

**CURE 1124 / UGED 1520      STUDY OF CHRISTIANITY    Term 2, 2024-25**

**Lecturer:** Prof. LAI Pan-chiu (pclai@cuhk.edu.hk)

**Tutor:** TBA

**Venue:** Lecture – LSK 306, Thursday 10:30-12:15

Tutorial – LSK 306 / LSK 208, Thursday 12:30-13:15

### **Course Description**

This course attempts to introduce Christianity as a multi-dimensional and diversified religious movement as well as the relevant methodological approaches to the study of it. Through making references to the manifestations of Christianity in various cultural, historical and social contexts, this course also aims to understand Christianity's relationship with other religions as well as the unity and plurality of Christianity as a global religion. References to relevant cases in Christianity in China, particularly Hong Kong, will be made for illustration purpose.

### **Expected Learning Outcomes**

Knowledge:

- To achieve proper understanding of Christianity as a global phenomenon and some of the representative manifestations of Christianity in various local contexts.
- To obtain a comprehensive knowledge of the major aspects of Christian faith, especially its views of the meaning of human life.
- To have a basic understanding of the methodology involved in the multidisciplinary study of Christianity.

Skills:

- To be able to use the analytical framework and hermeneutical tools for the academic studies of the religious phenomena related to Christianity.
- To be capable of relating what have been learnt from this course to some other academic disciplines.
- To have the ability to reflect critically on one's own cultural and / or religious tradition.

Attitudes:

- To treasure the value of human life and be sensitive to the related ethical responsibilities.
- To appreciate the diversity within particular cultural and / religious tradition.
- To become more respectful to others' religions, worldviews and values.

## Schedule

Week	Lecture	Main Themes & Key Concepts	Further Readings
<b>Jan 9</b>	Introduction: Approaches to the Study of Christianity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Religious Studies vis-à-vis Christian Theology</li> <li>* Seven dimensions of religion</li> <li>* Christianity or Christianities?</li> </ul>	<p>Chryssides &amp; Geaves 2007: 35-64 (chapter 2) [primarily for non-RS major]</p> <p>Lai 2006: 67-88 (chapter 3)</p> <p>Pearson 1997: 7-22, 169-185 (chapters 1 &amp; 9)</p>
<b>Jan 16</b>	Origins of Christianity & Primitive Christianity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Judaism &amp; Hellenism</li> <li>* Historical Jesus</li> <li>* Paul &amp; the Rise of Christianity</li> </ul>	<p>Borg 1997: 121-147 (chapter 8)</p> <p>Bultmann 1980: 175-208</p> <p>Stark 1997: 3-47 (chapters 1 &amp; 2)</p>
<b>Jan 23</b>	History & Diversity of Christianity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Major types of Christianity</li> <li>* Marginalized Christianity</li> <li>* Paradigm shifts in Christianity</li> </ul>	<p>Jacobsen 2011: 7-61 (chapters 1-4)</p> <p>Küng 1988: 47-84 (chapters 2 &amp; 3)</p> <p>Jenkins 2008: ix-xi &amp; 1-44 (note &amp; chapter 1)</p>
<b>Jan 30</b>	No class	Public holiday	
<b>Feb 6</b>	Narrative or Mythic Dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Scriptures, Bible, and Canon</li> <li>* Inspiration and Inerrancy</li> <li>* Use and abuse of the Bible</li> </ul>	<p>Barr 1984: 110-130 (chapters 12 &amp; 13)</p> <p>Lüdemann 1997: 76-127 (chapter 3)</p> <p>J. Dunn, 1990, 369-388 (chapter 15)</p>

<b>Feb 13</b>	Doctrinal & Philosophical Dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Doctrine, Orthodoxy, and Heresy</li> <li>* Creed &amp; Confession</li> <li>* Nature &amp; Task of Theology</li> </ul>	<p>McGrath 2015: 54-120 (chapter 3) [Or: first edition: chapters 7-8]</p> <p>Olson 2002: 29-69 (chapters 1 &amp; 2)</p> <p>Macquarie 1977: 1-40 (chapter 1)</p>
<b>Feb 20</b>	Practical & Ritual Dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Sign and Symbol</li> <li>* Ritual and Liturgy</li> <li>* Sacraments</li> </ul>	<p>Tillich 1958: 41-54 (chapter 3)</p> <p>Lawler 1995: 29-63 (chapter 2)</p> <p>McKenzie 1988: 75-105 (chapters 5 &amp; 6)</p>
<b>Feb 27</b>	Ethical & Legal Dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Love and sin</li> <li>* Human Life, Death, and Dying</li> <li>* Political &amp; Ecological Ethics</li> </ul>	<p>Keeling 1990: 81-145 (chapter 3)</p> <p>Rogers 2002: 275-288 (chapter 26)</p> <p>Bonino 1983:87-115 (chapters 7-8 &amp; epilogue)</p>
<b>March 6</b>	Reading week		
<b>March 13</b>	Mid-term exam	Short questions	
<b>March 20</b>	Social & Institutional Dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Church Polity</li> <li>* Church &amp; Society</li> <li>* Church &amp; State</li> </ul>	<p>Troeltsch: 991-1014 (Chapter 17)</p> <p>Casanova 1994: 135-166 (chapter 6)</p> <p>Guo 2001: 231-281 (chapters 5 &amp; 6)</p>
<b>March 27</b>	Experiential & Emotional Dimension	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Spirituality and Mysticism</li> <li>* Monasticism</li> <li>* Prayer</li> </ul>	<p>McGrath 1999: 82-109 (chapter 5)</p> <p>M. Dunn 2003: 59-81 (chapter 4)</p> <p>McGinn et al 1989: 395-426 (chapter 16)</p>

<b>April 3</b>	Material Dimension	* Icon and Visual Art * Church Architecture * Christian Music	Dyrness 2008: 109-130 (chapter 6) Koch 1996: 14-79 (chapter 2) Schmidt 2001: 314-344 (chapter 13)
<b>April 10</b>	Christianity in evolutionary Perspective	* Sin * Forgiveness * Love	Williams 2001: 124-158 (chaps 8 & 9) Wilson 2002: 189-218 (Chapter 6) Teehan 2010: 104-143 (Chapter 4)
<b>April 17</b>	Global vis-a-vis Local	*Globalization *Indigenization *Glocalization	Johnson 2016. Jenkins 2002: 107-139 (chapter 6) (Chinese version: 159-203] Lai 2006: 163-176 (chapter 8)
<b>April 24</b>	Final Exam	Long questions	

### Assessment Scheme

<b>Class participation</b> Students are required to attend lectures and tutorials unless they have medical or emergency reasons. Active participation will be rewarded. Students who miss more than 5 of the total number of class meetings (lectures and tutorials counted as a whole) cannot pass the course.	<b>10%</b>
<b>Tutorial presentation</b> Each student present one of the assigned readings for about 20 minutes – followed by group discussion. <b>Each student has to send a brief outline (about 2 pages) of his / her presentation to the tutor 3 days before the presentation (Monday, 5:00 pm).</b> If revision is required, the student may submit a revised version to the tutor one day before the presentation (Wednesday 5:00 p.m.).	<b>30%</b>
<b>Mid-term Exam</b>	<b>20%</b>

<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>40%</b>
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### Grade Descriptors

- A Outstanding performance on all learning outcomes.
- A- Generally outstanding performance on all (or almost all) learning outcomes.
- B Substantial performance on all learning outcomes, OR high performance on some learning outcomes which compensates for less satisfactory performance on others, resulting in overall substantial performance.
- C Satisfactory performance on the majority of learning outcomes, possibly with a few weaknesses.
- D Barely satisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes
- F Unsatisfactory performance on a number of learning outcomes, OR failure to meet specified assessment requirements.

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