

Christianity (A002907)

Course size *(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)*

Credits 5.0

Study time 150 h

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2026-2027

A (semester 1)

Dutch

Gent

independent work

Lecturers in academic year 2026-2027

Praet, Danny

LW01

lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2026-2027

	crdts	offering
Bachelor of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject China (China Track))	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject China (UGent Track))	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject India)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in Oriental Languages and Cultures(main subject Japan)	5	A
Bachelor of Arts in History	5	A
Elective Set Culture and Society	5	A
Elective Set Religion Studies	5	A

Teaching languages

Dutch

Keywords

The origins of Christianity, the historical Jesus, different currents in the history of Christianity.

Position of the course

This course aims to provide insight into the central issues within the problem of the origins of Christianity, of the modern research on the historical Jesus, and of the diversity in Christianity through the ages. It will also deal with history of the interpretation of Christianity.

Contents

This course offers an introduction to the central problems of the origins of Christianity and of the critical historical Jesus research: what are the historical sources to investigate these problems? What can we know today about this historical figure and how can we understand his public activities and the responses these raised. Substantial attention will go to the Greco-Roman and Jewish religions of the hellenistic period, which constitute the historical framework in which the historical Jesus and later birth of Christianity should be understood. The course will show that the available historical sources pose serious problems to investigate the life and teachings of the historical Jesus. Thus, highlighting the hypothetical nature of modern Jesus-research, this course will introduce the students into various historical-critical and philosophical interpretations which were developed through the ages. It will offer students the necessary background on the diversity both in a synchronical and diachronical sense, such as the most important differences between Catholicism and Protestant currents, orthodox traditions, which make it, pace the title of this course, difficult to talk simply of "Christianity".

Initial competences

Students have acquired a general level of historical knowledge after finishing secondary school.

Final competences

- 1 To have insight into the problems connected with the study of the historical Jesus and the origins of Christianity.
- 2 To be able to reflect critically on what we can know about this man, his activities and different responses to his life and teachings?
- 3 To have knowledge of the main intellectual developments of Catholic and Protestant forms of Christianity --- Klik om te editeren ---
- 4 To have general knowledge of the religious Umwelt of early Christianity: Jewish, Greek, Roman, Near-Eastern and Persian.--- Klik om te editeren ---
- 5 To be able to comment on theories of the historical Jesus and (early) Christianity in light of their historical-cultural context-- Klik om te editeren ---
- 6 To be able to critically evaluate the strengths and shortcomings of scientific theories about the historical Jesus and Christianity.--- Klik om te editeren ---

Conditions for credit contract

Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract

Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods

Independent work

Extra information on the teaching methods

Formal lectures.

The students must read parts of the Bible in preparation of the lectures.

The lectures will not be recorded.

Study material

Type: Handouts

Name: Handouts

Indicative price: Free or paid by faculty

Optional: no

Available on Ufora : Yes

References

Extensive bibliography on Ufora.

Course content-related study coaching

Available for questions before and after lectures; fixed contact hours Thursday afternoon (14-16 h.). Full study-vademecum (e.g. examples of types of questions for exam) included in the syllabus.

Assessment moments

end-of-term assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the first examination period

Written assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic assessment during the second examination period

Written assessment

Examination methods in case of permanent assessment

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent assessment

not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods

Written exam both with open and closed questions both on knowledge and insight.

The exam is in line with the intended final competences and is explained in the guide included in the course book.

Calculation of the examination mark

Periodical: exam (100%)

Facilities for Working Students

1. Possible exemption from educational activities requiring student attendance.
2. Possible rescheduling of the examination to a different time in the same

academic year

3. Alternative time for feedback

For more information concerning flexible learning: contact the monitoring service of the faculty of Arts and philosophy