

**Associated Canadian Theological Schools
of Trinity Western University**

**HIS 540: History of Christianity I:
From the First Century to the Reformation**

Professor: Bruce L. Guenther, Ph.D

Fall Term 2017, 3 credit hours

Monday, 2:30-5:10 pm, Fosmark Building

Prerequisites: RES 500 (May be taken concurrently)

E-mail: bruce.guenther@twu.ca

Phone: (604) 513-2133

Office Hours: Drop-in or by appointment

DESCRIPTION

This course is the perfect antidote to the fictitious fabrications regarding the history of Christianity that have been popularized by books and movies such as *Angels & Demons* (2009) and *The Da Vinci Code* (2006). It surveys the history of Christianity from the time of Christ until the eve of the Protestant Reformation. It is concerned not only with ecclesiastical organization and practice, but also with the history of theology, mission and spirituality, and the dynamic relationship between Christianity and culture. The course highlights various cultural, political and theological influences that have shaped the church's institutional development and explores the relationship between the Christian faith and western culture.

The course will be taught by using lectures, films and groups discussions augmented by readings from textbooks, primary source documents and exploration of internet sites. While the textbooks will provide a chronological survey of persons, events and movements important during this period, the lectures and discussion of source documents will permit a more detailed examination of select topics.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By successfully completing the course, each student should:

- * Have a general knowledge of the key individuals and events within the first 1500 years of the history of Christianity, and be familiar with enough names, dates and events to construct a chronological sequence of major events in the history of Christianity;
- * Demonstrate skills in reading and interpreting historical materials including the identification and evaluation of different historiographical approaches, and the ability to identify and analyse complexities within Christianity through careful, sensitive reading of documents and events;
- * Identify historical resources useful for personal devotional, intellectual and theological development as well as congregational renewal;
- * Be equipped with knowledge and skills for exploring their own spiritual, theological and denominational roots;
- * Utilize historical knowledge and research skills for analysing and responding to some of the contemporary issues and challenges facing Christianity.

TEXTBOOKS

Required

Gonzalez, Justo L. *The Story of Christianity*. Peabody: Hendrickson Press, 1999. This book, sometimes published as two separate volumes, will also serve as the textbook for HIS 541. (400 pp reading)

Tucker, Ruth A., and Walter Liefeld. *Daughters of the Church: Women and Ministry from New Testament Times to the Present*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987. Like the previous text, this book serves as a textbook for both HIS 540 and HIS 541. Students will be required to read approximately one half of this book during this course. (170 pp)

Williams, D.H. *Retrieving the Tradition and Renewing Evangelicalism: A Primer for Suspicious Protestants*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999. (220 pp)

Heath, Gordon L. *Doing Church History: A User-Friendly Introduction to Researching the History of Christianity*. Toronto: Clements Publishing, 2008. (85 pp)

Cross, F. L., and Elizabeth A. Livingstone, eds. *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*. Oxford; New York: Oxford University Press, 2005. **This book is not required as a course textbook, but it is good to have access to at least one valuable lifelong quick reference book. This book is included as part of the ACTS Seminaries Logos Software package.**

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

* Note: Evaluation of student performance in this course intentionally does not include knowledge-based exams. Instead, projects have been designed that will help students build a solid base of historical knowledge as well as develop analytical, applicational and integrative skills.

1. Reading Responses

The reading responses for the course are comprised of several components and will be submitted in several stages. Please give careful attention to the following details.

(a) Text-book Response (10% of final grade): **DUE DATE: 9 October 2017**

Read Volume One of Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity* and offer a short (no more than two pages single-spaced) report in which you itemize in an organized way some of your observations about the book. Do NOT attempt to summarize the content of the text (I already know what it says!). Instead, concentrate on answering questions such as the following that reflect your capacity to evaluate the book and its impact. What did you find interesting, memorable, entertaining, instructive? Why? What surprised you most? With what did you agree or disagree? Why? How did the book affect you? How have your opinions about various topics changed? Feel free to address additional questions that you think are pertinent.

(b) Primary source readings and class participation (15% of final grade): **DUE DATE: 4 December 2017 (NO EXTENSION)**

Short primary source documents are assigned each week to augment lectures and to illustrate some of the themes highlighted in classroom lectures and discussions. Supplementary readings will also occasionally be assigned (e.g., specific chapters in *Daughters of the Church*). Student must read the assigned readings prior to class. The students' knowledge of the readings will be assessed from class participation, and from regular entries in a reading journal. The journal should have **short** (approximately half to one page single-

spaced) weekly entries that provide an indication that you have read the assigned materials. Depending on the type of document an entry might include a brief description of the reading, some comments or questions that arise, the main argument/theme of an article, significance of this excerpt in the historical development of Christianity, a personal reaction to what you have read, etc. It is advisable that the journal entries be made as soon as possible after the reading is completed in order to capture initial impressions, questions and comments.

The mark for this assignment will include a portion that considers patterns of class attendance, regular attempts to be involved through contributions to discussions and the raising of questions, the quality of contributions in reading responses (i.e., indications of careful reading, thought, insight and interest in issues, etc). Try not to get behind in your readings: judging from the experience of students in previous years, it is impossible to catch up at the end of the term if you have not been making regular response entries during the term.

2. Mini-Conference Presentation #1: (20% of final grade): DUE DATE: 30 October 2017

The student mini-conference will feature the book, *Retrieving the Tradition and Renewing Evangelicalism*, by D.H. Williams. Well in advance of the due date, the class will be divided randomly into working groups of no more than four people. Each group will distribute the four assigned questions itemized below among the members of their group. Each member will present a short response (between 5-10 minutes – absolutely no more than 10 minutes!) to their assigned question to other members of their group. The manuscript, or detailed presentation notes, will be handed in to the professor after the presentation. Presentations will be graded both by the members of your group, as well as by the professor. Following the four presentations, a larger discussion will take place concerning the usefulness of the book for contemporary evangelical Protestantism.

The four questions to be distributed include:

- (1) Critique Williams' distinction between "Tradition" and "tradition"
- (2) Evaluate Williams' critique of the "fall paradigm"
- (3) Identify and discuss any implications that William's ideas might have for the relationships that evangelical Protestants have with other Christians
- (4) Discuss the relationship between historical awareness, and spiritual/theological renewal

3. Historical Texts and Church Leadership: Mini-Conference Presentation #2: (20% of final grade): DUE DATE: 20 November 2017

The second student mini-conference will feature the sixth-century book entitled *Liber regulae pastoralis* or *Book of Pastoral Care* by Gregory the Great. (See <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3601.htm> or <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf212.iii.iv.i.html> or for on-line versions. A more recent translation of this text has also been prepared by Henry Davis.) Originally intended primarily for bishops, Gregory's work became the standard handbook of pastoral care for over a millennium. It was one of the most widely read works within the medieval church. Other than the Bible, there is no other book on church leadership that has been so widely used for such a long period of time!

Students will once again be divided into groups. Each group member will make a short presentation (absolutely no more than 10 minutes) to members of their group. Your presentation should identify clearly **three (3)** leadership insights derived from the *Book of Pastoral Care* that might be useful for helping those involved in pastoral care and spiritual guidance in your specific local church setting (e.g., small group leaders, board of elders). You will of necessity need to be selective – the *Book of Pastoral Care* is too long for anyone to attempt a comprehensive summary! While the focus of the presentation is on practical application, be careful not to ignore the historical context that gave rise to the document or to the historiographical implications that you might encounter (e.g., the value of ancient texts for contemporary church leadership, the role of the document in the history of Christianity). While this is NOT a research essay, it is valuable to do at least some historical research so that you are familiar with

both the central issues surrounding your subject and the issues surrounding the document and its use in the past.

The manuscript, or detailed presentation notes, will be handed in to the professor after the presentation. Presentations will be graded both by the members of your group, as well as by the professor.

4. Research essay (35% of final grade): DUE DATE: 11 December 2017

Write a research essay of approximately 2,500-3,000 words on a subject pertinent to the first 1500 years of the history of Christianity. Each essay must have a title page, followed by a page containing an outline along with a 1-2 sentence thesis statement—essays without such a page will not be accepted for grading.

The essay may feature an individual, institution, movement, document, religious practice or issue, but the subject should be concise enough to be investigated in some detail. In addition to key secondary sources try also to use primary sources in your analysis. Your aim in the essay must be to **analyze and explain** the historical development and significance of your subject. Carefully avoid conducting a theological critique or merely describing a sequence of historical events! Every section of the essay needs to relate to the central argument.

This assignment represents a significant proportion of the final grade indicating the level of research and general quality expected. Begin work on this project as soon as possible by selecting a topic and assembling resources. It is generally a good idea to discuss your essay topic in advance with either the professor or teaching assistant. Students may wish to obtain a preliminary assessment of their ideas by submitting a one-page outline along with a proposed thesis statement.

Please Note: An essay grading template, which outlines the specific criteria used for evaluating research essays, will be distributed in class. The grade for this assignment will be based on the following criteria:

- (1) Clarity and Force of Argument (plausible thesis, sound logic, evidence supports thesis, etc.)
- (2) Quality of Research (depth and breadth, evidence of discerning analysis, etc.)
- (3) Organization (effectively organized, sections support main thesis, smooth transitions, etc)
- (4) Writing style (eloquent, proper grammar, format, etc)

Students who are unfamiliar with writing research essays in history should consult Heath, *Doing Church History* (2008), or introductory guides such as Anthony Brundage, *Going to the Sources: A Guide to Historical Research and Writing*, 3rd ed. (Wheeling, IL: Harlan Davidson, 2002); Mary Lynn Rampollo, *A Pocket Guide to Writing History*, 5th ed. (Boston: Bedford Books, 2006); or William Kelleher, and Helen Towser Jones, *Writing History: A Guide for Canadian Students*, 2nd ed. (Oxford University Press, 2007). Some of the following websites might also prove useful:

Boston University Guide: http://www.bu.edu/history/files/2011/01/writing_guide.pdf

Suggestions on Essay Writing: <http://www.westmont.edu/~work/material/writing.html>

History Commandments: <http://personal2.stthomas.edu/gwschlabach/courses/10commnd.htm>

For suggestions on how to improve one's writing style consult works such as Strunk and White's famous *The Elements of Style*, Joanne Buckley's *Fit to Print*, or Steward and Smelstor's *Writing in the Social Sciences*.

MISCELLANEOUS NOTES and POLICIES

1. Assignment Format. All written work must be type-written, **double-spaced** and submitted on clear print on white paper. Font size of the body of the paper must not be less than 11 pt. Page-bottom footnotes are preferred (but not mandatory). Bibliographies with complete citations must be attached at the end of each paper. The style guide of choice at ACTS Seminaries is Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research*

Papers, Theses and Dissertations, 8th ed. **Grades will be reduced if the Turabian style format is not used** (take special care with bibliographies and footnotes). Students may find the following website helpful:
http://www.press.uchicago.edu/books/turabian/turabian_citationguide.html

2. E-file Assignment Submission. Assignments may be submitted electronically either directly to the professor or uploaded to the MyCourses site. When submitting assignments in electronic form, please be sure to include your last name and the assignment in the file name (e.g., Guenther - Research Essay.docx).

3. Inclusive Language. Develop the habit of using inclusive language. Failure to do so in writing or in public speaking is often considered offensive in North America, and it is impossible to publish material without using inclusive language. It is therefore a useful habit to develop during graduate studies.

4. Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty. Students are expected to be familiar with the ACTS policy concerning plagiarism and academic dishonesty. Plagiarism will be treated as a serious offense and will result in the failure of the specific assignment and possibly also in a failing grade in the course. Every instance of plagiarism without exception (even minimal plagiarism) will be reported both to the registrar and the Academic Success Committee of ACTS Seminaries, and will result in a letter included in your permanent student record. Further details about this subject can be found in the ACTS Seminaries Student Handbook.

5. Students who use the **assistance of tutors** must indicate that they have done so, must describe the nature of the assistance, and must include full contact information of the tutor. Failure to disclose the assistance of a tutor will result in the rejection of assignment, and may also result in having the assignment categorized as plagiarism. Students will be exempt from this disclosure requirement if they use the TWU Writing Centre.

6. One due date extension may be requested without penalty on eligible assignments, IF requests are submitted (a) in advance of the due date, and (b) with an alternative due date. The marks for assignments that are submitted late will be reduced by one letter grade, and will not be accepted if more than seven days late except in the case of extenuating circumstances.

MEANING OF LETTER GRADES

Letter Grade	Definition	Grade Point
A+	Outstanding Excellent	4.30
A		4.00
A-		3.70
B+	Proficient Good Average	3.30
B		3.00
B-		2.70
C+	Adequate Acceptable Marginal	2.30
C		2.00
C-		1.70
F	Inadequate	0.00

CLASS LECTURE and READING SCHEDULE (subject to change)

To facilitate easy access, as many as possible of the readings identified below will be available on the *MyCourses* site, or through links to documents available via internet.

Monday, 11 September 2017

- (1) Getting Acquainted, Introduction to the Course
- (2) Introduction to Historiographical Method: Towards a Theology of Church History

Readings

Gordon L. Heath, *Doing Church History: A User-Friendly Introduction to Researching the History of Christianity* (Toronto: Clements Publishing, 2008), pp. 9-75.

Monday, 18 September 2017

- (3) The Expansion of Early Christianity
- (4) The Corporate Life of the Early Church

Primary Source Readings

1. *The Didache* – <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/richardson/fathers.viii.i.iii.html>
2. Ignatius on Unity – <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/anf01.v.ii.iii.html> (chapters 3-5)

Supplementary Readings

Ruth A. Tucker, and Walter Liefeld, *Daughters of the Church: Women and Ministry from New Testament Times to the Present* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987), Chapters Two, and Three.

Monday, 25 September 2017

- (5) The Persecuted Church

Primary Source Readings

Excerpt from *The Ecclesiastical History of Eusebius Pamphilus* (Book X:V-VII, IX)
<http://people.ucalgary.ca/~vandersp/Courses/texts/eusebius/eusehe10.html>
Pliny/Trajan Correspondence - <http://www.kchanson.com/ancdocs/latin/pliny.html>
Excerpt from The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicity
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/perpetua-excerpt.asp>

- (6) Leadership Structures in the Early Church

Primary Source Readings

“Hippolytus and the Apostolic Tradition” - <http://www.bombaxo.com/hippolytus.html>

Monday, 2 October 2017

- (7) Canon and Creeds: Early Doctrinal Developments and Variants - Dr. Craig Allert

Primary Source Readings

The Arian Controversy and the Council of Nicaea
Arius - <http://www.fourthcentury.com/index.php/urkunde-6>
Nicene Creed - <http://www.anglicanonline.org/basics/nicene.html>

- (8) Augustine

Primary Source Readings

Selection of writings by Augustine (Ray C. Petry, ed., *History of Christianity: Readings in the History of the Church* [Grand Rapids: Baker, 1962], pp. 109-116). On reserve in the TWU library.

Monday, 9 October 2017 - Gonzalez Textbook Reading Due

(9) The Rise of Monasticism

Primary Source Readings

Rule of St. Benedict - <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/benedict/rule2/files/rule2.html#ch30> (see particularly Chapters 1, 8, 9, 16, 20, 22, 30, 33, 38, 48, 58 and 73)

(10) Christianity and the Barbarians

Monday, 16 October 2017

(11) Introduction to Internet Research in Church History

(12) The Church under the Frankish Dynasties

Primary Source Readings

Excerpt from *History of the Franks* by Gregory, Bishop of Tours (Book II, Chapters 25-43)
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/gregory-hist.asp>

Monday, 23 October 2017 - Moduler Course & Reading Week - Enjoy!

Monday, 30 October 2017 - Mini-Conference Presentations

(13) The Celtic Churches

Primary Source Reading

Confession of St. Patrick - <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/patrick/confession.toc.html>

Monday, 6 November 2017

(14) The Eastern Churches

Primary Source Readings

The Council of Chalcedon - <http://www.ewtn.com/library/COUNCILS/CHALCHRI.HTM>

Nestorian Christological Hymn - <http://www.nestorian.org/index.html>

The Henoticon - http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/evagrius_3_book3.htm (Chapter XIV)

The Sentence Against the Monothelites - <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf214.xiii.viii.html>

John of Damascus, *An Exposition of The Orthodox Faith*, Book 1 Chapters 1, 8; Book 3 Chapters 13,14

<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3304.htm>

John of Damascus, *In Defense of Icons* - <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/johndam-icons.asp>

(15) Christianity and Islam

Monday, 13 November 2017

(16) Introduction to the Middle Ages

(17) Monastic Renewal in the Middle Ages

Primary Source Readings

Bernard of Clairvaux, *Apology*

<http://www.history.vt.edu/Burr/S%26B.html> (Scroll down; it is near the bottom)

Bernard of Clairvaux, Sermon 84 on the Song of Songs
<http://www.pathsoflove.com/bernard/songofsongs/sermon84.html>

Supplementary Readings

Tucker & Liefeld, *Daughters of the Church*, Chapter Four

Monday, 20 November 2017 - Mini-Conference Presentations

(18) The Papacy in the Middle Ages

Primary Source Readings

“The Donation of Constantine” - <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/donatconst.asp>

(19) Popular Piety in the Middle Ages

Primary Source Readings

Paschasius Radbertus on the Real Presence, and Ratramnus of Corbie on the Real Presence (8.10 and 8.11 in *The Christian Theology Reader*) - Go to books.google.ca and search “paschasius radbertus real presence”
Council of Florence - <http://www.ewtn.com/library/COUNCILS/FLORENCE.HTM#3> (Scroll down to Session 8-22 November 1439)
Canons of the IV Lateran Council, 1215 - <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/lateran4.asp> Canons 1, 21, 62)

Monday, 27 November 2017

(20) Building “Cathedrals of the Mind”: Christian Thought in the Middle Ages

Primary Source Readings

Anselm, *Proslogion* - <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/anselm-proslogium.asp> (Chapters 3&4)
Anselm, *Cur Deus Homo* - <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/anselm-curdeus.asp> (Book 1, chapters xi, xii, xiii, xx, xxi; Book 2, chapters iv, vi, xi, xix, xx)
Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* - <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/aquinas/summa.toc.html> (Third Part, Question 75, Articles I-V; Question 76, Article VI; Question 77, Articles I-II)

(21) Women in the Medieval Church

Primary Source Readings

Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love* - <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/julian/revelations.toc.html> (Read chapters 2-4, 58-59)

Monday, 4 December 2017 - Primary Source Reading Responses Due

(22) Dissent in the Medieval Church

Primary Source Reading

Conversion of Peter Waldo - <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/waldo1.asp>
Reinarius Saccho, Of the Sects of the Modern Heretics - <http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/waldo2.asp>
Waldensian Confessions of Faith - <http://www.pb.org/articles/walden.html>

(23) In Search of Reform: The Prelude to the Protestant Reformation

Primary Source Readings

John Wycliffe, Letter to Pope Urban - <http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/source/1382wycliffe.asp>
John Wycliffe, “On Vernacular Preaching” (Petty, pp. 362)

John Hus, "On Simony" (Petry, pp. 531-533)

Desiderius Erasmus, Orations "Great Illuminated Divines," and "Monks," in *The Praise of Folly* -
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1509erasmus-folly.asp>