

CAREY THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE
SYLLABUS
HIST 503 HISTORICAL INSIGHTS FOR CONTEMPORARY ISSUES
Spring 2017 Online

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April 3 - June 9, 2017
3 graduate credits
135 hours

Course Description

This course provides you with a survey of the history of Christianity from the end of the New Testament era (ca. 100 C.E.) to the present through an examination of both primary and secondary texts. The course emphasizes Christian theology, spirituality, ethics, institutional developments, and the interaction between culture and faith, in a global context.

Course Objectives

At the end of the course, the students will:

1. Describe the major developments in the history of Christianity.
2. Use both primary and secondary sources for writing and discussions.
3. Deepen their appreciation of their own spiritual heritage and the spiritual heritage of others.
4. Apply historical insights to contemporary situations.

Required Reading/Videos

Books

Shelley, Bruce. *Church History in Plain Language*, 4th ed. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2013. Kindle edition available.

Stark, Rodney. *The Rise of Christianity*. Harper Collins, 1997. (Selected Chapters)

Jacobsen, Douglas. *Global Gospel: An Introduction to Christianity on Five Continents*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2015. Selected Chapters. Kindle edition available.

One of the following: *The Rule of St. Benedict* or *The Rule of St. Basil* or *Celtic Prayers* (any publisher or web edition).

DVDs

Kingdom of Heaven. 20th Century Fox Home Entertainment, 2005.

Luther. MGM Studio Production, 2004.

The Cathedral. PBS Production, 2010.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZpOd2pHiI0>

The History of Orthodox Christianity. 3 vols. GoTelecom/Vision Video, 1992.

Students are encouraged to check out the DVDs from the John Allison Library or public libraries.

Recommended Reading/Learning Resource

Dowley, Tim ed. *The Baker Atlas of Christian History*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1997.

Academic Requirements

Web-based Discussions/ Class Activities

Due: Every Wednesday. Your response to your classmates should be completed by the following Monday.

Students are expected to participate in all online discussions and class activities. The discussion or activity for *each week takes about 8 hours to complete* (a total of 85 hours of online work, which includes supplementary reading time but excludes required textbook reading and DVD viewing time).

Students respond to the discussion questions or complete class activities by midnight of every Wednesday and respond to peer-postings in each unit by midnight of the following Monday.

Please note: discussions begin right away in the first week of class. Each student should *interact with at least one other student's post* each week.

The web-based discussion exercise is designed for students to engage in serious reflection with the reading assignments. Discussions will be graded on: accuracy, clarity, depth, creativity and their interaction.

- a. Accuracy – How well do students understand the issue/topic?
- b. Clarity – How clearly the student presented the argument to others
- c. Depth of thinking and integration
- d. Creativity - Creativity of the presentation
- e. Interaction – How they interacted with other students

To manage the amount of online reading, your postings should be **no more than 150 words** in length, unless otherwise indicated.

Since each discussion response or class activity carries a percentage of your grade, it is important to **keep up with the schedule**. Due to the nature of an online course, **no make-up is possible** for missed discussion sessions. If you encounter unexpected circumstances, please notify the instructor as soon as possible. All discussions posted after the assigned due dates will receive a zero unless arranged ahead of time with the instructor.

WEB DISCUSSION AND CLASS ACTIVITY INSTRUCTIONS:

First Posting Due: April 5, 2017. All postings should be no more than 150 words unless otherwise indicated. Please expect to spend 8 hours per week on your online work.

Week 1 (4/03)

Introductions, the Growth of Christianity in the first and second centuries (10%)

Read: Shelley chs. 1-4, Assigned chapter from Stark, Jacobsen chs. 1-2

1. Introduce yourself to your classmates and name one of your hopes and one of your fears in studying church history. (4/05)
2. Each student/group will be assigned a chapter from Rodney Stark's book, *The Rise of Christianity*. Imagine you are appointed by the Roman Emperor as a detective to make a report to account for the growth of Christianity. Based on your reading of Stark and Shelley, post a 150-word report of your summary findings as an official report presented to the Roman Emperor. (4/05)
3. *Insight from History* (due Monday [4/10]): Read the findings of other students/groups. Identify factors that are still contributing to the growth of Christianity by providing one contemporary example.

Week 2 (4/10)

An Inventory of Early Church Heresies (5%)

Read: Shelley chs. 5-11, Stark chs. 8-10, Jacobsen ch. 3

1. Imagine you are a bishop in the Early Church invited by the emperor to be present at one of the great church councils. You want to expend every effort to identify the heresies flowing around the Early Church. Collaborate with your fellow bishops to create a "Heresies Glossary," which includes the ***name, major leaders, time frame and central beliefs*** of each heresy. Each student/bishop will create a thread in the discussion board on a different heresy. Choice of heresy will be on a first come, first served basis. Subsequent postings should not repeat earlier topics. (4/12)
2. *Insight from History*: Give a brief description of a heresy or heresies in churches today and the theological root(s) in Early Church heresy. (4/17)

Week 3 (4/17)

Learning about and Experiencing Medieval Monastic Spirituality (10%)

Read: Shelley chs. 12-16 and one of the following:

The Rule of St. Basil

The Rule of St. Benedict

Celtic Prayers

Watch: *The Cathedral*

Follow the daily routine of a medieval monk by choosing one spiritual discipline from the *Rules* or using the Celtic prayers as devotional readings for a day or two. Share with your classmates the characteristics of the spirituality you practiced and insights it may bring to contemporary Christian living. (4/19) Respond to at least one other student's post. (4/24)

Week 4 (4/24)

Learn about Orthodox Christianity (5%)

Read: Shelley chs. 17-19, Watch: *The History of Orthodox Christianity*

Online Posting: After watching the History of Orthodox Christianity, describe how it stretches your definition of Christianity. Make a visit to or worship at an Orthodox Church this week, if possible. Compare the evangelical view of Christianity and its related spirituality with Orthodox Christianity and spirituality. *Identify 3 insights you gained from*

the Orthodox Christian tradition.(4/26) Respond to at least one other student's post. (5/01)

Week 5 (5/01)

Just War? (10%)

Read: Shelley chs. 20-23, Jacobsen ch. 5, Watch: *The Kingdom of Heaven*

Supplementary Reading: Norman Housley, "The Crusades and Islam." *Medieval Encounters* 13 (2007) 189-208. <http://users.clas.ufl.edu/ncaputo/euh4930-08/articles/hously.pdf>

[Archbishop Paul Nabil Sayah](http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=503), "Christian-Muslim Relations in the Middle East" <http://www.catholicculture.org/culture/library/view.cfm?recnum=503>

Online Discussion: Examine Augustine's and Aquinas' positions on "just war." What do you think of these arguments for using force to convert pagans for their "eternal good" and to fight evils in the name of God and justice? Formulate your response to this "retaliate against evil and defend the innocent through just war" position. Include an assessment of its impact on contemporary Christian-Muslim relations. (5/03) Respond to at least one other student's post. (5/08)

Week 6 (5/08)

Reformation Thoughts, Then and Now (10%)

Read: Shelley chs. 24-31, Watch: *Luther*

1. Study the pre-reformation context of a sixteenth-century reforming movement. Consider the geographic, socio-economic and cultural settings. In groups of 3 or 4, identify with one stream of the reformation besides Luther (Calvin, Zwingli, an Anabaptist group, Anglicanism or an aspect of Catholic reform). Formulate your own "95 theses" (10 will be sufficient) against specific complaints in this context and post them on the "Wittenberg Church Discussion Board" as a group.(5/10)
2. *Insight from History:* Identify one area of renewal needed in contemporary Canadian churches in light of Reformation-era thoughts posted on the Wittenberg Church Discussion Board. (5/15)

Week 7 (5/15)

Christian Activists Hall of Fame (10%)

Read: Shelley chs. 32-38, Jacobsen ch. 4

1. Identify and study a key leader in the pietistic (German), revivalistic (English or American) or holiness movements. Create a "Christian Activists Hall of Fame" in collaboration with your classmates. Each student will create a new thread in the discussion board with a different leader. Choice of leader will be on a first come, first served basis. Subsequent postings should not repeat earlier topics. Include a short biographical sketch, an analysis of the Christian thought that led him or her to engage in specific social action, and its impact on the larger world, both positive and negative. Please feel free to include photos, video links, etc. (5/17)
2. *Insight from History:* Respond to at least one posting and share how this person's life and work shed light on contemporary Christian social activity. (5/22)

Week 8 (5/22)

The Parachurch Movement: Field Trip and Analysis (15%)

Read: Shelley chs. 40-42, 44-45

1. Visit and research the history of any parachurch organization. If possible, choose one that operates in your community. Analyze its history and development using the life-cycle scheme provided on the course website. (250 words) (5/24)
2. *Insight from History:* How does the study of this parachurch organization inspire you to examine the growth and development of your own congregation or ministry? (5/29)

Week 9 (5/29)

Learn about the Emerging Church (5%)

Read: Shelley chs. 39, 43, 46-48; Jacobsen ch. 7

1. Online Discussion: Google articles and websites, survey books or essays, or watch documentaries about the “emerging church” movement. Reflect on movements in the history of Christianity, and offer reasons for the recent development of the “emerging church” considering the state of contemporary Protestant Christianity in the West. (5/31)
2. *Insight from History:* What have you learned from the “emerging church” movement about church renewal, either positive or negative? (6/05)

Week 10 (6/05)

Learn about Christianity in Other Parts of the World (20%)

Read: Jacobsen ch. 6 & Conclusion

Collect news clippings, web articles, etc. or interview missionaries or friends on the development of Christianity in a country in Asia, Latin America or Africa, providing a brief history but focusing on stories from the last 5 years. Imagine yourself as a journalist and prepare a 10-minute documentary (oral or written) reporting on Christianity in the country of your choice. You may include charts and photos, or use PowerPoint, YouTube or another medium for your presentation.

Students are encouraged to use the Camtasia tool in Connect if you put together a video. (6/07)

Respond to at least one other student’s post. (6/09)

Time Investment

Reading	40 hours
DVD Viewing	10 hours
Web-based Discussions/Class Activities (100 %)	85 hours (8-9 hours/week)
Total	135 hours

Bibliography

Here are several good introductory overviews of Christian history that fit the scope of this course.

Douglas, J. D., ed. *The New International Dictionary of the Christian Church*, rev. ed. Exeter: Paternoster, 1978.

Gonzalez, Justo L. *The Story of Christianity*, 2nd rev. ed., 2 vols. San Francisco: HarperOne, 2010.

Hastings, Adrian, ed. *A World History of Christianity*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999.

Latourette, Kenneth Scott. *A History of Christianity*, rev. ed., 2 vols. San Francisco: Harper, 1975.

Noll, Mark. *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*, 3rd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2012.

Walker, Williston, and Richard A. Norris, David W. Lotz, Robert T. Handy. *A History of the Christian Church*, 4th ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1985).

Academic Policies

Please see the **Carey Academic Catalog** for more details:

<http://www.carey-edu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Academic-Catalog-2016-2017-FINAL.pdf>

Course Attendance

Students are expected to attend all scheduled class sessions to fulfil degree requirements. This includes on-line webinars and/or live-streamed portions of courses.

Carey Grading Scale

See the Carey Academic Catalogue for details on the Carey grading scale.

Course Withdrawal Policy

A student who withdraws after the period for which tuition refunds are available within the first half of the course will receive a "W" on their transcript. Beyond those dates, they will receive an "F."

Extensions

Extensions for course work will only be granted in exceptional circumstances. If an extension will make it impossible for the professor to submit the final grade no later than one month following the final assignment, the student must petition the Registrar's Office. If the Registrar's Office grants such a request, the final extension deadlines will be clearly established. Work granted an extension may receive a grade reduction of up to one-third of the final mark.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is honest and responsible scholarship. Students are expected to submit original work and give credit to other peoples' ideas. Academic dishonesty is acting in a manner to gain unearned academic credit. Examples of academic dishonesty are:

- Plagiarizing by misrepresenting the work of another person (in whole or in part) as a student's own work or failing to give credit for either wording or ideas that belong to another.
- Submitting the same material for credit in more than one course (whether the earlier submission was at Carey or another institution).
- Using unauthorized aids of any sort in examinations, completing work in unauthorized collaboration with others, or the unauthorized recording and use of class lectures.

Penalty for a lack of academic integrity may include a failing grade in the assignment, examination or course, depending on the severity of the offense. All students are responsible for knowing and practicing academic integrity and must become familiar with the plagiarism student resource at:

<http://learningcommons.ubc.ca/academic-integrity/>.

Gender Language

As language usage changes, the church must discern where its language must change in order to bear faithful witness to the gospel. Modern English usage has moved away from using masculine terms to refer to groups that include women. Using of such terms in worship, writing, or conversation miscommunicates the invitation of the gospel and the nature of the church. Assignments that don't conform to the gender language policy will be returned to the student for resubmissions.

See the Carey Academic Catalogue for more details on this policy.