, and beliefs with attention to its continuing religious and cultural impact.

It delves into the study of Contemporary Christian issues including the nature of the Bible, science and evolution, gender and sexuality, World Christianity, persecution, the decline of Christianity in America, church and state, racism, freedom, art and technology, ecology, sports, and institutions.

## Course Scope:

This course provides students an academic survey of the modern issues found in Contemporary Christianity incorporating the use of current academic methods of religious studies to assess their continuing religious and cultural impact upon the Christian church and society today. Special attention will be given to incorporating study results with practical life applications personally and professionally.

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## Objectives

After successfully completing this course students will be able to:

1. CO1 Define the challenges and opportunities inherent in the study of Contemporary Christianity.
2. CO2 Discuss Contemporary Christianity trends and other aspects.
3. CO3 Demonstrate the ways in which the Christian context, religiosity, and in some cases, their ministry, are being challenged in Contemporary Christianity and how they can effectively respond to it for communicating with others.
4. CO4 Explore the ways in which an awareness of the realities in Contemporary Christianity can produce a fresh perspective of these issues.

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# Outline

## Week 1: Introduction to the Academic Study of Contemporary Christianity

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### Learning Outcomes

1. Decipher the challenges and opportunities that exist in determining a working academic definition of Contemporary Christianity. (CO1.1)
2. Detail the foundational principles of Phenomenology, the Functional Perspective, and Lived Religion as effective academic methods of religious studies and the type of results that can be generated through their use in the study of Contemporary Christianity. (CO2.1)
3. Recount how predictions at the end of the 20th century in relation to the issues of Contemporary Christianity forecast in the 21st century have helped to pave the way in exploring the issues found in Contemporary Christianity today. (CO3.1)

### Required Readings

### Week 1 Readings and Resources

### Week 1 Learning Materials

### Assignments

### Week 1 Discussion Introduction

### Recommended Optional Reading

### Recommended Media

## Week 2: The Contemporary Challenges to Biblical Authority Christianity

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### Learning Outcomes

1. 2.2 Compare and contrast the opposing academic arguments of debate found in the contemporary challenges to biblical authority.
2. 1.2 Select one (1) side of the contemporary debate and academically defend your position on this issue.
  1. 4.1 Employ the use of one (1) academic method of religious study in the development of your solution to make life applications personally and for the Christian church today.

### Required Readings

### Week 2 Readings and Resources

### Week 2 Learning Material

### Assignments

### Week 2 Discussion

### Recommended Optional Reading

## **Week 3: Contemporary Christian Theologies Learning Outcomes**

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### Learning Outcomes

1. 2.3 Identify and define the most popular contemporary Christian theologies that are found in Christianity and are impacting Christian ministry today.
2. 4.2 Evaluate the contemporary Christian theologies and consider the foundational principles as to their strengths and weaknesses and application in Christendom.
3. 3.2 Academically defend the use and application of a contemporary Christian theology and the representative alignment of practical applications for addressing issues in Christian ministry today.

### Required Readings

### Week 3 Readings and Resources

### Week 3 Learning Material

### Assignments

### Week 3 Discussion

### Week 3 Informational Brochure

### Recommended Optional Reading

### Recommended Media

## **Week 4: Contemporary Christianity in a Scientific World**

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### Learning Outcomes

1. 3.3 Identify the academic issues found in the debate between Christianity, science, evolution, and environmental stewardship.
2. 4.3 Define the implications of these issues on life in the contemporary Christian church

### Required Readings

### Week 4 Readings and Resources

### Week 4 Learning Material

### Assignments

### Week 4 Discussion

### Recommended Optional Reading

### Recommended Media

## **Week 5: Contemporary Christianity in America**

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### Learning Outcomes

1. 2.4 Explore the arguments of debate that are applied in the academic study of the First Amendment of the United States Constitution in association with the Establishment Clause and the Free Exercise Clause as they relate to the issues of the separation of church and state in the practice of Contemporary Christianity.

2. 3.4 Assess the academic issues found in the debate as to whether-or-not America is a Christian nation.
3. 4.4 Evaluate and apply an academic method of religious study to the issue of Sports and Christianity as they relate to the study of Contemporary Christianity.

Required Readings

Week 5 Readings and Resources

Week 5 Learning Material

Assignments

Week 5 Discussion

Week 5 A Contemporary Christianity Ministry Proposal

Recommended Optional Reading

Recommended Media

## **Week 6: Social Movements in Contemporary Christianity**

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Learning Outcomes

1. 2.5 Explore the arguments of debate that are applied in the academic study of Contemporary Christianity in addressing the social movement of Racism and Christian church diversity.
2. 4.5 Assess the academic issues found in the arguments of debate that are applied in the academic study of Contemporary Christianity in addressing the LGBT social movement in the Christian church.
3. 3.5 Probe the arguments of debate that are applied in the academic study of Contemporary Christianity in addressing the social movement of Christian Persecution in the Christian church

Required Readings

Week 6 Readings and Resources

Week 6 Lesson Material

Assignments

Week 6 Discussion

Recommended Optional Reading

Recommended Media

## **Week 7: Contemporary Christianity and the Arts**

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Learning Outcomes

1. 4.6 Evaluate the relationship that exists between Contemporary Christianity and the Arts by employing the use of Phenomenology as an academic method of religious studies.
2. 2.6 Discover the important role and value Art and Technology has played in the history of the Christian church and the application of it in the lives of Christians and the church today

Required Readings

Week 7 Readings and Resources

Week 7 Learning Material

## Assignments

Week 7 Discussion (Optional)

Week 7 Multimedia Presentation: My Favorite Topic in Contemporary Christianity

Recommended Optional Reading

Recommended Media

## Week 8: The Future of Contemporary Christianity

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### Learning Outcomes

1. 1.3 Assess the variety of predictions that are made for the future of Contemporary Christianity and the church
2. 4.7 Develop personal predictions for the future of Contemporary Christianity that are based upon resources provided.

### Required Readings

Week 8 Readings and Resources

Week 8 Lesson Material

## Assignments

Week 8 Discussion

Recommended Optional Reading

Recommended Media

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## Evaluation

Discussions: 40%

Assignments: 30%

Presentation: 30%

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## Materials

**Book Title:** Various resources from Trefry Library and/or the Open Web are used. Links provided inside the classroom.

**Author:**

**Publication Info:**

**ISBN:** D2L Note

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# Course Guidelines

## Late Submission of Work

Students are expected to submit assignments by the due dates listed in the classroom. Late assignments, including but not limited to Assignments, Discussions, posts and responses, quizzes, and exams, may or may not be accepted after the course end date. Submitting an assignment after the due date may result in a penalty of up to 10% of the grade per day late, not to exceed a maximum 50% of the grade. The amount of the penalty is at the faculty member's discretion. Faculty recognize that students have limited time and may be more flexible if potential delays are communicated ahead of time.

\* \*Doctoral and Programs with specialty accreditation may have different late policies. \*\*Students with DSA accommodations may have different late policies applied.

## Citation and Reference Style

Students will follow the current edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) Style Guide as the sole citation and reference style used in written work submitted as part of coursework to this course. Assignments completed in a narrative essay or composition format must follow APA formatting.

## Discussion Assignments

These are interactive dialog assignments designed to help you connect with your classmates in course related discourse and form a learning community. They are located under the "Discussions" of your course screen. Please carefully read the discussion prompt each week. Post your initial response by 11:59 PM on Wednesday of the week and 2 reply posts to classmates by 11:59 PM on Sunday of the week. The grading rubric and requirements for discussions can be found in the Discussion section of the classroom. You are encouraged to post substantively and on-time as this facilitates the advancement of the discussion. Netiquette Online universities promote the advancement of knowledge through positive and constructive debate –both inside and outside the classroom. Discussions on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and "flaming." Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a university setting – basic academic rules of good behavior and proper "Netiquette" must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the rewards and excitement of learning which does not include descent to personal attacks or student attempts to stifle the Discussion of others. Technology Limitations: While you should feel free to explore the full-range of creative composition in your formal papers, keep e-mail layouts simple. The classroom may not fully support MIME or HTML encoded messages, which means that bold face, italics, underlining, and a variety of color-coding or other visual effects will not translate in your e-mail messages. Humor Note: Despite the best of intentions, jokes and especially satire can easily get lost or taken seriously. If you feel the need for humor, you may wish to add "emoticons" to help alert your readers.

## APUS Online Library

The Online Library is available to enrolled students and faculty from inside the electronic campus. This is your starting point for access to online books, subscription periodicals, and Web resources that are designed to support your classes and generally not available through search engines on the open Web. In addition, the Online Library provides access to special learning resources, which the University has contracted to assist with your studies. Questions can be directed to [librarian@apus.edu](mailto:librarian@apus.edu).

Charles Town Library and Inter Library Loan: The University maintains a special library with a limited number of supporting volumes, collection of our professors' publication, and services to search and borrow research books and articles from other libraries. Electronic

Books: You can use the online library to uncover and download over 50,000 titles, which have been scanned and made available in electronic format.

Electronic Journals: The University provides access to over 12,000 journals, which are available in electronic form and only through limited subscription services.

Tutor.com: AMU and APU Civilian & Coast Guard students are eligible for 10 free hours of tutoring provided by APUS. Tutor.com connects you with a professional tutor online 24/7 to provide help with assignments, studying, test prep, resume writing, and more. Tutor.com is tutoring the way it was meant to be. You can get expert tutoring whenever you need help and work one-to-one with your tutor on your specific problem

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## Communications

### Student Communication

To reach the instructor, please communicate through the MyClassroom email function accessible from the Classlist of the Course Tools menu, where the instructor and students email addresses are listed, or via the Office 365 tool on the Course homepage.

- In emails to instructors, it's important to note the specific course in which you are enrolled. The name of the course is at the top center of all pages.
- Students and instructors communicate in Discussion posts and other learning activities.
- All interactions should follow APUS guidelines, as noted in the [Student Handbook](#), and maintain a professional, courteous tone.
- Students should review writing for spelling and grammar.
- [Tips on Using the Office 365 Email Tool](#)

### Instructor Communication

The instructor will post announcements on communications preferences involving email and Instant Messaging and any changes in the class schedule or activities.

- Instructors will periodically post information on the expectations of students and will provide feedback on assignments, Discussion posts, quizzes, and exams.
  - Instructors will generally acknowledge student communications within 24 hours and respond within 48 hours, except in unusual circumstances (e.g., illness).
  - The APUS standard for grading of all assessments (assignments, Discussions, quizzes, exams) is five days or fewer from the due date.
  - Final course grades are submitted by faculty no later than seven days after the end date of the course or the end of the extension period.
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## University Policies

Consult the [Student Handbook](#) for processes and policies at APUS. Notable policies:

- [Drop/Withdrawal Policy](#)
- [Extension Requests](#)
- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Appeals](#)
- [Academic Dishonesty / Plagiarism](#)
- [Disability Accommodations](#)
- [Student Deadlines](#)
- [Video Conference Policy](#)



## Mission

The [mission of American Public University System](#) is to provide high quality higher education with emphasis on educating the nation's military and public service communities by offering respected, relevant, accessible, affordable, and student-focused online programs that prepare students for service and leadership in a diverse, global society.

## Minimum Technology Requirements

- Please consult the catalog for the minimum hardware and software required for [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) courses.
- Although students are encouraged to use the [Pulse mobile app](#) with any course, please note that not all course work can be completed via a mobile device.

## Disclaimers

- Please note that course content – and, thus, the syllabus – may change between when a student registers for a course and when the course starts.
- Course content may vary from the syllabus' schedule to meet the needs of a particular group.