



Chaminade University OF HONOLULU

Course Syllabus

Chaminade University Honolulu

3140 Waialae Avenue - Honolulu, HI 96816

Course Number: RE 211

Course Title: The Bible as Controversy

Department Name: Religious Studies

College/School/Division Name: School of Humanities, Arts and Design

Term: Fall 2025

Course Credits: 3

Class Meeting Days: Tuesday & Thursday

Class Meeting Hours: RE 211.01 at 2:30 a.m. – 3:50 p.m. RE211.04 at 11:30 p.m. – 12:50 p.m.

Class Location: C.T.C. Ching Hall 254

Instructor Name: Dr. Peter Steiger, PhD.

Email: psteiger@chaminade.edu

Phone: 808-440-4212 (Chaminade Office – Note: I am rarely in my office, so please email me!)

Office Location: Henry Hall 206K

Office Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays 1:30-2:30 p.m., 4-4:30 p.m.; Wednesdays 2:30-4:30 p.m. or by appointment

University Course Catalog Description

Religious Studies 211 – The Bible as Controversy:

Ancient scriptural documents have erupted into modern controversies, ranging from questions over biblical fundamentalism to the meaning of Jesus in contemporary times. Questions concerning the creation stories, the monarchy of Israel, the movement of Jesus the Jew, the writings of Paul, and the historical and contemporary uses and abuses of the Bible will be examined in detail. Offered every semester.

This course fulfills the lower division Religious Studies General Education Core requirement.

Course Overview

This lecture course will explore various elements, issues, techniques, principles and applications utilized by scholars to interpret the bible. More than an introduction to the bible, it is intended to orient students to the causes of the controversies that have always been a part of studying scripture. No pre-requisite knowledge of the bible is necessary, but some familiarity with the bible may help. The course is meant to enable students to appreciate biblical interpretation and prepare them for other courses in religion or theology, as well as literary analysis. Some project-based methods will be used during the semester so that students can learn collaboratively by applying what is taught.

Marianist Values

This class represents one component of your education at Chaminade University of Honolulu. An education in the Marianist Tradition is marked by five principles and you should take every opportunity possible to reflect upon the role of these characteristics in your education and development:

1. Education for formation in faith
2. Provide an integral, quality education

3. Educate in family spirit
4. Educate for service, justice, peace and the integrity of creation
5. Educate for adaptation and change

Native Hawaiian Values

Education is an integral value in both Marianist and Native Hawaiian culture. Both recognize the transformative effect of a well-rounded, value-centered education on society, particularly in seeking justice for the marginalized, the forgotten, and the oppressed, always with an eye toward God (Ke Akua). This is reflected in the 'Ōlelo No'eau (Hawaiian proverbs) and Marianist core beliefs:

1. Educate for Formation in Faith (Mana) E ola au i ke akua ('Ōlelo No'eau 364) May I live by God
2. Provide an Integral, Quality Education (Na'auao) Lawe i ka ma'alea a kū'ono'ono ('Ōlelo No'eau 1957) Acquire skill and make it deep
3. Educate in Family Spirit ('Ohana) 'Ike aku, 'ike mai, kōkua aku kōkua mai; pela iho la ka nohana 'ohana ('Ōlelo No'eau 1200) Recognize others, be recognized, help others, be helped; such is a family relationship
4. Educate for Service, Justice and Peace (Aloha) Ka lama kū o ka no'eau ('Ōlelo No'eau 1430) Education is the standing torch of wisdom
5. Educate for Adaptation and Change (Aina) 'A'ohe pau ka 'ike i ka hālau ho'okahi ('Ōlelo No'eau 203) All knowledge is not taught in the same school

GENERAL EDUCATION CORE CURRICUM OUTCOME

Catholic Intellectual Tradition –

The student will explain faith and reason as integral to developing a Catholic sacramental perspective of the cosmos that leads to responsible action supporting social justice.

(In this course, students will examine the bible, using hermeneutics from the Catholic Intellectual Tradition, to develop a sacramental view of the world. Students will be encouraged to see how interpretation of the Bible addresses the human condition and promotes social justice.)

Religious Studies Program Learning Outcomes linked to this course at an introductory level are:

1. Utilize the key concepts of Catholic theology in a critical reflection on integral human experience.
2. Engage in respectful dialogue on religious meaning in our globalized, multicultural society.
3. Employ Christian moral imagination in moral reasoning and decision making that affirms and/or challenges secular and cultural values.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of our course, students will be able to:

1. Describe the development and diversity of Christian exegetical principles and practices over the past two thousand years by explaining the hermeneutics used by various influential Christian interpreters
2. Identify and distinguish between philosophical, historical, and literary critical tools and theologically based techniques of biblical exegesis and then integrate these to show their complementarity for a sacramental world view
3. Recognize that respectful dialogue on religious meaning mandates understanding and acknowledging both the usefulness of the tools of scientific, historical-critical biblical interpretation and theological applications of the bible, as well as awareness that these hermeneutical techniques are often misunderstood, even by experts, and so are not easily kept in tension
4. Explain how Christian moral reasoning formed by interpretation of the bible both affirms and challenges secular, cultural assumptions

Alignment of Learning Outcomes	CLO 1	CLO 2	CLO 3	CLO 4
Marianist & Native Hawaiian Values	1 & 2	1 & 2	2 & 3	2, 4 & 5
Program Learning Outcomes	1	1	2	3
Gen Ed Learning Outcomes	1	1	1	1

Course Prerequisites

Students must be prepared to complete 50-60 pages of reading per week for success in this course.

Students must compose a 500–600-word essay within 80 minutes for each semester exam, and a 600-800-word essay within 120 minutes for the final exam.

Required Learning Materials

*notebook for hand-written notes (this is a requirement – computers & electronic devices are not permitted in class)

*writing instruments (pen or pencil) for handwriting notes

*four blue exam booklets available for purchase in the bookstore; all exams will be handwritten essays in bluebooks

*Textbooks: (Please purchase the hard copy of all three of these)

John Barton, *A History of the Bible: The Book & Its Faiths*, Penguin Books, 2019.

Ian Christopher Levy, *Introducing Medieval Biblical Interpretation: The Senses of Scripture in Premodern Exegesis*, Baker Academic, 2018.

Keith D. Stanglin, *The Letter and Spirit of Biblical Interpretation: From the Early Church to Modern Practice*, Baker Academic, 2018.

*Access to Canvas, the Chaminade University online platform – used to supply supplemental reading assignments, report grades, and take daily attendance.

Recommended Reading: (These might be helpful but will not be part of the assigned reading for this course.)

Timothy R. Carmody, *Reading the Bible: A Study Guide*, Paulist Press, New York, 2004.

Daniel J. Harrington, *How Do Catholics Read the Bible*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, New York, 2005.

Access to a bible, preferably the New American Bible, New Revised Standard Bible or the Orthodox Study Bible. The selected bible must contain the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical literature.

Letter grades are given in all courses except those conducted on a credit/no credit basis. Grades are calculated from the student's class participation, group project and presentation and exams. They are interpreted as follows:

91-99% (91-99 points) = A (Outstanding scholarship and an unusual degree of intellectual initiative)

80-90% (80-90 points) = B (Superior work done in a consistent and intellectual manner)

70-79% (70-79 points) = C (Average grade indicating a competent grasp of subject matter)

61-69% (61-69 points) = D (Inferior work of the lowest passing grade, not satisfactory for fulfillment of prerequisite course work)

0-60% (0-60 points) = F (Failed to grasp the minimum subject matter; no credit given)

Assessment:

For this semester, students will be assessed through the composition of two semester exams and one final exam. The three exams will cover material for the weeks immediately prior to the scheduled exam and these exams will be oriented with increasing difficulty, so that semester exam one will be more basic than exam two, and the final exam will be more demanding than exam two. In addition, each exam will be worth an increasing amount, so that semester exam one will be worth twenty percent of the final semester grade, semester exam two will be worth twenty-five percent of the final semester grade, and the final exam will be worth thirty percent of the final semester grade, and will be given during the required exam period officially scheduled by the university. Students are required to write all three exams in order to pass the course. Following each exam, students who do poorly will be permitted to do one retake exam outside of class hours at a time scheduled by the professor; retakes must be taken during these scheduled hours. In addition, three unannounced, unscheduled quizzes, each worth three bonus percent will be offered during the semester. Students who are not present on the day of these pop-quizzes will not be permitted to make up these quizzes, as they are a bonus to earn extra. No other extra credit will be offered in this course in order to protect the integrity of the course as written and to protect the just treatment of all students enrolled in the course. Grades of "Incomplete": For specifics about the policy on incomplete grades, consult the official University policies. Incomplete grades are very rare and will require significant collaboration between the student and professor. Communication must be initiated by the student seeking an incomplete at the earliest possible time and only during the semester in which the incomplete is sought, not after the semester has ended.

Course Policies

Late Work Policy:

No written homework will be submitted in this course, so there is no late homework policy for this course. However, because Chaminade University class sizes are small, it will be the assumption of the Professor that students are prepared to discuss the assigned readings at each class meeting. It is especially expected that students will come to class with questions about the assigned readings.

Writing Policy:

In all writing submitted for the course students are required to follow standard English grammar and syntax. Poor spelling, incorrect grammar and sloppy handwriting will have points deducted (this includes lack of proper capitalization and failures of punctuation). Do your best to think clearly first, in order to write clearly. Any exam submitted that is poorly written or not composed according to instructions will be rejected and receive a failing grade.

Instructor and Student Communication:

Questions must be emailed to the Professor at psteiger@chaminade.edu. Response time will be done within three days (seventy-two hours). Prompt communication is the best way to assure the course runs smoothly.

Attendance Policy: The following attendance policy is from the Academic Catalog:

"Students are expected to attend regularly all courses for which they are registered. Student should notify their instructors when illness or other extenuating circumstances prevents them from attending class and make arrangements to complete missed assignments. Notification may be done by emailing the instructor's Chaminade email address, calling the instructor's campus extension, or by leaving a message with the instructor's division office. It is the instructor's prerogative to modify deadlines of course requirements accordingly. Any student who stops attending a course without officially withdrawing may receive a failing grade.

Unexcused absences equivalent to more than a week of classes may lead to a grade reduction for the course. Any unexcused absence of two consecutive weeks or more may result in being withdrawn from the course by the instructor, although the instructor is not required to withdraw students in that scenario. Repeated absences put students at risk of failing grades. Students with disabilities who have obtained accommodations from the Chaminade

University of Honolulu Tutor Coordinator may be considered for an exception when the accommodation does not materially alter the attainment of the learning outcomes.

Federal regulations require continued attendance for continuing payment of financial aid. When illness or personal reasons necessitate continued absence, the student should communicate first with the instructor to review the options. Anyone who stops attending a course without official withdrawal may receive a failing grade or be withdrawn by the instructor at the instructor's discretion."

It has been the experience of the Professor, and innumerable research studies have proven, that regular classroom attendance with active engagement in the course is one of the best indicators to assure student success. To that end, attendance will be taken for every class meeting and this will be tracked in the Canvas platform so that students can see their attendance record. Additionally, as an incentive, any student who attains perfect attendance for the semester will receive one half of a letter grade curve bonus added to her or his final semester grade. If the entire class collectively achieves a 97% attendance record, then all class members will receive a full letter grade curve to the final semester grade.

Credit Hour Policy:

The unit of semester credit is defined as university-level credit that is awarded for the completion of coursework. One credit hour reflects the amount of work represented in the intended learning outcomes and verified by evidence of student achievement for those learning outcomes. Each credit hour earned at Chaminade University should result in a minimum of 45 hours of engagement, regardless of varying credits, duration, modality, or degree level. This equates to one hour of classroom or direct faculty instruction and a minimum of two hours of out-of-class student work each week for approximately fifteen weeks for one semester. Terms that have alternative lengths, such as 10-week terms, should have an equivalent amount of faculty instruction and out-of-class student work to meet each credit hour. Direct instructor engagement and out-of-class work result in total student engagement time of 45 hours for one credit. The number of engagement hours may be higher, as needed to meet specific learning outcomes.

The minimum 45 hours of engagement per credit hour can be satisfied in fully online, internship, or other specialized courses through several means, including (a) regular online instruction or interaction with the faculty member and fellow students and (b) academic engagement through extensive reading, research, online discussion, online quizzes or exams; instruction, collaborative group work, internships, laboratory work, practica, studio work, and preparation of papers, presentations, or other forms of assessment. This policy is in accordance with federal regulations and regional accrediting agencies.

This is a three-credit hour course requiring 135 clock hours of student engagement, per the official CUH Credit Hour Policy. Students enrolled in this course are anticipated to spend 40 hours in class, 7 hours studying for semester exam one, 10 hours for exam two, and 18 hours studying for and taking the Final Exam. There will be an additional 60 hours of work required beyond what is listed here (course reading assignments and review of class notes, etc.), averaging 4 hours each week.

The figures explaining how this credit hour policy was calculated are provided below:

- **Seat Time:** 80 min weekly x 2 x 15 weeks = 40 hours
- **Time Spent on Key Assignments and assessments:**
 - ❖ **Assigned reading/review of notes** = 4 hours per week x 15 weeks = 60 hours
 - ❖ **Preparation for Exams** = 35 hours
- **Sub-Total** = 135 hours (seat time + reading assignments + exams/assessments)
- **Total required engagement of 135 hours is met.**

Student with Disabilities Statement:

Chaminade University of Honolulu offers accommodations for all actively enrolled students with disabilities in compliance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and the ADA Amendments Act (2008). Students are responsible for contacting Kokua Ike: Center for Student Learning to schedule an appointment. Verification of their disability will be requested through appropriate documentation and once received it will take up to approximately 2–3 weeks to review them. Appropriate paperwork will be completed by the student before notification will be sent out to their instructors. Accommodation paperwork will not be automatically sent out to instructors each semester, as the student is responsible to notify Kokua Ike via email at ada@chaminade.edu each semester if changes or notifications are needed.

Title IX and Nondiscrimination Statement:

Chaminade University of Honolulu is committed to providing a learning, working and living environment that promotes the dignity of all people, inclusivity and mutual respect and is free of all forms of sex discrimination and gender-based violence, including sexual assault, sexual harassment, gender-based harassment, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. As a member of the University faculty, I am required to immediately report any incident of sex discrimination or gender-based violence to the campus Title IX Coordinator. For pregnant and parenting students, I am also obligated to provide you with similar resources for support and protections available to you. My goal is to make sure that you are aware of the range of options available to you and have access to the resources and support you need.

Nondiscrimination Policy & Notice of Nondiscrimination:

Chaminade University of Honolulu does not discriminate on the basis of sex and prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates, as required by Title IX and its regulations, including in admission and employment. Inquiries about Title IX may be referred to the University's Title IX Coordinator, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights, or both and contact information may be found at the Chaminade University Title IX Office Contact Information and Confidential Resources website.

On-campus Confidential Resources may also be found here at **CAMPUS CONFIDENTIAL RESOURCES**. The University's Nondiscrimination Policy and Grievance Procedures can be located on the University webpage at: <https://chaminade.edu/compliance/title-ix-nondiscrimination-policies-procedures/>.

To report information about conduct that may constitute sex discrimination or make a complaint of sex discrimination under Title IX, please refer to the Campus Incident Report form: https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?ChaminadeUniv&layout_id=0

Chaminade University of Honolulu prohibits sex discrimination in any education program or activity that it operates. The NOTICE of NONDISCRIMINATION can be found here: <https://chaminade.edu/compliance/title-ix-nondiscrimination-policy/>.

CUH Alert Emergency Notification:

To get the latest emergency communication from Chaminade University, students' cell numbers will be connected to Chaminade's emergency notification text system. When you log in to the Chaminade portal, you will be asked to provide some emergency contact information. If you provide a cellphone number, you will receive a text from our emergency notification system asking you to confirm your number. You must respond to that message to complete your registration and get emergency notifications on your phone.

Student Conduct Policy:

Campus life is a unique situation requiring the full cooperation of each individual. For many, Chaminade is not only a school, but a home and a place of work as well. That makes it a community environment in which the actions of one student may directly affect other students. Therefore, each person must exercise a high degree of responsibility. Any community must have standards of conduct and rules by which it operates. At Chaminade, these standards are outlined so as to reflect both the Catholic, Marianist values of the institution and to honor and respect students as responsible adults. All alleged violations of the community standards are handled through an established student conduct process, outlined in the Student Handbook, and operated within the guidelines set to honor both students' rights and campus values.

Students should conduct themselves in a manner that reflects the ideals of the University. This includes knowing and respecting the intent of rules, regulations, and/or policies presented in the Student Handbook, and realizing that students are subject to the University's jurisdiction from the time of their admission until their enrollment has been formally terminated. Please refer to the Student Handbook for more details. A copy of the Student Handbook is available on the Chaminade website under Student Life. See the Chaminade Catalogue for further information.

Policy on academic honesty:

Academic honesty is an essential aspect of all learning, scholarship, and research. It is one of the values regarded most highly by academic communities throughout the world. Violations of the principle of academic honesty are extremely serious and will not be tolerated.

Students are responsible for promoting academic honesty at Chaminade by not participating in any act of dishonesty and by reporting any incidence of academic dishonesty to an instructor or to a University official. Academic dishonesty may include theft of records or examinations, alteration of grades, and plagiarism, in addition to more obvious dishonesty. Questions of academic dishonesty in a particular class are first reviewed by the instructor, who must make a report with recommendations to the Dean of the Academic Division. Punishment for academic dishonesty will be determined by the instructor and the Dean of Academic Division and may include an "F" grade for the work in question, an "F" grade for the course, suspension, or dismissal from the University. For the most up to date information, please refer to the Academic Honesty Policy on the Chaminade University Catalog website.

Technical Assistance for Canvas Users:

- Search for help on specific topics or get tips in [Canvas Students](#)
- [Live chat with Canvas Support for students](#)
- Canvas Support Hotline for students: +1-833-209-6111
- Watch this [video to get you started](#)
- [Online tutorials](#): click on "Students" role to access tutorials
- Contact the Chaminade IT Helpdesk for technical issues: helpdesk@chaminade.edu or call (808) 735-4855

Tutoring and Writing Services

Chaminade is proud to offer free, one-on-one tutoring and writing assistance to all students. Tutoring and writing help is available on campus at Kōkua 'Ike: Center for Student Learning in a variety of subjects (including, but are not limited to: biology, chemistry, math, nursing, English, etc.) from trained Peer and Professional Tutors. Please check [Kōkua 'Ike's website](#) for the latest times, list of drop-in hours, and information on scheduling an appointment. Free online tutoring is also available via TutorMe. Tutor Me can be accessed 24/7 from your Canvas account. Simply click Account – Notifications – TutorMe. For more information, please contact Kōkua 'Ike at: tutoring@chaminade.edu or 808-739-8305.

fall 2025 schedule	Meeting Date		
Week 1		Lecture Topics	Reading Assignment - to be completed for next meeting
Tues.	8/26/25	Syllabus & intro to course; Lecture: Theology or Religious Studies?	Graham and Steiger articles: due 8/28/25
Thur.	8/28/25	Bible Basics: Canon, Inspiration, Translation, Interpretation	Barton, p. 215-238: due 9/2/25
Week 2			
Tues.	9/2/25	Development of the scriptures - Old Testament	Barton, p. 145-163
Thur.	9/4/25	Gospel before gospels - Christianity before the N.T.	Barton, p. 164-187
Week 3			
Tues.	9/9/25	Jewish & Christian exegetical controversies - 1st century	Barton, p. 188-211
Thur.	9/11/25	Manuscripts and Codex production	Barton, p. 239-263
Week 4			
Tues.	9/16/25	Christian controversies - 2nd & 3rd centuries	Barton, p. 264-284
Thur.	9/18/25	Irenaus, Origen and the canon of the New Testament	Stanglin, p. 19-45
Week 5			
Tues.	9/23/25	View virtual tour of "First Fragments" online and John Behr video	Barton, p. 331-357
Thur.	9/25/25	Exam one - bring blue book and pen for essay writing	Stanglin, p. 47-68
Week 6			
Tues.	9/30/25	Christian interpretation - 4th & 5th centuries	Levy, p.7-26
Thur.	10/2/25	Monastic Interpretation of the Bible - Evagrius of Pontus	Stanglin, p. 68-100
Week 7			
Tues.	10/7/25	Applying the bible - Didymus, Chrysostom, Jerome and Augustine	Levy, p. 27-39 & book reviews of <i>Moralia in Job</i> translation
Thur.	10/9/25	Medieval Exegesis - Gregory's <i>Moralia</i> : the cloistered bible	Barton, p. 358-386
Week 8			
Tues.	10/14/25	Manuscripts - Glossed, Illuminated & becoming secularized	Levy, p. 107-135
Thur.	10/16/25	Cistercians and Cathedral Schools - "should we become secular?"	Levy, p. 137-170
Week 9			
Tues.	10/21/25	Masoretic text, Mendicant orders & rise of universities	Stanglin, p. 101-111
Thur.	10/23/25	Thomas Aquinas' Exegesis of the Book of Job	Levy, p. 170-216
Week 10			
Tues.	10/28/25	Exam two - bring blue book and pen for essay writing	Barton, p. 387-408
Thur.	10/30/25	Advent of Modernity & a bible for the secularized world	Stanglin, p. 113-151
Week 11			
Tues.	11/4/25	Reformation - undermining the sacramental world view	Barton, p. 436-452
Thur.	11/6/25	Excluding Theology from the "secularized" universities	Stanlin, p. 153-187
Week 12			
Tues.	11/11/25	No classes - Veterans Day	Barton, p. 409-435
Thur.	11/15/25	Keeping the bible in secular universities = Religious Studies	Articles about Quest for Historical Jesus
Week 13			
Tues.	11/18/25	Historical-criticism of the Old and New Testament	Articles about Religion and Science
Thur.	11/20/25	Quests for the Historical Jesus	Barton and Powell articles
Week 14			
Tues.	11/25/25	Reaction to historical-criticism: Modernism & Fundamentalism	Barth and Cone articles
Thur.	11/27/25	No classes - Thanksgiving Day	Websites about the New Perspective on St. Paul
Week 15			
Tues.	12/2/25	Critique of biblical studies: New Perspective on St. Paul	Articles about <i>Nouvelle Theologie</i> and Dialectical Theology
Thur.	12/4/25	Challenging the "Myth" of the secular bible	Study for final exam
Final Exam	CTC Ching 254	RE 211.04: Tuesday, 12/9/25 - 11am-1pm.	Bring blue book and pen for essay writing
Final Exam	CTC Ching 254	RE 211.01: Tuesday 12/9/25 - 3:30-5:30pm.	Bring blue book and pen for essay writing