

## **CHS505: INTRODUCTION TO CHURCH HISTORY ONLINE**

Semester I, 2009-2010

### **Essential Information**

Please refer to the following documents for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. All of these documents are available at <http://moodle.nts.edu/>

- NTS Mission Statement and Purpose, M.Div. Objectives
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS bookstores procedures
- Online technical requirements and helpdesk information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- *A Handbook for Inclusive Language*

### **Instructor Information**

Tom Miles, Ph.D. candidate, *ABD* (Southern Methodist University)

Email: [tomamiles@aol.com](mailto:tomamiles@aol.com)

Phone: 812-679-8473 (please do not call between 10:00 p.m. and 8:00 a.m. Central time)

### **Catalog Description**

A survey of the life of the Christian Church from Apostolic times to the present. Attention is given to influential persons, ideas, movements, and events that have shaped the Church through the centuries.

### **Course Narrative and Rationale**

The primary purpose of this course is to provide students with basic familiarity with the historical development of the central doctrines, practices, and institutions of the Christian Church. It is assumed that students in this course have little or no previous exposure to systematic study of the history of Christianity.

This course specifically addresses the goals and objectives of each of the NTS degree programs, which call for students to develop an understanding of the history and heritage of the Christian faith and familiarity with the context in which ministry takes place today.

### **Course Outcomes:**

1. Students will gain a knowledge of the basic facts necessary for understanding the broad outline of the history of Christianity from New Testament times to the present, especially the development of major doctrines and creeds;
2. Students will develop ability to accurately tell the story of the Church in broad outline, and to identify and describe the significance of major persons, ideas, movements and events in that story;
3. Students will gain insight into the dynamic, ongoing interaction between Church and world, Christianity and culture, which characterizes the life the Church in history;
4. Students will develop ability to describe how the Church has implemented its mission in the world throughout the centuries;
5. Students will acquire a growing ability to use the story of Christianity as a resource for understanding the context of contemporary Christian life and ministry;
6. Students will acquire resources to enter into critical and fruitful conversation with the past in order to appropriate the historical heritage of the Church as a resource for responsible and faithful ministry in the present and future.

### **Required Texts and Course Materials**

1. **INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY**, edited by Tim Dowley (Fortress Press, 2002).
2. **TURNING POINTS: DECISIVE MOMENTS IN THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY**, Mark A. Noll (Baker Books, 1997).
3. **WHY STUDY THE PAST?: THE QUEST FOR THE HISTORICAL CHURCH**, Rowan Williams (Eerdmans, 2005).
4. Copies of two **videos** (rent, beg, borrow, or buy) – **LUTHER** (Joseph Fiennes, Alfred Molina, et. al. – 2003); **THE MISSION** (Robert DeNiro, Jeremy Irons, et. al. – 1986).

## Course Outline

- I. The Historical Study of Christianity – why we do it, how we do it, and how it fits into the larger endeavor of theological reflection in the Church
- II. The “Jesus Movement” Makes the Transition from Apostolic to Post-Apostolic Times – the context, challenges, and leaders of this era
- III. The Church Expands into New Regions and Cultures – the challenges to carefully define its faith and practices
- IV. The “Outlaw Cult” Becomes the “Establishment Church” – the opportunities and pitfalls of “success”
- V. The Church in the “Middle Ages” (I) – the growing importance of monasticism; the deepening division between “Eastern” and “Western” Christianity; the importance of ongoing doctrinal debate and the development of new forms of scholarship
- VI. The Church in the “Middle Ages” (II) – the institutional “hardening” of the Church; the rise of “Scholasticism;” popular piety; early impulses toward “reform” of the Church
- VII. The Reform of the Church: Renewal and Division – the development of reform movements in various parts of the European Church, the persons and issues involved and the major results.
- VIII. European Christianity in the Post-Reformation Era: Conflict, Expansion, Adaptation – religious warfare; the role of Christianity in the exploration and settlement of “New Worlds;” new forms of Christian life and practice
- IX. The Age of Reason and Revival – the development of the Enlightenment and Pietism
- X. Christianity in a “Revolutionary” and “Modern” World – the Spirit of revolution in Europe and North America; Christianity in North America; the rise of “secularism” and its consequences for Christianity
- XI. Christianity in a “Modern” and “Post-Modern” World (I) – the “modern missionary movement;” modern “protest” and reform movements within Christianity (e.g., Pentecostal and Charismatic forms)
- XII. Christianity in a “Modern” and “Post-Modern” World (II) – intellectual and ideological challenges to Christianity; the impinging “faith worlds” of today; the “shifting” geographical and cultural world of contemporary Christianity; course wrap up

## Course Assignments and Requirements

**1. Class Participation** – consistent, thoughtful participation in class discussion and small group work. Class participation is absolutely essential in the online environment. **To assist in this process, a Moodle discussion component will be a central feature of the course.** Students are required to post responses to discussion questions relating to the assigned reading, the weekly lectures, videos or other assigned supplementary resources, or to brief reading reviews prepared by other members of the class – as instructed each week in that particular unit of the course.

**Online postings and responses are required at least three times each week.** This means that you must make your assigned posts over the span of at least three separate login times during the week. You cannot get by simply by logging in once on a Wednesday night, making your assigned original posts and then your assigned responses, all within the period of an hour, and then be done with the Forum for that week! You must spread out your assigned comments over at least three separate login occasions.

Good posted responses to discussion questions and other assignments should normally be at least 100 words in length, and it is preferable that these not exceed 150 words. Responses to the comments, observations, suggestions – or written reading reviews – of fellow classmates should normally be at least 50 words in length, and preferably will not exceed 125 words. Generally speaking, you will not be penalized for making long posts unless it becomes a problem, although as a courtesy to your classmates (since everyone has to read all of the posts) it is helpful to be as concise as possible. A good post will make substantive contributions to the dialogue.

It is expected that your posts will be written with good grammar and correct spelling, and you should proofread them for mistakes before submitting them. Avoid using abbreviations and codes that are sometimes used in other types of online communications, and always be polite and respectful in your comments.

All online postings need to be posted as instructed by the deadline – normally 11:59 p.m. US Central Daylight Time (CDT) – and after November 2, 2008 US Central Standard Time (CST) – in order to receive full credit. Late postings results in a 15% deduction daily (which begins one minute after the deadline) unless you have a compelling excuse **submitted in advance** of the posting deadline.

Due to the progressive nature of online learning, required postings must be completed the week assigned for any credit to be given. No postings will be graded after the week for which they were assigned.

**It is expected that each student will read all of the posts made by each other student in the course.** In a traditional classroom, students learn valuable information about the subject both from the professor's lecture as well as from classroom dialogue between students and instructor and between fellow students. The Forum on Moodle is the online counterpart to this valuable class interaction. It is often the case that valuable clarifications and insights come up during this online dialogue. Although you are only required to post a certain number of new threads and replies, as outlined in each week's assignment, it is still expected that you will read all of the posts and comments in each week's Forum. (Often this will mean checking at the end of the week or the beginning of the following week to read posts your classmates made after your last online login.) You are welcome to make additional brief comments to other posts, above and beyond the assigned requirement, if you wish – but this is not required.

**NOTE:** *It is understood that there will be times when "life gets in the way" or when you have a ministry crisis. These situations will be taken into consideration when they are communicated honestly and promptly to the professor. Generally one such situation per student is allowed during the semester if requested. However, a pattern of personal "crises" is unacceptable.*

**2. Completion of all assigned reading and other learning activities.**

**3. Reasonable mastery of assigned materials** – to be evaluated by the instructor through data quizzes, reading and video reviews, contribution to one assigned group project, and regular informed participation in online discussion.

**4. Reading and reporting in writing on the book *WHY STUDY THE PAST?: THE QUEST FOR THE HISTORICAL CHURCH* by Rowan Williams.** This should be reported on in a written review approximately 500 words in length. The review should critically evaluate the book and discuss how it has affected your thinking about the study of the history of Christianity.

5. **Watching and reporting in writing on two videos – *LUTHER* and *THE MISSION*.** Each video should be viewed at the time assigned in the weekly lessons and then reported on in a brief (approximately 500 word) written personal review. The review of *LUTHER* should evaluate its historical faithfulness as well as its dramatic structure and impact. The review of *THE MISSION* should especially note how it raises various issues encountered in our study of the history of Christianity.

6. **Data Quizzes** – There will be three (3) of these. **They will be administered during WEEK 5, WEEK 9, AND WEEK 12.** These will be timed quizzes and will test familiarity with the major persons, ideas, events, and developments highlighted in the assigned sections of the text, *INTRODUCTION TO THE HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY*.

7. **Comprehensive Essay Exam** -- This exam and detailed instructions for completing it will be made available to students by **week 5** of the course. This will involve researching and responding in writing to a series of questions that address some major developments, issues, problems, or controversies in the history of Christianity. These questions call for research and reflection, for careful critical analysis, and for using and applying the information to which students are introduced by the assigned reading and other learning activities.

### **Method for Submitting Assignments**

The course is organized by **weekly units**. All materials and assignments needed for each week's instruction are made available online in that week's component of the course. This includes lectures, assignments, written reports, online postings, and examinations/quizzes. **There are appropriate sites and links provided within the units for each week of the course** for you to submit written assignments, access and read the written assignments of your classmates, post online comments, etc.

## **Policy Regarding Late Work and Missed Quizzes/Exams**

Reading and video reviews are **due no later than 11:59 p.m. of the day they are due** (see also instructions under "online postings and responses above). Late reading and video reviews are reduced ½ letter grade for every three days (or portion thereof) overdue. Data quizzes must be taken at the time they are made available on Blackboard. **Missed data quizzes may not be made up at another time.**

## **Course Grading**

1. Consistent, informed online participation in the class (see specific expectations above and in the weekly units of the course) **counts for 30% of the final grade.** Online participation will be **evaluated and graded at three specific points in the course** and students will receive feedback on their participation at these times. **Participation assessment will be made at the end of week 4, at the end of week 9, and at the end of the course.**
2. The three reading and video reviews combined **count for 20% of the final grade.**
3. The three data quizzes combined **count for 25% of the final grade.**
4. The comprehensive essay exam **counts for 25% of the final grade.**

For all written work, the following criteria are employed in evaluation and grading: 1) **"A" quality work** – is superior in every way – writing is clear, essentially without errors in syntax, spelling, word usage, etc. – content evidences a high level of reflection, insight, and originality; 2) **"B" quality work** – is above average – writing is generally clear, with few errors in syntax, spelling, word usage, etc. – content evidences careful preparation and meets the expectations of the assignment; 3) **"C" quality work** – average – writing is adequate, but may have significant errors – content is adequate – meets the minimum expectations of the assignment, but lacks insight and originality; 4) **"D" quality work** – below average – writing is poor, marred with excessive errors – content evidences lack of insight or lack of understanding of the assigned material; 5) **"F" quality work** – failure to do satisfactory work – work evidences haste, lack of careful preparation, lack of basic understanding of the assigned material.

## **COURSE CALENDAR**

The fall semester for on-campus courses begins September 9. However, for purposes of the online course, Week 1 effectively begins on Monday, September 14.

<b>2009</b>	<b>Week</b>	<b>Topic</b>
Sept 14	1	Introduction
Sept 21	2	The Historical Study of Christianity
Sept 28	3	The Transition from Apostolic to Post-Apostolic Times
Oct 5	4	The Church Expands into New Regions and Cultures
Oct 12	5	The "Outlaw Cult" becomes "Establishment Church"
Oct 19	6	READING AND RESEARCH WEEK
Oct 26	7	The Church in the "Middle Ages" (I)
Nov 2	8	The Church in the "Middle Ages" (II)
Nov 9	9	The Reform of the Church: Renewal and Division
Nov 16	10	European Christianity in the Post-Reformation Era
Nov 23	11	Christianity in a Revolutionary and Modern World
Nov 30	12	Christianity in a Modern and Post-Modern World (I)
Dec 7	13	Christianity in a Modern and Post-Modern World (II)
Dec 14	14	Review, Summary, and Final Evaluation

\*\*\*\*\*