



# Course Syllabus Wycliffe College Toronto School of Theology

This description is intended to assist in the course approval process and to assist students in determining whether this course will help them achieve their educational objectives and the learning goals of their program. It is not a learning contract. The details of the description are subject to change before the course begins. The course syllabus will be available to the class at the beginning of the course.

## ***Course Identification***

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Course Number : WYB 5032 H  
Course Name: Early Christian Self-definition

## ***Instructor Information***

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Instructor: Terry Donaldson  
E-mail: terry.donaldson@wycliffe.utoronto.ca  
Office Hours: By arrangement

## ***Course Prerequisites or Requisites***

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None

## ***Course Description***

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A study of the developing self-understanding of early Christianity, seen in the context of the process by which the Christ movement separated from its Jewish matrix and developed into a distinct, largely Gentile religion. The major portion of the course will consist of a study of selected Christian literature with attention to specific issues of self-definition.

## ***Course Methodology***

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Class time will be used in three different ways:

- (1) Lectures: For at least part of each class in the first half of the course, I will provide a framework for the course in a series of lectures. The outline for the lectures is given below.
- (2) Readings (primary and secondary): Also in the first part of the course, we will spend five hour-long sessions in discussion arising from assigned readings in Justin's *Dialogue*, together with selected secondary sources. Prior to the class in which the readings are to be discussed (specifically, by noon on the Tuesday prior to Wednesday's class), students are to post one observation or question arising from the readings on the Discussion Board of the course website. These postings should relate to some aspect of the four course questions described below (see the section on "Seminar paper" under "Requirements") and should arise from some intersection of or interaction between the two readings. Each posting should be focused (dealing with one main point or issue) and concise (a paragraph or two). The postings will provide us with a point of departure for further discussion in class.
- (3) Seminar presentations: Most of the classes after reading week will be devoted to a study of selected pieces of the New Testament and other early Christian literature. The selection of literature will depend to some extent on the particular interests of those in the class. The basis of our study will be short

papers prepared by members of the class. These papers will not be delivered orally; instead, they will be posted on the course website ahead of time (see further below), read by the other members of the class and then discussed in class. Prior to each class, all other students will be required to read the paper or papers for the week and to post a response. As with the readings from Justin (above), the responses should be focused, concise and of a kind that will foster discussion. The responses are to be posted on the Discussion Board by noon on the [Tuesday] prior to [Wednesday's] class.

The **lectures** will follow this outline:

1. Introduction
2. Separation from Judaism
  - 2.1 Factors affecting current context
    - 2.11 *Holocaust and Christian anti-Judaism*
    - 2.22 *New conceptions of Second Temple Judaism*
    - 2.23 *New conceptions of Christian origins*
  - 2.2 The situation at 30 and 150 CE
    - 2.21 *Earliest Jewish Christianity: social placement and self-understanding*
    - 2.22 *Justin Martyr: social placement and self-understanding*
  - 2.3 The process of separation:
    - 2.31 *Stages*
    - 2.32 *Factors*
  - 2.4 Christian self-definition vis-à-vis Judaism
3. Gentilization
  - 3.1 Jewish “patterns of universalism”
  - 3.2 Early Christian patterns of Gentile inclusion
  - 3.3 The process of Gentilization
  - 3.4 “Gentiles”
  - 3.5 The landscape in the middle of the 2<sup>nd</sup> c.
  - 3.6 Christian self-definition vis-à-vis the Roman empire

## ***Course Outcomes***

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The first column below contains the set of intended learning outcomes for the course; these describe the level of knowledge and skill that will be characteristic of a typical student who completes the course successfully. These outcomes will provide one of the benchmarks for evaluation and grading. The third column links each course learning outcome to one or more learning outcomes for the PhD program as a whole. The PhD learning outcomes appear as Appendix A in the PhD Handbook. (The title of the appendix, “PhD Degree Learning Expectations [DLE]” reflects the terminology in use at the University of Toronto.)

<b>COURSE OUTCOMES</b>	<b>COURSE ELEMENT</b>	<b>PROGRAM OUTCOMES</b>
<b>By the end of this course, students</b>	<b>This outcome will be demonstrated through these course elements:</b>	<b>This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of the Degree Learning Expectations (DLEs) for the PhD program:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• will be able to describe the emergence of the early Christian movement within the Jewish world and its</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• online and class discussion</li> <li>• final paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PhD: 1.1; 1.2</li> </ul>

development into various Jewish and Gentile groups (more or less) distinct from Judaism		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• will be able to describe the various ways in which this process of development has been understood and conceptualized</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• online and class discussion</li> <li>• final paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PhD: 1.1; 1.2</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• will be able to recognize and analyze pertinent aspects of Christian self-definition vis-à-vis both the Jewish and the Roman worlds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• online and class discussion</li> <li>• seminar presentation</li> <li>• final paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PhD: 1.1; 1.2</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• will be able to discern the distinct features of one piece of early Christian literature as seen in the context of this process of separation and self-definition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seminar presentation</li> <li>• final paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PhD: 1.1; 1.2; 2</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• will have demonstrated the following scholarly skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• clear and effective communication in both oral and written forms</li> <li>• the ability to construct and carry out a scholarly research project</li> <li>• facility with appropriate bibliographic, methodological and linguistic tools and resources</li> <li>• the use of standard conventions of style for scholarly writing</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• seminar presentation</li> <li>• final paper</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PhD: 2; 3; 5</li> </ul>

## ***Course Resources***

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### **Required Course Texts**

Thomas B. Falls and Thomas P. Halton (trans. & ed.), *St. Justin Martyr: Dialogue with Trypho* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2003). This book is available for purchase in the CRUX Bookstore. In addition to Justin's *Dialogue*, we will be reading specific articles or excerpts in the first several weeks of the course (see below). These can be found either on the reserve shelf at the Graham Library or on the course website.

## Course Website(s)

Blackboard <https://weblogin.utoronto.ca/>

This course uses Blackboard for its course website. To access it, go to the UofT portal login page at <http://portal.utoronto.ca> and login using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to the portal using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Blackboard-based courses. (Your course registration with ROSI gives you access to the course website at Blackboard.) Note also the information at <http://www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/information-students>. Students who have trouble accessing Blackboard should ask Thomas Power for further help.

## Class Schedule

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A tentative outline of **classes** is as follows:

Week 1    Lecture

Week 2    Discussion of readings:

- Justin *Dial.* 1-10
- Terence L. Donaldson, "Eusebius, Aristides and Paul: Gentile Christianity, the Parting of the Ways, and Roman Imperial Ideology about the Nations" (available on the course website).

Lecture

Week 3    Discussion of readings

- Justin *Dial.* 11-30
- Stephen G. Wilson, *Related Strangers: Jews and Christians 70 – 170 C.E.* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), pp. 258-284 (available on reserve shelf)

Lecture

Week 4    Discussion of readings

- Justin *Dial.* 31-47
- Denise Kimber Buell, *Why This New Race: Ethnic Reasoning in Early Christianity* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2005), pp. 1-13, 94-115 (available on reserve shelf)

Lecture

Week 5    Discussion of readings

- Justin *Dial.* 110-125
- Terence L. Donaldson, "We Gentiles': Ethnicity and Identity in Justin Martyr," *Early Christianity* 4 (2013), 216-41 (available online through the library; note that this is the journal published in Tübingen, not the entry in *Oxford Bibliographies Online*)

Lecture

Week 6    Discussion of readings

- Justin *Dial.* 130-142
- Terence L. Donaldson, "The Parting of the Ways and Gentile Christianity" (pdf available on course website)

Lecture

Weeks 6-11      Student seminar presentations and discussion

Week 12    Wrap-up

## *Evaluation*

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### Requirements

The final mark for the course will be based on evaluations in four areas:

- (1) Preparation, presence and participation (20%) – The weekly postings (observations on readings, questions on student papers) are included in the participation component. (See above, under “Procedures and Outline.”)
- (2) Seminar paper (30%) – For each selected piece of early Christian literature we will be asking four questions (or, better, four sets of questions). These questions will be developed in the lectures, but they can be described here in brief; the first three are literary and theological, while the fourth is historical and sociological:
  1. *The ekklesia and scriptural Israel*: the nature and character of scriptural Israel; the place and purpose of Israel in the process of salvation that is accomplished through Christ; the way in which Israel’s scriptures are claimed as a Christian book (the “Old Testament”); the presumed relationship between scriptural Israel and the *ekklesia*.
  2. *Jews, Gentiles and the ekklesia*: the theological framework within which membership of non-Jews (“Gentiles”) in the *ekklesia* is understood; the *ekklesia* and the nations (*ethne*); the status of Jewish Christ-believers; the relationship between Jewish and Gentile Christ-believers.
  3. *Continuing Judaism*: attitude towards Jews and Judaism; the nature and purpose of anti-Judaic polemic; theological status of Judaism in the present and in the eschatological future.
  4. *Socio-historical location*: location of the author and his intended readers with respect to Judaism and the wider Roman world; placement within the process of separation.

Each student is to select one piece of literature and to write a short paper (8 - 10 pages / 2400 - 3000 words) dealing with the selected piece from the perspective of one (or more) of these four sets of questions. While the paper may function as part of the preparation for the final seminar paper (below), the primary purpose of the paper is to introduce the selected piece of literature to the other members of the seminar, to draw attention to aspects of the piece that have a bearing on one (or more) of the four sets of questions, and to identify questions for further investigation. The paper should also contain a substantial bibliography of secondary sources dealing with the selected piece of literature from the perspective of the questions being discussed in the course. (The bibliography will be in addition to the page / word total indicated above.) The paper (with bibliography) is to be submitted to the instructor in electronic form by 5:00 p.m. on the [Friday] before the class in which it will be discussed. It will then be posted on the course website (by [Saturday morning] at the latest). A sign-up sheet will be distributed the second week of class.

- (3) Final paper (proposal: 10%; paper: 40%) – The final requirement is a scholarly paper (20–25 pages / 6,000–7,500 words) on a topic to be chosen by the student and confirmed with the professor. Normally the paper will deal with the same piece of early Christian literature that was the subject of the seminar paper, and will build on the work done for that paper. Nevertheless, in contrast to the seminar paper (which is to function more in an introductory, descriptive and question-raising way), the final paper should be a research paper (research question, deliberate attention to methodology, well-constructed argument in support of a thesis). A paper proposal (including a working bibliography) is to be submitted by [Friday March 25]. The paper is due by the end of examination week (i.e., [Friday April 15]). The date beyond which a student would need to arrange for an SDF (with his or her College AD Director) is [April 22].

## Grading System

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalents	Grade Point	Grasp of Subject Matter
A+	90–100%	4.0	Profound & Creative
A	85–89%	4.0	Outstanding
A-	80–84%	3.7	Excellent
B+	77–79%	3.3	Very Good
B	73–76%	3.0	Good
B-	70–72%	2.7	Satisfactory
FZ	0–69%	0	Failure

Grades without numerical equivalent:

CR	Designates credit; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
NCR	Designates failure; has no numerical equivalent, but has a grade point value of 0 and is included in the GPA calculation
SDF	Standing deferred (a temporary extension)
INC	Permanent incomplete; has no numerical equivalent or grade point value
WDR	Withdrawal without academic penalty
AEG	May be given to a final year student who, because of illness, has completed at least 60% of the course, but not the whole course, and who would not otherwise be able to convocate; has no numerical equivalent and no grade point value

### ***Policy on Assignment Extensions***

Basic Degree students are expected to complete all course work by the end of the term in which they are registered. Under **exceptional circumstances**, with the written permission of the instructor, students may request an extension (SDF = “standing deferred”) beyond the term. An extension, when offered, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. An SDF must be requested no later than the last day of classes of the term in which the course is taken. The request form is available on the college website or from the Registrar’s office.

**One percentage point per day will be deducted on the course grade if an extension has not been requested by the stated deadline.**

**Course grades.** Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor’s college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Policies/PDF/grading.pdf>) or college grading policy.

## ***Policies***

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**Accessibility.** Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

**Plagiarism.** Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/academic/resources-forms/handbooks> and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>), a student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges ([http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library\\_Archives/Theological\\_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm](http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm)).

**Other academic offences.** TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

**Writing Style.** The writing standard for the Toronto School of Theology is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, 8<sup>th</sup> edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013), which is available at Crux Books.

## ***Bibliography***

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