6AAT3201 Jesus in Context

Level 6 – 15 Credits

Course lecturer: Prof. Joan Taylor (joan.taylor@kcl.ac.uk)

Classroom: S-1.01

Class times: Mondays, 9-11 am

Class Times: Lent Term (Semester 2)

Office hours (Lent): Mondays, 2-3 pm, Tuesdays 2-3 pm, VWB3.22

Module Syllabus
1. Introduction

**Outline / What is our topic?**

This module provides an introduction to the historical quest for Jesus. It does so by placing Jesus within his contemporary context of Second Temple Judaism and of first-century Galilee and Judaea, with an awareness also of the wider Graeco-Roman world. Key Gospel texts will be studied using the historical-critical method.

**Lectures, seminars and participation / How can I get involved?**

After the initial lectures, class time will be split between a lecture and a small group work for considering texts and questions.

**KEATS & Maughan Library / Where do I find relevant sources?**

Readings and bibliographies are available on KEATS. You can find good sources in the Maughan Library, and also other libraries in the University of London family. For the Maughan, see: [http://libguides.kcl.ac.uk/trs](http://libguides.kcl.ac.uk/trs)

If you find new sources that should be in the library, please let me know.

2. Module plan & Readings

For preliminary reading, use the course text book: Graham Stanton, *The Gospels and Jesus* (Oxford: OUP, 2002), and see also the specific articles available on KEATS. Please bring a BIBLE with you to every class or have one available online.

1. Jan 18 Introduction to the course. Who was Jesus?
2. Jan 25 The quest for the historical Jesus (reading on KEATS)
3. Feb 1 The gospels, other sources, and the criteria of authenticity (GS Chaps. 3-9)
4. Feb 8 John the Baptist and Jesus (GS Chap 10)
5. Feb. 15 The Kingdom of God: Jesus' Teaching (GS Chap 11)

**Reading Week**

6. Feb 29 Jesus the healer and exorcist (GS Chap 14)
7. Mar 7 Disciples, apostles, gender and family
8. Mar 14 Reception exegesis: Using film to study the historical Jesus (reading on KEATS)
9. Mar. 21 Debates about the Law of Moses: Pharisees,
Revision Class: Monday 2 May S-1.01 9-11 am

3. Assessment / How will my work be assessed?

- Coursework essay (3000 words, contributing 40% to your module mark) on the essay question listed at the end of this syllabus. Due: Monday 7 March, BEFORE 4pm, on KEATS

Feedback will be available on KEATS no later than Tuesday 29 March. Feedback tutorials will offer further guidance on improving your work and preparing for the exam.

- Unseen written exam (2 hours, contributing 60% to your module mark): 2 out of at least 7 questions must be answered. The examination will take place in Period II (May-June 2016).

The most recent exam past papers will be available in the relevant KEATS module area before the start of teaching.

Scope of assessment

The exam topics will cover the subjects discussed in lectures 3-10

What is a good essay/exam answer?

- Good essays and examination answers will demonstrate a nuanced grasp of the topic, an awareness of historical contexts and issues of interpretation, and a capacity to develop a well-reasoned argument that is convincingly supported by reference to suitable evidence and is presented in a structured manner using clear English.
- For more details please see the link to marking criteria below (“Essential Information”).

Essential information: How do I submit my essay?

- The Faculty of Arts & Humanities cover-sheet needs to be the first page of the submitted essays; please follow this link: http://www.kcl.ac.uk/trs/study/handbook/assessment/taught/submission.aspx
- The candidate number (e.g. W01234) on the cover-sheet needs to be accurate and of the present academic year. Your work cannot be attributed to you on the College systems, if this information is incomplete or wrong.
- The word limit includes all footnotes/endnotes, but excludes the bibliography, which you should provide. There is a 5% tolerance: no penalty will be incurred for essays that are up to 5% over the word limit. Beyond that tolerance band, two marks will be
deducted for every 5% of excess words until 50% is reached. After 50%, three marks will normally be deducted for each further 5% of excess words.

- **The MHRA reference style** has been adopted for this module. Please find the *Quick Guide to Reference Styles in TRS* in the TRS Handbook online. The **presentation of your work**, including the insertion of page numbers, quality of referencing and bibliographical information and the standard of English, has a strong bearing on the mark given for it.

- **Submission BEFORE 4pm:** Your work must be submitted via the assessment submission section of the KEATS area for the module, by the published deadline, i.e. **before 4pm on the relevant day.** Work with a Turnitin time stamp of 4.00pm counts as a late submission (see next point).

- **Late submissions** will be treated as follows:
  
  Unless an extension has been granted by the Chair of the UG Programme Board of Examiners on the basis of a Mitigating Circumstances Form (MCF), supplied with supporting evidence, or comes to be granted retrospectively:
  
  - Work submitted within 24 hours after the original deadline will be marked, but the mark for this element will be capped at the pass mark of 40%.
  - Work submitted more than 24 hours after the original deadline will not be marked, and the submission will receive a mark of zero.

- **Mitigating Circumstances Forms:** MCFs can be downloaded from the Policy Zone of the College website. [http://www.kcl.ac.uk/aboutkings/quality/academic/assessment/mitcir.aspx](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/aboutkings/quality/academic/assessment/mitcir.aspx)

- **Extensions retrospectively:** An extension may be granted retrospectively, providing the MCF with supporting documentation is submitted no later than 7 days after the missed assessment and supporting documentation has been received no later than 21 days after the missed assessment. Please note that extensions are granted by the TRS Assessment Board Chair and NOT by individual module tutors.

- **Plagiarism:** Please make sure that you understand the College rules on plagiarism. Information is available at: [http://www.kcl.ac.uk/library/help/plagiarism/index.aspx](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/library/help/plagiarism/index.aspx), and you should also have been enrolled on a KEATS plagiarism module.

- **Collusion** also counts as misconduct. Think twice before circulating your work to other students.

- **Marking:** Your essays for this module will be assessed according to Model 3: [https://www.kcl.ac.uk/trs/study/handbook/assessment/taught/markmodels.aspx](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/trs/study/handbook/assessment/taught/markmodels.aspx)

  **Essays:** First and second markers will apply the Faculty’s Undergraduate Marking Criteria: [http://www.kcl.ac.uk/artshums/study/handbook/sguides/assessment/ugmarkcrit.pdf](http://www.kcl.ac.uk/artshums/study/handbook/sguides/assessment/ugmarkcrit.pdf)

### 4. Essay Question

You will write a critical comparative book review, with the following title:

‘Who was Jesus? A Comparative Review of Two Scholars of the Historical Jesus’
Choose TWO authors of books on the historical Jesus, and explain how their work may be situated within the wider field of study, outlining their major contributions, methods of investigation, assumptions and characteristics in relation to others who have written in the field. How do they answer the question, ‘Who was Jesus?’ Where do they agree and disagree, and give specific examples. Evaluation which presentation (if any) you find more persuasive, and explain your reasons. Your aim is to show not only that you have read and understood the works of the scholars in question, but that you have a good appreciation of trends in the field of study and issues of interpretation of the Gospel evidence.

For further guidance on writing a critical review, see materials on KEATS.

You may choose from the following works (if you wish to use others, please get approval).
Recent books on the Historical Jesus


Sanders, E.P., *The Historical Figure of Jesus* (New York: Penguin Books, 1993).

Wright, N. T., *The Challenge of Jesus: Rediscovering who Jesus was and Is* (Downers Grove; Illinois: Inter-Varsity Press, 1999)


**Also useful: for Essays, Exam Preparation and General Reading**


Crossley, James, *Jesus in an Age of Neoliberalism: Scholarship, Intellectuals and Ideology* (Equinox: London and Oakville, 2012)

Crossley, James, *Jesus in an Age of Terror: Scholarly Projects for a New American Century* (London and Oakville: Equinox, 2008)

Donne, Anthony Le, *Historical Jesus: What Can We Know and How Can We Know It?* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2011).

Dunn, James D.G. & Scott McKnight, eds, *The Historical Jesus in Recent Research, Sources for Biblical and Theological Study* 10 (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 2005).


Gowler, David B. *What Are They Saying About the Historical Jesus?* (New York: Paulist Press, 2007).


Powell, Mark Allan, *Jesus as a Figure in History: How Modern Historians View the Man from Galilee* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2013).

