Course Description
This course is designed as an introduction to the history of Christianity and the church from its beginnings in the apostolic period to its most recent expressions in the twentieth century. Major movements, leading personalities, theological developments and religious trends will be examined with the aim to better understand the broad spectrum of Christian expressions in both the West and non-West.

Course Objectives
- To acquaint the student with the major movements, leading personalities, theological developments and religious trends that have shaped the history of the Christian church from its inception to the present day.
- To increase the student’s appreciation of the Church in general and of Christian traditions other than one’s own.
- To understand and evaluate the church’s theological development and how it encountered the surrounding culture in the various eras.
- To encourage the student to examine his/her own religious tradition in an informed manner.
- To appreciate of the global nature of the Church by examining Christians traditions of the past and present in non-Western areas.
- To be spiritually challenged and encouraged by the faith of believers throughout the ages.

Required Course Texts


- Online or Primary Source Readings on Moodle website (see reading assignments below)

Recommended Course Texts

(Four chapters of the book are required reading.)

**Course Requirements**

- **Class Attendance and Participation:** Each weekend session covers one fifth of a semester’s work. Furthermore, topics will be presented and discussed in class that go beyond the textbook. Therefore, class attendance is considered mandatory. It is expected that students come to class having read the assignments and prepared to participate in the discussion. Students will be graded on the quality of their participation in class discussions.

- **Tests on Reading Material:** Each weekend (with the exception of the first weekend), the students will be tested on the textbook and primary source readings due for that day. The tests will be objective (short answer/definitions/multiple choice/matching/true and false). The test for the first weekend’s reading will be take-home (due one week after the session).

- **Christian Experience Report:** Each student will sign up and visit a Christian congregation of a tradition not his or her own. In a 3-4 page written report, the student should identify the congregation’s tradition, give a very brief historical sketch of that tradition, note characteristics of theology and practice that are characteristic to it, as well as describe the worship service. A bibliography of works consulted should be included. On the due date for that Christian tradition, the student should be prepared to share with the class insights gained through this project.

  Optional Christian traditions with due date:
  - Eastern Orthodox (Greek, Serbian, Russian) **Due:** Session II
  - Roman Catholic **Due:** Session II
  - Confessional Protestant (Christian Reformed, Missouri Synod Lutheran) **Due:** Session III
  - Anabaptist (Brethren, Mennonite, Amish) **Due:** Session III
  - Mainline Protestant (United Methodist, PCUSA, Episcopal) **Due:** Session V
  - Holiness or Pentecostal (Nazarene, Wesleyan Methodist, Pentecostal) **Due:** Session V
  - Ethnic or Racial Churches (Asian, African American, etc) **Due:** Session V

- **Book Review:** Each student will choose one scholarly biography to read from the list provided below. The student will write a five-six page review of the book and present his/her findings to the class at the appropriate juncture in the course. More specific details on how to write a critical book review will be given on a separate sheet on the first day of class. Book reviews dealing with the early church will be presented Friday evening of the second weekend.

  Books for review and when due:
  - Adrian House, *Francis of Assisi, A Revolutionary Life* (Mahwah, NJ: Hidden Spring, 2000). (Due: Session II)
Roland Bainton, *Here I Stand, A Life of Martin Luther* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1990). (Due: Session III)


- **Primary Source Research Paper OR Christian Devotional Classic Research Paper:**

  - **OPTION 1:** *Primary Source Research Paper:* The student will write a twelve to fifteen page research paper that is based upon the analysis and interpretation of primary source(s), which are set in their historical context. In addition to the primary sources, the student will consult and utilize in the paper at least ten reliable, scholarly, secondary sources (books and journal articles, not online sources), which are listed in an attached bibliography. The paper should have a clearly stated thesis statement. A thesis statement is the answer to a significant research question that the student brings to the primary sources and which the available sources (primary and secondary) allow to be answered. In the central portion of the paper the student develops his argument based on the thesis statement. The paper is due two weeks after Session V. Examples of possible primary source based research papers are the following:
    - Reflections of the Arian controversy in the Niceno-Constantinople Creed
    - Monastic spirituality in Benedict’s *Rule*
    - Luther’s rejection of the sale of indulgences in *95 Theses*
    - Proposals for church renewal in Philip Jakob Spener’s *Pia Desideria*
    - William Carey’s arguments for world missions in his *Enquiry*

  - **OPTION 2:** *Christian Devotional Classic Research Paper:* The student will write a twelve to fifteen page research paper that is based upon a thoughtful reading and analysis of a Christian devotional classic. The paper must include the following sections: 1) a biographical sketch of the author (1 page); 2) the historical context in which the work arose (3-5 pages); 3) the author’s purpose (1 page); 4) a survey of content and basic teachings of the devotional classics including relevant quotes (6-7 pages); and 5) the relevance of the book for contemporary Christian experience (1-2 pages). In addition to the devotional classic, the student will consult and utilize in the paper at least five reliable, scholarly, secondary sources (books and journal articles, not online sources), which are listed in an attached bibliography. The paper is due two weeks after Session V. Examples of Christian devotional classics:
    - Augustine, *Confessions*
    - Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor*
    - Hildegard of Bingen, *Scivias*
    - Bernard of Clairvaux, *On Loving God*
    - Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship*
- David Brainerd, *The Life and Diary of David Brainerd*
- John Bunyan, *The Pilgrim’s Progress*
- Jonathan Edwards, *A Treatise on Religious Affections*
- Charles Finney, *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*
- George Fox, *The Journal of George Fox*
- Thomas a Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*
- William Law, *A Serious Call to a Devout and Holy Life*
- Brother Lawrence, *The Practice of the Presence of God*
- C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters*
- Ignatius Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*
- Martin Luther, *The Freedom of a Christian*
- Henri J. M. Nouwen, *The Prodigal Son*
- John Owen, *Communion with God*
- Blaise Pascal, *Thoughts*
- Philip Jakob Spener, *Pia Desideria*
- John Wesley, *Christian Perfection*

**Grading**

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<th>Requirement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Attendance and Participation</td>
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<td>Tests on Reading Material (5)</td>
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<td>Christian Experience Report</td>
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<td>Book Review</td>
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<td>Primary Source OR Devotional Paper</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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**Grading Scale**


**Course Schedule with Reading Assignments**

The course meets on the following weekends, on Friday evenings from 5:30 PM to 9:30 PM, and on Saturdays from 8:30 AM to ca. 3:00 PM (one hour lunch break plus short session breaks).

- Session I: January 10-11
- Session II: January 31-February 1
- Session III: February 21-22
- Session IV: March 28-29
- Session V: April 25-26
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Dates</th>
<th>Session Topic</th>
<th>Subtopics</th>
<th>Reading Assignments</th>
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<td>I</td>
<td>Jan 10-11</td>
<td>The Church in the First Three Centuries</td>
<td>Apostolic Age&lt;br&gt;Persecution&lt;br&gt;Creeds and Canon&lt;br&gt;Constantine&lt;br&gt;Theological Developments</td>
<td><em>Church History</em>, 1-115&lt;br&gt;<em>Documents</em>, 1-7, 9-22, 24-31, 37-43, 47-55, 66-83, 88--92&lt;br&gt;McKim, <em>Theological Turning Points</em>, 4-43</td>
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<td>1) Book reviews: Whitefield</td>
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