

## **BCRE14 Introduction to the New Testament and Early Christianity, texts and contexts**

**Semester: B**

**ECTS Credits: 5**

**Duration: 11 weeks**

**Contact Hours: 22**

**Quota: None**

**Prerequisite subjects: None**

This course invites learners to engage with the earliest extant written records of believers in Jesus: the narratives and letters that make up the New Testament, employing a variety of approaches used in biblical scholarship today. Students will discover both the consistency and the fascinating diversity that evidently characterised early Christian belief, ritual and practice.

### **Learning Outcomes:**

On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

Identify the main approaches of investigation of New Testament literature (e.g. historical-critical, narratological, feminist) and the principal methodological difficulties related to the study of the New Testament and its origins.

Demonstrate adequate familiarity with the content of the writings which form the New Testament, their structure and the main historical and cultural factors which contributed to their development.

Read the New Testament in English translation with awareness of the complex process of its formation and with an appreciation of the diverse traditions which are represented in it. This includes a basic awareness of the history of its interpretation and exegetical traditions and an increased facility in presenting scholarly views about the New Testament to both specialists and non-specialists, writing well-structured essays and compiling well-reasoned bibliographies.

Appreciate the importance of the transmission of the text of the New Testament, its canon, its manuscripts (in particular those preserved in the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin) and its critical editions for the understanding of early Christianity.

### **Indicative Reading:**

Ehrman, Bart D. *The New Testament: A Historical Introduction to the Early Christian Writings* (New York and Oxford: OUP, 2000).

Hurtado, Larry W. *The Earliest Christian Artefacts: Manuscripts and Christian Origins* (Grand Rapids, Mich. and Cambridge: Eerdmans, 2006).

Keefer, Kyle. *The New Testament as Literature: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: OUP, 2008).

Parker, David. C. *An Introduction to the New Testament Manuscripts and Their Texts* (Cambridge: CUP, 2008).

**Assessment:** One 3,000 word essay

**Name of lecturer**

Professor Daniele Pevarello