

**TH 334 001: Christology**

Instructor: Stephen M. Meawad, Ph.D.

Department: Theology and Philosophy

Semester: Fall 2025

Time: Tues. & Thurs. 11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.

Classroom: Werner 109

Office: Visceglia Hall (Student Center), Room 145

Office Hours: Monday through Thursday 9:30-10 a.m.

Monday & Wednesday 12-1 p.m.

**Course description:**

This course “studies the person and mission of Christ as found in the New Testament, church doctrines, and the writings of theologians down to the present.” It will cover thousands of years of writings, thoughts, and beliefs on Jesus the Christ, including the Old Testament understanding of the Messiah, the presence of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity in the Old Testament, Jesus Christ in the New Testament and the early Church, how Christians came to understand Jesus Christ and His salvific works, and various beliefs on the Jesus Christ in modern times, including those of Judaism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Liberation Theology. As the single most influential figure to walk this earth, understanding these perspectives on Jesus Christ are central to understanding current contexts across the globe. This course will dissect this history and theology and their implications.

***Note***: This course satisfies 3 credits for the Enriched Core, Catholic and Dominican Tradition (EC) requirement.

***Important***: The use of any form of Artificial Intelligence (AI) of any kind is strictly prohibited for this class and will result in a failure of that assignment. This includes but is not limited to readings, papers, reflections, and presentations.

**Course learning goals/outcomes:**

* Through this course, students will:
  + Think deeply about the historical person of Jesus Christ and formulate their opinions on Christology coherently.
  + Comprehend the basic biblical narrative as presented in the Old and New Testaments in relation to Jesus Christ.
  + Understand and articulate general categories within the study of Christology generally, and in relation to different perspectives, specifically.
  + Articulate the Christian understanding of the need for a Messiah and how and why Jesus Christ fits those “criteria.”
  + Reflect on how their own experiences are shaped by Jesus Christ, regardless of their personal religious affiliations.
  + Examine Christology in relation to their own personal experiences, combining the two to produce an informed and fair perspective.
  + Express their opinions in a respectful manner that goes beyond the scope of mere opinion and more into the realm of reflective citizens concerned for the common good, fostering perspectives that will promote that good.
  + Learn to articulate their beliefs, perspectives, and opinions as they relate to the accurate historical, socio-political, and religious content of the course.
  + Learn to conduct strong academic research, “communicate effectively in writing,” “demonstrate the ability to use logical reasoning to support conclusions,” and “demonstrate competence in information literacy by selecting, and utilizing and documenting appropriate sources” (University Catalog, p. 38).

**Required Texts:**

* *The Blackwell Companion to Jesus*. Malden, MA : Wiley-Blackwell, 2011.

* + <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/caldwell/detail.action?docID=4041779>
* All other readings will be provided either on Blackboard as PDFs or as URLs on this syllabus below.

**Other resources:**

* Online Study Bible: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/genesis/1>
* All other readings will be provided as PDFs on Blackboard or as URLs on this syllabus below.

**Grading:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Letter Grade** | **Percentage** | **GPA** | **Description** |
| A | 94-100 | 4.0 | Highest Level of achievement |
| A- | 90-93 | 3.75 | Exemplary achievement |
| B+ | 87-89 | 3.5 | Consistently superior achievement |
| B | 84-86 | 3.0 | Very good |
| B- | 80-83 | 2.75 | Good |
| C+ | 77-79 | 2.5 | Above average |
| C | 70-76 | 2.0 | Satisfactory work |
| D+ | 67-69 | 1.5 | Unsatisfactory work |
| D | 60-66 | 1.0 | Poor Performance |
| F | Below 60 | 0.0 | Failure |

**Attendance and Participation (20%):**

Since this course will incorporate a variety of learning strategies, it is imperative that you attend every class session with your reading completed *in advance* of the date for which they are assigned. If some emergency arises that may affect your participation, please contact me ahead of time to apprise me of the situation. **Any unexcused absence or obvious lack of preparation will progressively lower the participation portion of your grade (by three points off your final grade) per class session beyond the first absence**. Missing 5 or more classes will result in notification of the Office of the Dean and potential failure of the course. *Also, please put away cell phones and headphones for the duration of class. Laptop use is not permitted in the classroom*, unless discussed with the professor otherwise*.* Not adhering to these requests will negatively impact your participation grade.

**Discussion Facilitations (10%):**

During each class, a few students will come prepared to help facilitate the in-class discussion that day. One to two students will give brief (3 to 5 minutes) introductions/summaries of the key points for that day’s readings. The other one to two students will be prepared with 3-5 questions that will generate discussion. This does not mean that the entire discussion relies only on these students; their role is only to give a push to the discussion at the beginning. Participation of all students is required every day. If you have any questions regarding your day’s readings and discussion facilitation, please email me or meet with me during office hours. By the end of the semester, each student will have presented an introduction on the readings for one class session and prepared and presented questions for another.

**Jesus Christ in Art Presentation (15%):**

Choose a depiction of Jesus Christ that interests you. Tell us why you chose this image, and research the meaning behind the art, the intention by the artist, all of the symbols or components depicted in the image, and anything else you would want to share with the class. ***Prepare a short PowerPoint presentation that includes this image, and email it to one full day before your presentation. You are also required to upload your presentation to Blackboard.*** You will be asked to share this 5-minute presentation in class on a date that you select on the first day of class. **Do not miss your presentation date.**

**In-class quizzes (20%):**

You will have two short quizzes in class (dates below). These are simple quizzes that require you to reflect on the course materials thoughtfully prior to the quiz. The idea is to make sure you are engaging the facts and combining them with your own perspectives, experiences, and opinions. Just the facts are insufficient, and just your opinion is insufficient. A sample question might be, “Why was the identity of Jesus Christ so important in the early Church, and are there reasons it might still be an important discussion today?” **See quiz dates on schedule below.**

**Documentary Paper (10%):**

You have an option either to attend a colloquium; watch a documentary, movie, TV show; or listen to a podcast or TEDx related to a topic discussed in this class. Non-professional YouTube videos are strongly discouraged. Write a two-page (typed, double-spaced, approximately 500-word) reflection, organized as follows:

* Include the title of the colloquium or documentary, the name(s) of the presenter(s) or main presenters.
* The **first section** of the paper should be a summary paragraph
* Followed by a **second section** explaining how it relates to this course directly
* And concluding with a **third section** on your own personal reaction/reflection.
* **See schedule below for due date.**

**Final Paper (25%):**

Select one topic presented in this course for in-depth analysis. I encourage you to choose a topic that you are passionate about, as this promotes good research. You are to use the resources provided in this course as well as external resources you obtain from your own research.

* For example, if you select the topic of Jesus Christ in the early Church, you might discuss the implications of why one view on Jesus prevailed over another.
* For example, if you choose the view of Judaism on Jesus Christ, you might demonstrate evidence for why one view might make more sense than the other.
* For example, if you write about an atheistic rejection of Jesus Christ as mere human, you might present a paper that discusses the difficulty of holding this view in light of the impact Jesus Christ made on history. How do you make sense of this shift in history?
* For example, you could write about the historical evidence supporting the existence of Jesus Christ and why this is important.
* These are just potential examples. You are free to be creative and think of your own topics for a research paper that you are excited about and that you feel can contribute to your own knowledge as well as that of those around you. Feel free to consult with me regarding your topic paper if you would like.
* **A clear thesis statement that articulates the point of your paper’s argument is required for this paper.**
* **Please submit final paper as a PDF or Word document. Google docs and Notes docs are not acceptable.**

The essay will be no less than 4 full pages and no greater than 5 pages, typed, double-spaced, Times New Roman and 12-point font. Be sure to cite any work or thought that is not originally your own; Blackboard submission will be vetted through SafeAssign to ensure there is no plagiarism. Consult the Writing Center if you need help. Papers are expected to be well-edited, organized. Have a clear thesis statement, introduction, body flow, and conclusion. You are free to use any citation style in accordance with the standard of your own major. **See schedule below for due date.**For each day the paper is late, half a letter grade will be deducted. No papers will be accepted after May 1.

**Class Outline and Schedule:**

Note: The readings listed under each date are to be completed PRIOR TO that class session. Be prepared to share your opinions, thoughts, and questions on those readings, as this will comprise a significant portion of your final grade.

**8/26:**

* Class introduction
  + Ice breakers
  + Syllabus Review
  + Expectations
  + Presentation sign-ups

**8/28:** Why is the Identity of Jesus Christ so important?

* + N.T. Wright – Jesus and the Identity of God

<https://besidestillwaters.tripod.com/sitebuildercontent/sitebuilderfiles/jesus_and_the_identity_of_god_by_nt_wright.pdf>

**9/2:** Jesus Christ in the Old Testament

* + Christophanies
    - Charles A. Gieschen, “The Real Presence of the Son Before Christ: Revisiting an Old Approach to Old Testament Christology.” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 68:2, 2004.
      * <http://www.ctsfw.net/media/pdfs/gieschenrealpresence.pdf>

**9/4:** Prophecies

* + - 351 Prophecies in the Old Testament Fulfilled in Jesus Christ (PDF)
    - Group activity

**9/9:** Jesus Christ in the New Testament

* + - Mary L. Coloe, *John’s Portrait of Jesus*, in The Blackwell Companion to Jesus, Malden, MA : Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, pp. 64-80.

**9/11:**

* + - Gospel of St. John [(](file:///Users/Stephen/Library/Mobile%20Documents/com~apple~CloudDocs/Documents/Education/Caldwell/TH334-Christology/()https://bible.usccb.org/bible/john/0)
      * Chapters 1-5

**9/16:**

* + - Gospel of St. John [(](file:///Users/Stephen/Library/Mobile%20Documents/com~apple~CloudDocs/Documents/Education/Caldwell/TH334-Christology/()https://bible.usccb.org/bible/john/0)
      * Chapters 6-10

**9/18:**

* + - Gospel of St. John [(](file:///Users/Stephen/Library/Mobile%20Documents/com~apple~CloudDocs/Documents/Education/Caldwell/TH334-Christology/()https://bible.usccb.org/bible/john/0)
      * Chapters 11-15

**9/23:**

* + - Gospel of St. John [(](file:///Users/Stephen/Library/Mobile%20Documents/com~apple~CloudDocs/Documents/Education/Caldwell/TH334-Christology/()https://bible.usccb.org/bible/john/0)
      * Chapters 16-21

**9/25:** Jesus Christ in the early Church

* + Book of Acts, chapters 1-4 (<https://bible.usccb.org/bible/acts/1>)

**9/30:**

* + Pauline epistles
    - Romans 5-11 (https://bible.usccb.org/bible/romans/5)
    - Hebrews 8-10 (https://bible.usccb.org/bible/hebrews/8)

**10/2:** Heresies & Councils

* + Ecumenical Councils: <https://www.newadvent.org/library/almanac_14388a.htm>

**10/7:** Quiz #1 in class

**10/16:** Game Day

**10/21:** Jesus Christ in Modernity

* + Judaism
    - Michael J. Cook, *Jewish Perspectives on Jesus*,in The Blackwell Companion to Jesus, Malden, MA : Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, pp. 213-231.

**10/23:**

* + Islam
    - Reem A. Meshal PhD, M. Reza Pirbhai PhD, *Islamic Perspectives on Jesus*, in The Blackwell Companion to Jesus, Malden, MA : Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, pp. 232-249.

**10/28:**

* + Hinduism
    - Sandy Bharat, *Hindu Perspectives on Jesus*, in The Blackwell Companion to Jesus, Malden, MA : Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, pp. 250-266.

**10/30:**

* + Buddhism
    - Peggy Morgan, *Buddhist Perspectives on Jesus*, in The Blackwell Companion to Jesus, Malden, MA : Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, pp. 267-282.

**11/4:**

* + Liberation Theology
    - Kelly Brown Douglas, Delbert Burkett, *The Black Christ*, in The Blackwell Companion to Jesus, Malden, MA : Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, pp. 410-426.

**11/6:**

* + - Lisa Isherwood, Feminist Christologies, in The Blackwell Companion to Jesus, Malden, MA : Wiley-Blackwell, 2011, pp. 427-442.

**11/11:** Quiz #2 in class (All material after quiz #1)

**11/13 & 11/18:**

* Jesus Christ in Art
  + Choose a depiction of Jesus Christ that interests you. Tell us why you chose this image, and research the meaning behind the art, the intention by the artist, all of the symbols or components depicted in the image, or anything else you would want to share with the class. Prepare a short PowerPoint presentation that includes this image, and upload it to Blackboard by Nov. 12, 11:59 p.m. You will be asked to share this 5-minute presentation in class on one of these days.

**11/20:**

* **Documentary Papers due Nov. 19, 11:59 p.m.**

**11/25:** Movie on the Gospel of John, or select clips from *The Chosen*

**12/2:** Course conclusion

* Student Opinion Reports (SORs)
* Q&A
* **Final paper due before class**

**Academic Integrity**

Please see the full policy here: <https://catalog.caldwell.edu/C/2020-2021/content/academic-policies/academic-integrity-policy/201>

**Statement on Documented Disability and Academic Accommodations**

Any student who has a documented disability and is in need of academic accommodations must contact the Office of Accessibility Services (973-618-3645) and notify the professor of this course. Students are required to provide written documentation of their disability in order to be eligible for accommodations. Accommodations are individualized and in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and ADA Amendments Act of 2008.

**Statement on Recording Lectures**

Caldwell University promotes a mutually respectful learning environment where students and faculty engage freely in open discussion on topics of intellectual, academic, and personal interest. The University strives to provide an environment where students and faculty alike are free to express their opinions, to protect their intellectual property rights and explore controversial topics without derision or offense. To that end, any attempt by students to record, transcribe, or in any way memorialize class activities or student/ faculty interactions would be likely to squelch the atmosphere for free and open discussion.

Students are prohibited from using video or audio recording devices to record lectures, class discussions, conversations, or interactions between and among faculty or between faculty and students, unless prior written approval to record is obtained from the faculty member or, if appropriate, from the Office of Accessibility Services. Students with documented disabilities who are permitted to record lectures as a reasonable academic accommodation must sign the “Agreement for Recording of Lectures” provided by the Office of Accessibility Services. Students without documented disabilities who desire to use recording devices must obtain prior written permission from the instructor and sign the general “Agreement for Recording of Lectures” form.

Students permitted to record lectures or class discussions acknowledge that the recording is for individual use and solely to assist in studying for the course. The recordings may not be shared, released publicly or electronically posted or distributed. Students who violate this policy will be exposed to academic integrity sanctions and/or other legal recourse available to the faculty and University.

**Counseling Resources Statement**

As a college student, there may be times when personal stressors interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily life. If you or someone you know is experiencing mental health challenges or other practical life concerns such as food or housing insecurities, please contact Counseling Services located within the Wellness Center on the 2nd floor of the Newman Center or call 973-618-3307 between the hours of 8:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. They can also be emailed at counseling@caldwell.edu.

If you are seeking counseling services afterhours, or are seeking alternative services, you can receive teletherapy services through Uwill, a teletherapy company that has partnered with CU. You can register/login to Uwill by using the QR code below.

All services are free and confidential.

In a crisis situation, or after hours, contact Campus Safety and Security at 973-618-3289 or the Police at **911**. The Suicide and Crisis Lifeline also offers free and confidential support 24/7 by texting or calling 988.

**Student Support Resources Statement**  
Student Support Resources: As a college student, there may be times when life hardships interfere with your academic performance and/or negatively impact your daily life. If you or someone you know is experiencing any hardships or struggles at Caldwell University, such as food or housing insecurity, transportation needs, or assistance with basic needs, please contact the Coordinator of Student Support Services. The office is located in the Newman Center on the second floor.