

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

\*\*\*\*\*REVISED—AUGUST 21, 2008\*\*\*\*\*

**HIS/MHT 556 World Christianity I**

Meets Tuesdays, 10:30 a.m.-1:15 p.m., in Room #116

Gary B. McGee, Ph.D.

Fall 2008

[gmcgee@agts.edu](mailto:gmcgee@agts.edu)

417-268-1077

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

An examination of the growth and cultural contexts of Christianity from the time of the ancient church to 1800. The study includes divisions within Christianity; expansion from the Middle East into Africa, Europe, and Asia; theological and missiological developments; political and social dynamics; the rise of Islam and the Muslim conquests; the Protestant and Catholic Reformations; renewal movements; and the advance of Christian missions in the early modern period.

**COURSE OBJECTIVES**

At the conclusion of this course, each student should be able to:

1. Discuss the history of Christianity in its diverse cultural settings to 1800.
2. Analyze the contributions of key personalities and movements to the development of Christianity.
3. Explain how diverse cultural contexts both enriched and challenged the witness of the faith.
4. Analyze new understandings of the mission of the church that arose and the patterns of evangelization that were subsequently adopted.
5. Discuss important theological issues that contributed to the further articulation of Christian doctrine.
6. Discuss the changing nature of Jewish-Christian relationships.
7. Analyze the reasons why Islam could conquer the heartland of Christianity.
8. Relate one's own story to the larger story.

**TEXTBOOKS**

**CODE: Textbooks that will also be used in the World Christianity II are marked with a single asterisk (\*).**

Irvin, Dale T., and Scott W. Sunquist. *History of the World Christian Movement*, Vol. 1: *Earliest Christianity to 1453*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2001.

\*Koschorke, Klaus, and Frieder Ludwig, Mariano Delgado, eds. *A History of Christianity in Asia, Africa, and Latin America, 1450-1990: A Documentary Sourcebook*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2007.

- \*McGonigle, Thomas D., and James F. Quigley. *A History of the Christian Tradition: From the Reformation to the Present*. Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1996.
- Placher, William C., ed. *Readings in the History of Christian Theology*. Vol. I: *From Its Beginning to the Eve of the Reformation*. Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1988.
- \*Riddell, Peter G., and Peter Cotterell. *Islam in context: Past, Present, and Future*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003.

## **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

1. The student is expected to attend all class sessions. Absences should be for extreme circumstances only. The limits established by the Seminary will be observed. "Barring a serious medical emergency, credit cannot be granted for courses in which a student has been absent beyond the equivalent of more than two weeks."
2. The student will submit **eight one-page focus papers based on assigned readings** during the term. The topics and due dates are announced on the "Course Outline, Pre-Session Assignments, and Exam Schedule" section of the syllabus. (Each one is due at the beginning of class on the assigned date.) These essays allow the student to interact with the reading assignments for the scheduled lecture topics and respond cogently to them. The one-page length expectation should be seen as the maximum allowable length.

**NOTE: Focus papers should be single-spaced and carefully proofread. The margins should be 1.5" (left) with the other margins 1"; the font size should be 12. They should NOT include footnotes, endnotes, and bibliography. See the attached guidelines for writing. Do not use a title page; place your name and AGTS box number at the top.**

3. There will be **four scheduled 30-minute exams** based on the assigned readings, guest lectures, films, and professor's lectures. Each exam will contain one essay question and twenty multiple choice questions. **They may be given at the beginning, middle, or the end of a selected class session at the professor's discretion.**
4. Each student will submit a personal evaluation on their assigned reading.

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

It is assumed that students at AGTS will endeavor to be honest and of high integrity in all matters pertaining to Seminary life. A lack of respect and integrity is evidenced by cheating, fabricating, plagiarizing, misusing facilities, removing books and other property not one's own, and disrupting classes.

Cheating is defined as "intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information or study aids in any academic exercise." It is assumed that whatever is

submitted by a student is the work of that student and is new work for that course. Fabrication is “intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise or form.” Plagiarism is “intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise.” One who facilitates any of the above is equally responsible with the primary violator.

Penalties may include restitution, an “F” on an individual paper, exam, or course; loss of campus employment; disciplinary probation; removal from extracurricular activities; and suspension.—*AGTS Student Handbook*]

### **CLASSROOM INTEGRITY AND THE USE WORD PROCESSORS**

The use of word processors in the classroom represents a privilege given to students to enhance their learning. They may only be used for purposes related to the course. Therefore, it is breach of classroom etiquette and an act of rudeness to other students, when computers are also used to surf the web, watch videos, play games, send messages, etc., during class time. The professor assumes that seminarians will be persons of integrity when using word processors in the classroom.

### **GRADING PROCEDURE**

8 focus papers	50%
4 exams	40%
Personal reading evaluation	10%

Grades are recorded and averaged on the basis of the following grade scale: A=12; A-=11; B+=10; B=9; B-=8; C+=7; C=6; C-=5; D+=4; D=3; D-=2; F=1.

All assigned work for the course must be submitted for the student to receive a passing grade for the course. The grade of I (Incomplete) may be granted only for extenuating circumstances upon the written request of the student. Except in the case of severe extenuating circumstances, the course grade will be reduced by one letter.

### **COURSE OUTLINE, PRE-SESSION READING ASSIGNMENTS, AND EXAM SCHEDULE**

**CODE: Irvin and Sunquist—IS; Koschorke—K; McGonigle and Quigley—MQ; Placher—P; Riddell and Cotterell—RC. The numbers refer to first period (10:30 a.m.-11:45) and second period (12-1:15 p.m.).**

Aug 26	1.	Introduction to the course
	2.	The forms of Christianity

- Sep 2
1. Early Christian expansion
  2. Bishops and Church Fathers
- Pre-assigned reading:* IS—Chaps. 1-13; P—Chapters 1-2  
**30-minute exam (readings, films, and class notes from Aug 26 to Sep 2)**
- Sep 9
1. Councils of Nicea and Chalcedon; Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed
  2. Arians, Monophysites, Nestorians
- Pre-assigned reading:* IS—Chaps. 14-21; P—Chap.3  
**1<sup>st</sup> Focus paper: Evaluation of the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed: What is highlighted? What is left out? Why? Relevance for today?**
- Sep 16
1. Expansion to Asia, Africa
  2. Europe
- Pre-assigned reading:* IS—Chaps. 24-27, 35-36  
**2<sup>ns</sup> Focus paper: Evaluation of the Nestorian missionary advance. How did it differ from the missionary expansion in the West?**
- Sep 23
- Byzantine Christianity  
*Pre-assigned reading:* IS—Chaps. 28-30; P—Chap. 4
- Sep 30
- Rise of Islam Christy McDougall  
*Pre-assigned reading:* IS—Chaps. 22-23; RC—Chaps. 1-5  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Focus paper: Evaluation of Timothy of Baghdad’s defense of Christianity**
- Oct 7
1. **Chapel: 10:30-11:45 a.m.**
  2. **30-minute exam (readings and class notes from Sep 9 to 30); film: 12-1:15 p.m.**
- Oct 14
1. Christendom, Schism between West and East, Crusades
  2. Fall of Constantinople, Moscow—the Third Rome
- Pre-assigned reading:* IS—Chaps. 31, 34, 37-38; RC—Chaps. 6-7  
**4<sup>th</sup> Focus paper: Christendom: Definition; should it exist today? Why or why not?**
- Oct 28
1. Christian spirituality: John Climacus, Ephrem the Syrian
  2. Francis of Assisi Christy McDougall
- Pre-assigned reading:* IS—Chaps. 32-33; P—Chap. 7  
**5<sup>th</sup> Focus paper: Evaluation of Abelard’s *Exposition of the Epistle to the Romans***

- Nov 4 Protestant Reformation  
*Pre-assigned reading:* MQ—Chaps. 1-4  
**6<sup>th</sup> Focus paper: How could the beliefs of a German monk so profoundly change Christianity in the West?**
- Nov 11 Catholic Reformation  
*Pre-assigned reading:* MQ—Chaps. 5-7  
**30-minute exam (readings, films, and class notes from Oct 14-Nov 11)**
- Nov 18 Christianity in Latin America  
*Pre-assigned reading:* K—pp. 277-346  
**7<sup>th</sup> focus paper: Evaluation of the significance of the Virgin of Guadalupe**
- Nov 25 Christianity in Asia, Africa  
*Pre-assigned reading:* K—pp. 3-54, 139-183  
**8<sup>th</sup> Focus paper: Evaluation of Jesuit methods of contextualizing in Asia**
- Dec 2 1. Renewal movements of the 18<sup>th</sup> century  
 2. Beginnings of Protestant missions
- Dec 9 Science and Enlightenment in the West  
**30-minute exam (readings, films, and class notes from Nov 18-Dec 9)**

## **RESOURCES**

Suggested sources for primary and secondary materials can be found in the bibliographies of the required textbooks for the course.

Syllabus revised by Gary B. McGee, August 14, 2008.

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR WRITING BETTER PAPERS**

### **TRUISMS**

1. Reading and re-reading the instructions aid in the preparation of superior papers.
2. A good paper requires hard work. Within five minutes or less of reading a paper, a professor can spot poor work.
3. Writing skills improve with more writing; there are no shortcuts.

### **WHAT THE PROFESSORS EXPECT**

1. Original analytical reflection
2. Integrity in writing

3. Consistency in following the designated style manual (e.g., APA, Turabian, etc.)

### **WHAT STUDENTS EXPECT OF PROFESSORS**

1. Clear instructions about the nature of the paper
2. A clear rationale for the grade should be provided through comments written on the paper.
3. The weight of the grade based first on the content of the paper, secondly on the mechanics.

NOTE: This does not minimize the problem of mechanical errors, typos, etc., because they interfere with the logical argumentation of the paper. When I was in graduate school, a professor stated that he would count the number of mechanical problems and typos on a paper. If the number exceeded the number of pages, the grade would be reduced by one grade point. This represents a fair approach to grading. It has been my experience that if more than one mistake on the average appears on a page, then the paper has been poorly prepared both mechanically *and analytically*.

### **GUIDELINES:**

1. Before writing, prepare a detailed outline of what you intend to address; this will prevent rambling and guarantee logical development.
2. Somewhere on the first page, a clear and brief statement of purpose needs to be given, one that explains the nature of the paper and what it intends to achieve. The conclusion should then link closely with the statement of purpose.
3. Write in good written, not spoken English. All sentences should be complete and coherent. Most people, especially preachers, write like they talk. (Of course, profs remain immune to such temptations!) This means that redundancies redundancies will inevitably appear in the text. While repetition and alliteration may be effective in the pulpit, such devices can be unnecessary and distracting in print. Avoid constant repetitions of proper names (use pronouns), expressions, etc. Also, use adjectives, adverbs and emphasis words (such as “very”) sparingly.
4. After completing the first draft, look carefully through the paper and eliminate unnecessary sentences; continue this approach with later drafts. “What?” you ask, “more than one draft?”
5. Keep a sharp eye on paragraph development. The topic presented in the opening sentence must govern what follows. If a paragraph becomes a collection of several unrelated thoughts (e.g., the last sentence has no connection to the opening sentence), then the logical argumentation has broken down. Furthermore, make certain that the paragraph properly fits into the development of the section.
6. Following the introduction of a person’s name (e.g., Harry Jones), only use their last name and/or pronouns afterward. Do not use the person’s first name in subsequent references; this would imply that you are a personal friend of the person cited.
7. Minimize the use of verbs of being: am, is, are, were, and being. They are are are usually overworked. Regular active verbs make stronger sentences.
8. If in doubt about a long sentence construction, break into two or more sentences.

9. How should you refer to yourself in the paper? I suggest the occasional use of the pronoun “I.” Referring to yourself as “this writer” or “this author” or “he or she who scribeth this paper” appears awkward in my estimation. At the same time, minimize use of the first person plural (“we,” “us,” “our”) and avoid entirely the second person singular and plural (“you”). Refer to others in the third person singular or plural. Consistency avoids confusion and keeps the reader on course.
10. Use direct quotations sparingly. A direct quotation should only be used when a source says something of such importance that the reader would be deprived by not being aware of it. ***Generally speaking, the frequent use of direct quotations and especially block quotations in any kind of paper may indicate that the writer has not adequately digested the material; long or frequent quotations then serve as “stuffers” in the text.***
11. Beware of plagiarism. A safe rule of thumb is that only three to five words from a source may be used without quotation marks and a reference number.
12. Proofread the paper carefully and by all means use a spell-check. Have someone else—“THE HONEST FRIEND”—or several people read the paper to look for typos, mechanical errors, and especially for clarity and logical development. Learn from their suggestions, but don’t accept them uncritically.
13. THOU SHALT NOT (1) justify the right margin; (2) use large or very small fonts.
14. Gender inclusive language should always be used except when referring to the members of the Trinity.