

## CH 2030-i: History of Christianity I

Working Syllabus  
January Term 2011  
4:00 – 6:00 p.m.  
Sherrill 2A

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### Course Description

This survey course will cover the major social, cultural, and theological themes in Western Christianity from apostolic times (c. 33 C.E.) to the eve of the Reformation (c. 1517 C.E.). The course will examine core theological issues and doctrinal developments as reflected in the lives and struggles of women and men who have shaped the evolution of the faith. The course will also focus on the challenges and opportunities facing the church throughout the centuries.

### Specific Learning Goals

- Obtain a general familiarity with key events, individuals, and ideas from the history of Western Christianity from apostolic times to the eve of the Reformation.
- Discover voices and perspectives that have been marginalized or silenced in the past.
- Research and critically assess primary source historical documents.
- This course will honor multicultural worldviews, respect the contributions by multiple voices, and be taught with a commitment to anti-racism.

### Course Requirements

30%	Attendance and active participation in class
30%	Daily posts on Blackboard
10%	First in-class exam (Monday, January 10)
10%	Second in-class exam (Friday, January 14)
20%	Research paper (due by Tuesday, February 1)

#### 1. Daily Posts on Blackboard

By 12:00 noon on the day of each class session, post on Blackboard one paragraph for each of the following three questions:

- What in the readings surprised and/or excited you the most and why?
- What in the readings troubled and/or upset you the most and why?
- What in the readings would you like to see covered in class for clarification or further discussion and why?

#### 2. In-Class Exams

There will be two in-class exams for the course. The first in-class exam will be held on Monday, January 10th. The second in-class exam will be held on Friday, January 14th. More detailed information about the exams will be provided during the first week of class.

### 3. Research Paper

For the research paper, you will be asked to analyze a primary text of your choosing and propose a one-sentence thesis about the text, supporting your thesis with quotes from the text and/or secondary sources. The research paper is due via email to pcheng@eds.edu by Tuesday, February 1st at 5:00 p.m. ET. See Appendix A below for more detailed paper guidelines.

#### Course Grading Criteria

A level -- Submits work on time; proposes creative ideas in class sessions and online discussions; demonstrates critical and creative thinking in the research paper. No unexcused absences.

B level -- Submits work on time; shows enthusiasm in class sessions and online posts; demonstrates cogent and coherent thinking in the research paper. No more than one unexcused absence.

C level -- Does not submit work on time; shows minimal engagement with the class sessions, online posts, or research paper; and/or more than one unexcused absence.

#### Pass/Fail Option

Those who are taking this course on a pass/fail basis need to inform me by the end of class on Friday, January 7th. The pass/fail grading system is:

Pass: B or better  
Marginal Pass: B-  
Fail: Lower than B-

#### D.Min. Students (Permission By Instructor Required)

Course work for all Doctor of Ministry (D.Min.) students must demonstrate an advanced understanding of the nature and purposes of ministry, enhanced competencies in pastoral analysis and ministerial skills, and the integration of these dimensions into the theologically reflective practice of ministry. D.Min. students are encouraged to focus their course work on a particular subject germane to their anticipated thesis project.

#### Required Texts and Materials

The following required texts and materials are available for purchase through the EDS online bookstore or the Harvard Coop. They are also available on reserve at Sherrill Library.

##### Texts:

- Robert Bruce Mullin, *A Short World History of Christianity* (Mullin)
- Church Publishing, *Holy Women, Holy Men: Celebrating the Saints* (HWHM)
- Kenneth Curtis et al., *The 100 Most Important Events in Christian History* (Curtis)
- Tony Lane, *A Concise History of Christian Thought* (Lane)

##### Materials:

- John D. Hannah, *The Kregel Pictorial Guide to Church History, Vol. 2* (Hannah II)
- John D. Hannah, *The Kregel Pictorial Guide to Church History, Vol. 3* (Hannah III)
- Rose Publishing, *Christian History Time Line* (Timeline)

The other required readings for the course are marked with † in the course schedule below and are available on reserve and/or on Blackboard.

## Extensions

Students who cannot finish their research paper on time must send a petition for an extension to the Registrar, Penny Kohn, at [pkohn@eds.edu](mailto:pkohn@eds.edu).

## Course Schedule

Below is the tentative course schedule, which is subject to change. Please note that the readings marked with † below are available on reserve and/or Blackboard.

Class 1 – Monday, January 3

***Please read the following before our first class meeting:***

### Introduction

- † Richard A. Horsley, "Introduction," in *A People's History of Christianity*, vol. 1, 1-5
- Timeline (review AD 1 to 1400)
- Curtis 7-9 (focus on 64 to 1512 C.E.)
- † William M. Kondrath, *God's Tapestry* 253-56 (focus on 60 to 1492 C.E.)

### Life of Jesus; Daily Life in the Roman Empire

- Mullin, 3-13 (chapter 1)
- Timeline AD 1
- Mary, Martha, and Lazarus of Bethany (HWHM 492-93)
- † Richard A. Horsley, "Introduction," in *A People's History of Christianity*, vol. 1, 5-10
- † Carolyn Osiek, "Family Matters," in *A People's History of Christianity*, vol. 1, 201-15
- † Steven J. Friesen, "Economic Inequality in the Roman Empire," in *A People's History of Christianity*, vol. 1, 240-44
- † Nancy Wilson, *Our Tribe* 134-48

Class 2 – Tuesday, January 4

***The first daily post on Blackboard is due at 12:00 noon on Tuesday, January 4th.***

### Paul and the Early Church; Early Christian Women and Slaves

- Mullin 14-25 (chapter 2)
- Timeline AD 1; Hannah II 4-6
- St. Paul (HWHM 188-89)
- Lydia, Dorcas, and Phoebe (HWHM 192-93)
- † Mary T. Malone, "Early Christian Women," in *Women & Christianity*, vol. 1, 64-85
- † Barbara J. MacHaffie, "Ministries of Women in the Early Churches," in *Her Story* 9-20
- † Carolyn Osiek and Margaret Macdonald, "Female Slaves: Twice Vulnerable," *A Woman's Place* 95-117

Class 3 – Wednesday, January 5

### Apologists; Heretics

- Mullin 26-37 (chapter 3)
- Timeline 100; Hannah II 10-16
- Justin Martyr (HWHM 400-01, Curtis 17-19, Lane 10-11)
- Irenaeus (HWHM 444-45, Curtis 22-23, Lane 12-14)
- Tertullian (Curtis 24-25, Lane 14-18)

- † Barbara R. Rossing, “New Prophecy,” in *A People’s History of Christianity*, vol. 1, 280-86

Martyrs; Theologians

- Mullin 38-49 (chapter 4)
- Timeline 200
- Fire in Rome (Curtis 13-15)
- Polycarp (HWHM 238-39, Curtis 19-21)
- Perpetua and Companions (HWHM 262-63)
- Clement of Alexandria (HWHM 102-03, Lane 18-20)
- Origen (Curtis 26-28, Lane 20-23)
- Cyprian (HWHM 582-83, Curtis 28-29, Lane 24-27)
- † “The Martyrdom of Perpetua,” in *Her Story* 33-36.

Class 4 – Thursday, January 6

Constantine; Monasticism

- Mullin 53-63 (chapter 5)
- Timeline 300; Hannah II 17, 28-29
- Antony (HWHM 172-73, Curtis 30-31)
- Constantine (Curtis 32-34)
- Holy Cross Day and Helena (HWHM 580-81)
- Jerome (HWHM 614-15, Curtis 45-47, Lane 45-47)
- † Laura Swan, *The Forgotten Desert Mothers* 20-34, 40-63 (Amma Syncletica)

Councils and Creeds

- Mullin 64-72 (chapter 6)
- Timeline 400; Hannah II 17-25
- Councils of Nicea and Constantinople (Curtis 34-36, Lane 28-31, 39-41)
- Athanasius (HWHM 356-57, Curtis 36-38, Lane 31-34)
- John Chrysostom (HWHM 578-79, Curtis 43-45, Lane 44-45)
- Council of Chalcedon (Curtis 49-50, Lane 60-62, Curtis 49-50)
- Apostles’ Creed (Lane 62-63)
- † Ute E. Eisen, *Women Officeholders in Early Christianity*, 199-216 (bishops)

Class 5 – Friday, January 7

Augustine; Christianity in Africa

- Mullin 72-76 (chapter 6)
- Timeline 400; Hannah II 25-28
- Ambrose (HWHM 106-07, Curtis 38-40, Lane 42-43)
- Monnica (HWHM 358-59)
- Augustine (HWHM 544-45, Curtis 41-43, Lane 47-53)
- † Thomas C. Oden, *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind* 42-61
- † Shelley P. Haley, “Be Not Afraid of the Dark: Critical Race Theory and Classical Studies,” in *Prejudice and Christian Beginnings*, 27-34, 41-49

Class 6 – Monday, January 10

***First in-class exam.***

Christianity in the British Isles; Missionaries; Benedict’s Rule

- Mullin 85-87 (chapter 7)

- Timeline 500; Hannah II 29-31; Hannah III 4-7
- Patrick (HWHM 272-73, Curtis 47-48)
- Benedict of Nursia (HWHM 456-57, Curtis 50-52, Lane 97-100)
- Columba (HWHM 416-17, Curtis 52-53)
- Gregory the Great (HWHM 268-69, Curtis 54-55, Lane 100-03)
- Augustine of Canterbury (HWHM 388-89)
- Hilda (HWHM 686-87, Curtis 56-57)
- Venerable Bede (HWHM 386-87, Curtis 60-62)
- Boniface (HWHM 408-09, Curtis 58-60)
- † S.M. Houghton, *Sketches From Church History* 39-46

Rise of Islam; Holy Roman Empire; Christianity in Asia

- Mullin 77-85, 87-90 (chapter 7), 93-97 (chapter 8)
- Timeline 600-900; Hannah III 8-13
- Tours (Curtis 62-64)
- Charlemagne (Curtis 64-66)
- † Dale T. Irvin and Scott W. Sunquist, “Expansion of the Christian Movement in India, Central Asia, and China,” in *History of the World Christian Movement*, vol. 1, 305-22
- † “Church of the East Inscription at Xian” and “Chinese Christian Sutras,” in John W. Coakley and Andrea Sterk, *Readings in World Christian History*, vol. 1, 243-51

Class 7 – Tuesday, January 11

Great Schism; Medieval Reformation; Crusades

- Mullin 97-105 (chapter 8)
- Timeline 1000-1110; Hannah III 14-21
- Great Schism (Curtis 70-71)
- Anselm of Canterbury (HWHM 334-35, Curtis 71-72, Lane 105-07)
- Peter Abelard (Lane 108-10)
- First Crusade (Curtis 73-74)
- Aelred (HWHM 166-67)
- Hildegard (HWHM 588-89)
- † Hildegard, “The Visions of St. Hildegard” in *In Her Words* 107-13
- † John Boswell, *Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe* 180-98

Class 8 – Wednesday, January 12 Scholastics; Mystics

- Mullin 106-18 (chapter 9)
- Timeline 1200-1300; Hannah III 22-27
- Francis of Assisi (HWHM 622-23, Curtis 79-80, Lane 118-20)
- Fourth Lateran Council (Curtis 80-81, Lane 116-20)
- Thomas Aquinas (HWHM 194-95, Curtis 82-83, Lane 122-27)
- Catherine of Siena (HWHM 350-51, Curtis 84-85, Lane 134-35)
- Julian of Norwich (HWHM 362-63)
- † Catherine of Siena, “To Gregory XI,” in *Her Story* 86-88

- † Julian of Norwich, “Jesus As Mother,” in *Her Story* 84-86

Class 9 – Thursday, January 13

Eve of the Protestant Reformation

- Timeline 1400; Hannah III 28-32
- John Wyclif (HWHM 658-59, Curtis 86-87, Lane 135-38)
- John Hus (HWHM 454-55, Curtis 87-89, Lane 138-40)
- Gutenberg (Curtis 89-90)
- Inquisition (Curtis 91-92)
- Savonarola (Curtis 93-94)
- Michelangelo (Curtis 94-95)
- Jeanne D’Arc (HWHM 394-95)
- † Paul Spickard and Kevin M. Cragg, “Transformation and Renaissance,” in *A Global History of Christians* 146-70

Class 10 – Friday, January 14

***Second in-class exam.***

Conclusion

Tuesday, February 1

***Research paper due.***

## Appendix A – Research Paper Guidelines

You are asked to analyze a primary text in accordance with step one below and propose a one-sentence thesis about the text, supporting your thesis with quotes from the text and/or secondary sources. **The research paper is due via email on Tuesday, February 1st at 5:00 p.m.** The paper should be emailed to pcheng@eds.edu.

The paper should be typed and formatted as follows: double-spaced; 12 point font; one-inch margins on all sides; and no extra spaces between paragraphs. The paper should stay within the specified page limits and contain footnotes for all sources used. For additional matters of style and format, see Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th edition (2007).

On plagiarism and the importance of crediting for your sources, see the EDS Academic Handbook, Appendix 13. For additional assistance with respect to writing, please consult the WRITE program. Students who cannot finish their papers on time must send a petition for an extension to the Registrar, Penny Kohn, at pkohn@eds.edu.

Please follow these five steps for the paper:

- First, pick a favorite short primary text passage from a historical figure covered during the course. Be sure to reproduce the passage at the beginning of your paper.
- Second, find an English translation of the larger work in which that primary text passage appears (for example, the entire letter, sermon, or chapter that contains the excerpt), and attach a scanned or digital copy of that larger work with your paper. Note that the attached copy does not count towards the page count for the papers.
- Third, read the larger work carefully and propose a one-sentence thesis about the primary text passage. Be sure to state your one-sentence thesis at the outset of your discussion. Here are some sample theses:
  - You might focus on the **mindset of the author**.  
Example: Perpetua saw Jesus as the one who turns power relationships upside down.
  - You might focus on the **author's intended audience**.  
Example: Francis of Assisi's First Rule was directed at rich people who had just repented of being rich and who needed orientation for their new life.
  - You might focus on the author's **unspoken assumptions in the text**.  
Example: The editor of the story of Perpetua's martyrdom did not need to explain that the Christian faith and the Roman state were incompatible. The audience to which he or she wrote would have shared certain basic assumptions about the state.
  - You might focus on the **terms, concepts, and vocabulary that the author uses**.  
Example: The word 'tradition' played a critical role in Irenaeus's argument.
  - Your thesis might focus on the **rhetorical structure that the author employs**.  
Example: Pope Gregory VII's letter announcing the deposition of Henry IV was not addressed to Henry. Gregory chose instead to address the document to Saint Peter.
  - Your thesis might focus on the **kind of images used in the text**.  
Example: Perpetua drew upon military images to describe her confrontation with Rome.
  - Your thesis might focus on **ideas or elements in the text that were absent from readings earlier in the semester**.

Example: Unlike Irenaeus, Clare has no interest in doctrine, but only in discipleship.

- Your thesis might focus on the **theological content of your text**.

Example: Irenaeus emphasizes Christ's birth by Mary in order to counter Gnostic claims that Christ had no human body.

- Your thesis might focus on **a pastoral problem that your text attempted to address**.

Example: Irenaeus' emphasis on Christ's true bodily existence provides support for those in the Church who must endure Christian martyrdom.

- Fourth, briefly describe the author and the background of the primary text passage in the paper. Then, use specific quotations from the larger work to support your thesis. For extra credit, you can cite three or more secondary sources about the author and/or primary text passage (for example, library books and academic journals are acceptable, but not Wikipedia or other readings assigned for this course).
- Fifth, conclude by discussing how your thesis relates to the overall themes of the course to date and how your thesis relates to your own vocational and/or academic goals.

Some additional tips:

The point of this assignment is to read a text closely and to articulate clearly the voice, or some aspect of the voice, with which it spoke to its historical situation. Your own engagement with the primary source or sources you've selected should be at the heart of your work. Try to avoid rushing through the source. If possible, read it through in one sitting, allow it to "settle" for a time, and then think unhurriedly about it and the questions and connections you see rising from it, before you start writing.

Your own emotional and intuitive responses to the text can be important resources. A particular phrase, incident, or idea that evokes a particularly response might be a clue to a real issue in the person or church that generated the source. But there are some standard questions—you'll develop your own—that can open up questions worth exploring. For example, theological questions: who is the Jesus of this source? What is salvation? Or, social questions: was there anything distinctive about the situation of the people writing the text, and the church from which they came? Do you see a relationship between the exposition of faith in the document and the political structure or culture of the author? Or, questions about mission or piety: what vision of the church's purpose and work, or what kind of Christian, did this source envisage? Not all questions will be productive, but one of the most exciting transformations is when a source makes you change your questions.

A secondary text will be helpful for you to support your argument, but that is all that it should provide – support. It can provide a more detailed exploration of the historical context in which your text is set, and it can provide a sense of the interesting or controversial issues which you, in your reflections on your text, might address. But your paper needs to be structured primarily by your focused explication of your text. Likewise, you do not need to disregard what you have learned in other classes. A word study on the word *λογος* in a New Testament Greek might, for example, help you with a discussion of Athanasius's use of that term. A discussion of suicide in an ethics class might help you frame and support an argument about Perpetua's death. But, again, bring these into your paper to support the central discussion of your text.

The paper is not intended to be a religious meditation on the text that you have read or an exhortation to the reader to follow the example of the text. It is appropriate to bring such reflections to class discussion, but the paper itself should be an analysis of some element of the text.

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*These guidelines are adopted from the 2009 Church History I syllabus of Profs. Gray and Prichard of VTS and other sources.*

## Appendix B – Additional Required Readings

The additional required readings for this course (marked with † above) are available on reserve in Sherrill Library and/or Blackboard. They are taken from the following books:

- John Boswell, *Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe* (1994).
- John W. Coakley and Andrea Sterk, eds., *Readings in World Christian History*, vol. 1 (2004).
- Ute E. Eisen, *Women Officeholders in Early Christianity* (2000).
- Richard A. Horsley, *A People's History of Christianity*, vol. 1 (2005).
- S.M. Houghton, *Sketches From Church History: An Illustrated Account of 20 Centuries of Christ's Power* (1980).
- Dale T. Irvin and Scott W. Sunquist, *History of the World Christian Movement*, vol. 1 (2001).
- William M. Kondrath, *God's Tapestry: Understanding and Celebrating Differences* (2008).
- Barbara J. MacHaffie, ed., *Her Story: Women in Christian Tradition*, 2nd ed. (2006).
- Mary T. Malone, *Women & Christianity*, vol. 1 (2000).
- Laura Nasrallah and Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza, eds., *Prejudice and Christian Beginnings: Investigating Race, Gender, and Ethnicity in Early Christian Studies* (2009).
- Amy Oden, ed., *In Her Words: Women's Writings in the History of Christian Thought* (1994).
- Thomas Oden, *How Africa Shaped the Christian Mind: Rediscovering the African Seedbed of Western Christianity* (2007).
- Carolyn Osiek et al., *A Woman's Place: House Churches in Earliest Christianity* (2006).
- Paul R. Spickard and Kevin M. Cragg, *A Global History of Christians: How Everyday Believers Experienced Their World* (1994).
- Laura Swan, *The Forgotten Desert Mothers: Sayings, Lives, and Stories of Early Christian Women* (2001).
- Nancy Wilson, *Our Tribe: Queer Folks, God, Jesus, and the Bible* (1995).