

Course ID:	Course Title:	Fall 2021
BT 645	Special Topics: Life of Jesus	Prerequisite: NT 502 or OT 502
		Credits: 3

Class Information		Instructor Information		Important Dates	
Delivery:	Hybrid	Instructor:	Jonathan W. Lo, Ph.D.	First Day of Classes:	September 8, 2021
Days:	Wednesday (no classes: Nov. 10, 24)	Email:	Jonathan.Lo@ambrose.edu	Last Day to Add/Drop:	September 19, 2021
Time:	6:45-9:45pm	Phone:	403-410-2000 ext. 6940	Last Day to Withdraw:	November 22, 2021
Room:	L2084	Office:	L2064	Last Day to Apply for Extension:	November 23, 2021
Lab/Tutorial:	N/A	Office Hours:	By appointment	Last Day of Classes:	December 13, 2021
Final Exam:	None				

Important Dates and Information

For a list of all important dates and information regarding participating in classes at Ambrose University, please refer to the Academic Calendar at <https://ambrose.edu/academic-calendar>.

Course Description

Jesus of Nazareth is one of the most influential world figures within the last two millennia, but what can be known about him from a critical perspective that does not ignore the enduring faith that he inspired? How have historians attempted to examine and weigh the available evidence and what conclusions have they arrived at concerning Jesus' identity and significance? The purpose of this course is to bring together the earliest sources on the life of Jesus and to compare, categorize and evaluate them with an aim to better understanding his identity, mission, and impact. The course will begin with a discussion about what it means to study the life of any historical figure, the tools and methods needed for such an undertaking, and previous scholarly attempts to make sense of Jesus' life (the so-called "Quests for the Historical Jesus"). Extrabiblical as well as canonical sources for Jesus' life will be consulted, and different facets of Jesus' life will be considered from a critical perspective that takes into account the ideological world in which he lived, his followers' astonishing claims about him after his death, and the formation of the Christian Church. The course will conclude with a discussion on how to reconcile the Historical Jesus and the Christ of Faith, and an examination of the historical evidence and theological implications of early Christian devotion to Jesus.

Expected Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to complete the following tasks:

1. Describe the significance of Jesus' words, deeds, and ministry within the contexts of his first century Jewish and Greco-Roman worlds.
2. Critically engage with the issues involved in and questions raised by Life of Jesus scholarship.
3. Articulate the role of historical research within Christian faith in Jesus and theological formulations about him.
5. Give an account of the historical phenomenon of early Christian devotion to and worship of Jesus as a divine figure.
6. To reflect on and wrestle with the implications of truly encountering Jesus as the biblical authors intended their readers to do.

Required Textbooks

Bock, Darrell L. *Who is Jesus? Linking the Historical Jesus with the Christ of Faith*. Brentwood, TN: Howard Books, 2012.

Bond, Helen K. *The Historical Jesus: A Guide for the Perplexed*. New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2012.

Wright, N. T. *The Challenge of Jesus: Rediscovering Who Jesus Was and Is*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2015.

Recommended Books

Allison, Jr., Dale C. *The Historical Christ and the Theological Jesus*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009.

Bauckham, Richard. *Jesus and the Eyewitnesses: The Gospels as Eyewitness Testimony*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2006.

—. *God Crucified: Monotheism & Christology in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998.

Bird, Michael F., ed. *How God Became Jesus: The Real Origins of Belief in Jesus' Divine Nature*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2014.

Bock, Darrell L. *Studying the Historical Jesus: A Guide to Sources and Methods*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2002.

Boers, Hendrikus. *Who Was Jesus? The Historical Jesus and the Synoptic Gospels*. San Francisco, CA: Harper & Row, 1989.

Beilby, James K. & Eddy, Paul Rhodes, eds. *The Historical Jesus: Five Views*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009.

Bornkamm, Günther. *Jesus of Nazareth*. Trans. Irene & Fraser McLuskey, with James M. Robinson. New York, NY: Hodder & Stoughton, 1960.

Cousland, J. R. C. *Holy Terror: Jesus in the Infancy Gospel of Thomas*. New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2017.

Dawes, Gregory W. *The Historical Jesus Quest: Landmarks in the Search for the Jesus of History*. Leiderdorp: Deo Publishing, 1999.

Dunn, James D. G. *Jesus Remembered: Christianity in the Making*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013.

Ehrman, Bart D. *Jesus: Apocalyptic Prophet of the New Millennium*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999.

- . *How Jesus Became God: The Exaltation of a Jewish Preacher from Galilee*. San Francisco, CA: HarperOne, 2014.
- Evans, C. Stephen. *The Historical Christ and the Jesus of Faith: The Incarnational Narrative as History*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- Evans, Craig A. *Fabricating Jesus: How Modern Scholars Distort the Gospels*. Nottingham: Intervarsity Press, 2007
- Fuller, Reginald H. *The Foundations of New Testament Christology*. New York, NY: Scribners, 1965
- Grindheim, Sigurd. *God's Equal: What can we Know about Jesus' Self-Understanding in the Synoptic Gospels?* LNTS 446. New York, NY: T&T Clark International, 2011
- Hengel, Martin. *The Son of God*. Trans. John Bowden. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1976.
- Horsley, Richard. *Jesus and Empire: The Kingdom of God and the New World Order*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 2002.
- Hurtado, Larry W. *Ancient Jewish Monotheism and Early Christian Jesus-Devotion: The Context and Character of Christological Faith*. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2017.
- . *God in New Testament Theology*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 2010.
- . *How on Earth Did Jesus Become a God? Historical Questions, about Earliest Devotion to Jesus*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005.
- . *Lord Jesus Christ: Devotion to Jesus in Earliest Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005
- Keith, Chris. *Jesus Against the Scribal Elite: The Origins of the Conflict*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2014.
- . *Jesus' Literacy: Scribal Culture and the Teacher from Galilee*. LNTS. New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2011.
- Keith, Chris & Le Donne, Anthony, eds. *Jesus, Criteria, and the Demise of Authenticity*. New York, NY: T&T Clark, 2012.
- Longenecker, Richard N., ed. *Contours of Christology in the New Testament*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005.
- Neill, Stephen & Wright, Tom. *The Interpretation of the New Testament, 1861-1986*. 2nd Ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988.
- Novenson, Matthew V. *The Grammar of Messianism: An Ancient Jewish Political Idiom and Its Users*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017.
- Powell, Mark Allan. *Jesus as a Figure in History: How Modern Historians View the Man from Galilee*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.
- Sanders, E. P. *The Historical Figure of Jesus*. London: Penguin, 1993.
- . *Jesus and Judaism*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress, 1985.

Schweitzer, Albert. *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*. Expanded version. Ed., John Bowden. New York, NY: Philosophical Library, 2001 (1913).

Stanton, Graham N. *The Gospels and Jesus*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Theissen, Gerd & Merz, Annete. *The Historical Jesus: A Comprehensive Guide*. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1998.

Van Voorst, Robert E. *Jesus Outside the New Testament: An Introduction to the Ancient Evidence*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000.

Wright, N.T. *The Contemporary Quest for Jesus*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002 (1996).

—. *Jesus and the Victory of God*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1996.

Course Schedule

Date (Location)	Course Module/Topic	Assignments
Sep.8 (L2084)	Introduction to Life of Jesus Research: What is it? Why do it? What is at stake?	
Sep.15 (L2084)	What has already been done? A Survey of the Historical Jesus Quests	
Sep.22 (L2084)	Considering the Methods & Sources for Life of Jesus Research	
Sep.29	<i>Ambrose University Downey Lectureship 2021</i> Dr. Ray Aldred: "Creation: Sacred Stories of a Sacred Land" Wednesday (29) and Thursday (30) @ 7:30pm https://ambrose.edu/downey-lectureships	
Oct.6	<i>Ambrose Deeper Life Conference</i> Film Viewing & Discussion w/ Dr. Jon Coutts: <i>The Rider</i> https://ambrose.edu/deeper-life-conference	
Oct.13 (L2084)	Jesus' Beginnings, Baptism and Temptations	HJ Summary DUE
Oct.20 (L2084)	Authoritative Words: Jesus' Proclamations & Teachings	
Oct.27 (L2084)	Authoritative Deeds: Jesus' Healings, Exorcisms, Miracles	

Nov.3 (L2084)	The Restoration of Israel: Jesus' Relationship with Disciples, Family, Outcasts, "Sinners," and the Crowd	
Nov.10 (L2084)	<i>NO CLASS—Reading Break</i>	
Nov.17 (L2084)	Conflict and Controversy: The Temple Incident and the Final Week in Jerusalem	
Nov.24 (L2084)	<i>NO CLASS—Class break</i>	
Dec.1 (L2084)	Christology: Titles and Typologies, Questions of Jesus' Messianic Identity and Divinity	Theological Reflection DUE
Dec.8 (L2084)	Worshipping Jesus: Examining the Evidence for the Earliest Christian Devotion to Jesus	
Dec.15	Major Paper DUE: Submit Online by Midnight	

Requirements:

1. Major Assignment (Choose option A, B, or C) 80%
 - A. Exegetical Paper and Sermon
 1. A 4000-word exegetical paper on a paragraph from the canonical Gospels, that deals responsibly with the exegetical issues and interacts with relevant scholarly literature,
 2. A 2000-word sermon/outline based on your exegesis, with particular emphasis on how this Jewish story has contemporary implications.
 - B. Artistic Expression
 1. An academically and theologically competent paper of 2500 words on some aspect of the Life of Jesus which serves to inform the accompanying artifact (this paper must reflect a thorough awareness of and interaction with the scholarly literature).
 2. A piece of art, poetry, narrative writing, music, drama, architectural design, photographic essay, multimedia presentation, or other agreed upon media based on the theological reflection (the artifact must show evidence of requisite time investment, and must not have been produced for any other purpose prior to the class, and should be of an acceptable standard for a Masters program).
 - C. Research Essay
 1. A 4000-word research essay on any aspect of Jesus studies, e.g. Jesus and the Law, Jesus' Use of the OT, the Temple Cleansing, Jesus' Eschatology, the Humanity of Jesus, the reasons for the conflict between Jesus and Israel's Religious Authorities, Jesus' Titles, etc.
 2. A 2000-word sermon/outline based on some aspect of the essay on the significance of the material for church.

2. Summary of one particular Historical Jesus Quest 10%

A concise written summary (1200 words max., including footnotes) of the aims and people involved within a particular HJ quest, noting its assumptions, emphases, and commenting on its contributions and limitations.

3. Theological Interaction (Choose option A or B or C) 10%

A: A theological interaction (1000 words max., no footnotes) with a modern book, film, play, or other agreed upon substitute based on a comparison with the aims and mission of Jesus.

B. A written response to the Downey Lectures (1000 words max., no footnotes) explores the connections between the content and themes from this class and the lecture(s) of Dr. Ray Aldred on “Creation: Sacred Stories of a Sacred Land.” <https://ambrose.edu/downey-lectureships>

C. A written response to the film *The Rider* (1000 words max., no footnotes) that interacts with film theologically and makes connections with the content and themes discussed in class.

Grade Summary:

1. Major Assignment (A, B, or C)	80%	(DUE: December 15 th by midnight)
2. HJ Quest Summary	10%	(DUE: October 13 th)
3. Theological Interaction	<u>10%</u>	(DUE: December 1 st)
Total	100%	

Please document using Chicago style. For assistance see:

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/03/>

http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-1.html

Note: No student can pass this course without completing every assignment.

Attendance: Unexcused absences will be considered in calculating the final grade.

Grade Summary:

Grade	Interpretation	Grade Points
A+	Mastery: Complete Understanding of Subject Matter	4.00
A		4.00
A-		3.70
B+	Proficient: Well-Developed Understanding of Subject Matter	3.30
B		3.00
B-		2.70
C+	Basic: Developing Understanding of Subject Matter	2.30
C		2.00
C-		1.70
D+	Minimal Pass: Limited Understanding of Subject	1.30
D		1.0
F	Failure: Failure to Meet Course Requirements	0.00
P	Pass	No Grade Points

Because of the nature of the Alpha 4.00 system, there can be no uniform University-wide conversion scale. The relationship between raw scores (e.g. percentages) and the resultant letter grade will depend on the nature of the course and the instructor’s assessment of the level of each class, compared to similar classes taught previously.

Please note that final grades will be available on student registration system. Printed grade sheets are not mailed out.

Ambrose University Important Policies & Procedures:

Communication

All students have received an Ambrose e-mail account upon registration. It is the student's responsibility to check this account regularly as the Ambrose email system will be the professor's instrument for notifying students of important matters (cancelled class sessions, extensions, requested appointments, etc.) between class sessions.

Exam Scheduling

Students who find a conflict in their exam schedule must submit a *Revised Examination Request* form to the Office of the Registrar by the deadline noted in the Academic Calendar. Requests will be considered for the following reasons only: 1) the scheduled final examination slot conflicts with another exam; 2) the student has three final exams within three consecutive exam time blocks; 3) the scheduled final exam slot conflicts with an exam at another institution; 4) extenuating circumstances. Travel is not considered a valid excuse for re-scheduling or missing a final exam.

Standards of Behaviour in the Classroom Setting

Learning is an active and interactive process, a joint venture between student and instructor and between student and student. Some topics covered within a class may lead to strong reactions and opinions. It is important that Students understand that they are entitled to hold contradictory beliefs and that they should be encouraged to engage with these topics in a critical manner. Committing to this type of "active learning" significantly increases the learning experience for both teacher and student, and reflects the Christian imperative to pursue truth, which lies at the heart of the Ambrose educational experience. However, active discussion of controversial topics will be undertaken with respect and empathy, which are the foundations of civil discourse in the Classroom Setting. Primary responsibility for managing the classroom rests with the instructor. The instructor may direct a student to leave the class if the student engages in any behaviour that disrupts the classroom setting. If necessary, Ambrose security will be contacted to escort the student from class. Please refer to your professor regarding their electronic etiquette expectations.

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else's ideas, words, or work as one's own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to acknowledge to another person's ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar that deal with plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are

reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Academic Calendar. The academic calendar can be found at <https://ambrose.edu/content/academic-calendar-2>

Privacy

Personal information (information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual) may be required as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Coursework Extensions

Should a request for a time extension on coursework exceed the end of the term, a *Coursework Extension Application* must be completed and submitted to the Office of the Registrar. The extension (if granted) will be recorded on the student record. Extensions are granted at the discretion of the instructor and are normally granted for 30 days beyond the last day of the term.

Normally, Course Extension Applications will be considered only when all of the following conditions are met:

- the quality of prior course work has been satisfactory;
- circumstances beyond your control, such as an extended illness or death of a family member, make it impossible for you to complete the course work on time; and
- you submit *Coursework Extension Application* to the Office of the Registrar on or before the deadline specified in the Academic Schedule.

If granted, time extensions do not excuse you from a final examination where one has been scheduled for the course.

A temporary grade of TX will be assigned until a final grade is submitted in accordance with the new deadline. A final grade of F will apply to:

- all course work submitted after the end of the semester unless a coursework extension has been granted; and all course work submitted after the revised due date provided by an approved extension to coursework.

Academic Success and Supports

Accessibility Services

Academic accommodation is provided to Ambrose students with disabilities in accordance with the Alberta Human Rights Act and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Provision of academic accommodation does not lower the academic standards of the university nor remove the need for evaluation and the need to meet essential learning outcomes. Reasonable accommodations are tailored to the individual student, are flexible, and are determined by considering the barriers within the unique environment of a

postsecondary institution. It can take time to organize academic accommodations and funding for disability-related services. Students with a disability who wish to have an academic accommodation are encouraged to contact Accessibility Services as early as possible to ensure appropriate planning for any needs that may include accommodations. Staff can then meet with students to determine areas to facilitate success, and if accommodations are required, ensure those accommodations are put in place by working with faculty.

Ambrose Writing Services

Ambrose Writing services provides academic support in the four foundational literacy skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It also assists students with critical thinking and the research process. Throughout the academic year, students can meet with a writing tutor for personalized support, or they can attend a variety of workshops offered by Academic Success. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. Academic Success serves all students in all disciplines and at all levels, from history to biology and from theatre to theology. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/writingcentre>

Ambrose Tutoring Services

Ambrose Tutoring Services provides support in specific disciplinary knowledge, especially in high-demand areas such as chemistry, philosophy, math and statistics, and religious studies. These tutors also coach students in general study skills, including listening and note-taking. During the academic year, Ambrose Tutoring Services offers drop-in tutoring for courses with high demand; for other courses, students can book a one-to-one appointment with a tutor in their discipline. These services are free to students enrolled at Ambrose University. To learn more, please visit <https://ambrose.edu/tutoring>.

Mental Health Support

All of us need a support system. We encourage students to build mental health supports and to reach out when help is needed.

On Campus:

- Counselling Services: ambrose.edu/counselling
- Peer Supportive Listening: One-to-one support in Student Life office. Hours posted at ambrose.edu/wellness.
- For immediate crisis support, there are staff on campus who are trained in Suicide Intervention and Mental Health First Aid. See ambrose.edu/crisissupport for a list of staff members.

Off Campus:

- Distress Centre - 403-266-4357
- Sheldon Chumir Health Care Centre - 403-955-6200
- Emergency - 911

Sexual Violence Support

All staff, faculty, and Residence student leaders have received *Sexual Violence Response to Disclosure* training. We will support you and help you find the resources you need. There is a website with on and off campus supports – ambrose.edu/sexual-violence-response-and-awareness.

Off Campus:

- Clinic: Sheldon Chumir Health Centre - 403-955-6200
- Calgary Communities Against Sexual Abuse - 403-237-5888

Note: Students are strongly advised to retain this syllabus for their records.