

## CH 420 – Church History to 1500 Fall 2011

**INSTRUCTOR:** Darren Schmidt, Ph.D.  
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**SCHEDULE:** Tuesday, 8:30 a.m. – 12:10 p.m. (break for chapel, 10:00–11:00 a.m.)

**CREDITS:** 3

**DESCRIPTION:**

An introduction to the historical development of the church from the first century through the fifteenth.

**OBJECTIVES:**

At the successful completion of this course the student should have:

1. grasped the main outlines of the history of Christianity from the first century through the fifteenth, and the interaction between Christianity and culture in various contexts;
2. enhanced their awareness of Christian faith and practice beyond their own church tradition;
3. gained an appreciation for the relevance and meaning of Christian history to personal Christian understanding and modern-day church life and issues.

**TEXTBOOKS/READINGS:**

González, Justo L. *The Story of Christianity*, vol. 1, *The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. HarperOne, 2010. ISBN-10 006185588X; ISBN-13 978-0061855887.

Noll, Mark A. *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2000. ISBN 0-8010-6211-X.

Additional readings, especially historical readings which will serve as the basis for class discussion, will be made available by the instructor via Moodle.

The Moodle site for this course is accessible to registered students at: <http://online.taylor-edu.ca/>. The course name is "Church History to 1500 (Fall 2011)." Students are responsible to access this site on a weekly basis to obtain readings other than the above two texts. They will also be able to download lecture notes and other resources.

## **REQUIREMENTS:**

### **1) Reading**

**40 hours**

Assigned textbook reading should be done *prior to* the weekly lecture time, to serve as important background to the subject of the lecture. Class discussion will be a regular feature of lecture times; students should be prepared to contribute to discussions with comments and questions. The participation mark is worth 10% of the overall grade for the course. A strong effort in this category can make the difference between a less than satisfactory and a satisfactory grade, or between a good and an excellent grade. I recognize that students may or may not have studied history before; and therefore one's honest effort to engage with the material and to contribute in class will count far more than the brilliance or incisiveness of the contribution. Active participation also accomplishes wonders in terms of learning and retaining the material, which will be of benefit for the final exam.

### **2) Reading Journals**

**12 hours**

In addition to textbook readings, each class from weeks 2 through 12 will feature one primary, or historical, source reading (these are specified in the outline of lectures, below). These readings provide an opportunity to interact directly with the thoughts, beliefs, practices, personalities, and events of Christian history and to cultivate one's skills in "seeing things their way," reading sensitively and carefully, analyzing, and interpreting (with an eye to present-day Christianity). The journal assignment involves selecting a total of five primary source reading dates and, prior to the relevant class, writing a 500-word (two pages, double-spaced) summary, analysis and response for the primary reading in question. Your journal should include (but is not limited to) the following:

1. describe the historical context in brief, using textbook readings and additional sources if necessary; identify the document's author, audience, date, and reason(s) for writing;
2. identify the main points, or key content, of the document (what does it seek to accomplish or communicate?);
3. reflect on the historical and contemporary significance of the reading.

Your journal paper should be handed in at the end of the relevant lecture. If unable to attend the lecture, the journal assignment should be handed in at the seminary office or e-mailed to

the instructor by the day of the lecture; late penalties will apply. Each of the five journal papers will be worth 5%, for a total of 25% of the overall mark.

### **3) Research Paper**

**25 hours**

For this assignment, you have an opportunity to choose a subject which is of particular interest to you. The due date for the assignment (and the presentation which will accompany it – see #4, below) will depend on the time period for the subject you've chosen. The intent is that the research presentation would fit in with the material being covered in class.

One option is to do a biographical study, i.e. to conduct research and provide an account of the history, context (ecclesiastical, social, political, and so forth), contributions, strengths and weaknesses, and overall significance of one historical Christian from the time period covered by the course. I will provide a list of possibilities on the first day of class. You may instead suggest an individual of your own choosing, subject to my approval; please speak with me near the beginning of the semester if you would like to pursue this.

Alternatively, with my permission you may focus on a larger aspect of Christianity within the time frame of this course, such as the church in a particular time and place (i.e. the early history of the church in Carthage, the emergence of Coptic monasticism, or the history of Chartres Cathedral), a group or movement (i.e. the Montanists, Benedictine monasticism, the Celtic missionary movement, the medieval Waldenses), or a key event (i.e. the persecution of Christians under Nero or under Domitian, the Synod of Whitby, the First Crusade).

Besides the primary goal of carefully representing the history of the subject via thorough research, this assignment has several additional aims. First, consideration should be given to how the subject has been (or can be) interpreted in various ways. For example, the life of the medieval abbot and saint Bernard of Clairvaux will look quite different depending on the perspective, be it that of a fellow monk, a 16<sup>th</sup>-century Protestant, or a modern academic historian. Where possible, seek out a variety of sources (for example, you might choose to compare the account of an individual in two different church histories, one from the eighteenth century and one from recent years, or you might compare portrayals by Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Protestant, or modern academic authors) and attempt to explain the variances of interpretation. This “history of interpretation” approach can serve to highlight various factors or criteria (i.e. theological, ecclesial, political, and so forth) which have shaped, and continue to shape, how an historical Christian or aspect of Christianity is viewed and understood. A second aim, in the light of various interpretations, is to develop your own assessment of the subject's import or significance. What can be gained? What is relevant (or irrelevant) about your subject?

What might the history communicate (positively or negatively) to the twenty-first-century church?

Please follow the Seminary's *Guide for Research and Writing (SBL style)* for formatting all components of the paper, including title page, footnotes and bibliography. The bibliography should consist of at least eight substantial sources, including encyclopaedia entries, academic articles and books, and comprehensive histories of Christianity. Wikipedia, non-academic magazine or newspaper articles, and non-academic websites are **not** allowable sources. If in doubt about a source, please speak with me. The paper is due in class on the day of your presentation; late penalties apply.

**(2500 words)**

**Due Date: Various**

#### **4) Presentation**

**5 hours**

Present the core research of your paper to the class. The purpose of the presentation is not only to accurately represent the history, but also to be creative and engaging. What is the essence of your study, and what are some of the most interesting or relevant aspects? How might we understand your subject's place within the broad sweep of Christian history? Students are encouraged to use audio-visual aids (PowerPoint, art, music, brief dramatic monologues, etc.) to enhance the presentation and facilitate good communication.

Provide a one-page handout for members of the class which summarizes the major points of the presentation. Submit the handout to the instructor well in advance of the class if you wish it to be photocopied. Also, please advise the instructor if any technology is required, such as PowerPoint, CD player, etc.

Note: students will not be tested on material from these presentations in the final exam.

(15 minutes + 5 minutes for questions = 20 minutes)

#### **5) Final Exam (two hours, held during exam week)**

**8 hours**

#### **PENALTIES:**

Late assignments will incur a penalty of 5% per day (not including weekend days) for a period of one week, after which the assignment will not be accepted and a zero grade will be given. Extensions are considered only for verified medical or family emergencies; these must be discussed with the instructor as soon as possible.

**EVALUATION:**

Reading Journals	25%
Research Paper	25%
Class Presentation	15%
Participation	10%
Final Exam	25%

**COURSE OUTLINE:**

**\*Note:** All González page references given below are to the **second edition** of *The Story of Christianity*, vol. 1, published by HarperCollins in 2010.

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
Aug. 30	<b>1.</b> The History of Christianity: Who? What? When? Where? Why? How? / Origins – Jerusalem to Rome	☞ González chaps. 1–4 (pp. 1–39)
Sep. 6	<b>2.</b> The Church’s Success and Struggle in the 1 <sup>st</sup> and 2 <sup>nd</sup> Centuries	☞ González chaps. 5 & 6 (pp. 41–58) ☞ Noll chap. 1 (pp. 23–46) ☞ Primary source: <i>Martyrdom of Polycarp</i> ( <a href="http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0102.htm">http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0102.htm</a> )
Sep. 13	<b>3.</b> Contending for the Faith: Heresy, Orthodoxy, and Leadership	☞ González chaps. 7–9 (pp. 59–96) ☞ Primary source: Irenaeus of Lyons, <i>Against Heresies</i> (excerpts)
Sep. 20	<b>4.</b> From Persecuted Sect to Imperial Church: 3 <sup>rd</sup> and 4 <sup>th</sup> Centuries	☞ González chaps. 10–14 (pp. 97–155) ☞ Primary source: Eusebius of Caesarea, <i>Life of Constantine</i> (excerpts)
Sep. 27	<b>Taylor Modular Week (Sept. 26–30) – No class</b>	
Oct. 4	<b>5.</b> Reaction & Controversy, Heresy & Orthodoxy: Monasticism, Donatism, Arianism & Nicaea	☞ González chaps. 15–18 (pp. 157–197) ☞ Noll chap. 2 (pp. 47–64) ☞ Primary source: Athanasius of Alexandria, <i>Life of Anthony of Egypt</i> (excerpts)
Oct. 11	<b>6.</b> Church Fathers (& Mothers)	☞ González chaps. 19–24 (pp. 199–252) ☞ Primary source: Augustine of Hippo, <i>Confessions</i> (excerpts) ☞ Primary source: Augustine of Hippo, <i>City of God</i> (excerpts)
Oct. 18	<b>7.</b> Eastern Christianity	☞ González chap. 25–26, 28 (pp. 253–262, 295–313) ☞ Philip Jenkins, <i>The Lost History of Christianity</i>

DATE	TOPIC	READINGS
		chap. 2, "Churches of the East" (pp. 45–70) ☞ Primary source: <i>The Martyrdom of Martha, Daughter of Posi, Who Was a Daughter of the Covenant</i>
Oct. 25	<b>Taylor Modular Week (Oct. 24–28) – No class</b>	
Nov. 1	<b>8. Medieval Monks and Missionaries</b>	☞ Noll chap. 4 (pp. 83–105) [see also González chap. 27 pp. 277–281] ☞ Primary source: Benedict of Nursia, <i>Rule</i> (excerpts)
Nov. 8	<b>9. Threats and Restorations</b>	☞ González chaps. 27, 29 (pp. 269–293, 315–325) ☞ Noll chap. 5 (pp. 107–127) ☞ Primary source: Bede, <i>Ecclesiastical History of the English People</i> (excerpts)
Nov. 15	<b>10. Purging and Splitting Christendom: Barbarians, Crusades, and the Great Schism</b>	☞ González chaps. 30–31 (pp. 327–356) ☞ Noll chap. 6 (pp. 129–150) ☞ Primary source: Two accounts of the First Crusade
Nov. 22	<b>11. Medieval Church from Pope to Pauper, Protest &amp; Reform</b>	☞ González chaps. 32–34 (pp. 357–431) ☞ Primary source: Thomas à Kempis, <i>The Imitation of Christ</i> (excerpts)
Nov. 29	<b>12. Birth &amp; Death (Islamic expansion, Renaissance, Exploration)</b>	☞ González chaps. 35–38 (pp. 433–490) ☞ Primary source: Desiderius Erasmus, <i>In Praise of Folly</i> (excerpts)
Dec. 6	<b>Final Exam</b>	