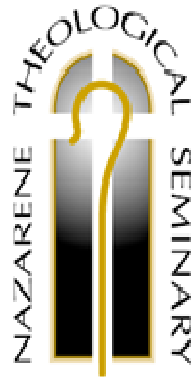


HISTORY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE 1 - CHS660  
Fall Module, 2008



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**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

This seminar is a study of the development of Christian doctrine according to what the Church has *believed, taught* and *confessed* on the basis of the Word of God (Pelikan's method); from the time of the Early Church up through the Medieval Synthesis. In so swift a survey the two organizing poles will be *historical* (the chronological events with social and political background) and *theological* (doctrinal--"grammar of faith" and thematic), in order to find a few common re-occurring threads running throughout the fabric of the Church.

**II. COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

- To begin to develop a theological method for thinking with the dogma of the Church's Faith.
- To begin to grasp the synergy between doctrine --"grammar of faith"-- and participation in God; E.G. *Lex Orandi & Lex Crendendi*; to "know" God is to "love" God.

- To learn “how” to exegete—“correct & fulfill”—one’s Tradition with the doctrines of the Christian Faith.
- To enlarge one’s vision of the Triune God through the dogma & doctrine of the “one,” “holy,” “catholic,” and “apostolic Church: We will become like the God we see.

### III. COURSE OUTLINE:

- a) Tradition and History
- b) The Early Formation of Doctrine
- c) The Trinity: God to God (Nicea-325)
- d) The Incarnation: God to Humankind (Chalcedon-451)
- e) Divine Grace and Human Freedom: Augustine & Pelagius (Synod of Orange-529)
- f) The Medieval Synthesis

### IV. PROCEDURE & ASSIGNMENTS:

1. **Class Attendance:** Since the **Christian Story** is a “shared” **Story** and because class sessions are the primary means by which the professor and students may collaboratively *rediscover*, and hopefully, *recover* the **Christian Story**; class attendance is compulsory. After a total of 2 absences, any unexcused absence in the total will reduce the final grade by one letter grade.

2. **Examinations:** There will be one comprehensive *Final Exam* covering the designated readings and class lectures from the *Course Outline*. This exam will be scheduled on the last day of the class, *Friday, August 29*. Further instructions are forthcoming. This exam will constitute 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of your final grade. There will be eight “*content mastery exams*” covering exclusively, the assigned readings in Jaroslav Pelikan. The average of all eight content mastery exams will constitute 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of your final grade. The assigned readings and dates for these exams are as follows:

**Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*. Vols. 1-3 Readings:**

<b><i>Content Mastery Exam One:</i></b> Vol. 1: Pp. 1-120. <sup>(120)</sup>	<b>September 12</b>
<b><i>Content Mastery Exam Two:</i></b> Vol. 1: Pp. 121-225. <sup>(104)</sup>	<b>September 19</b>
<b><i>Content Mastery Exam Three:</i></b> Vol. 1: Pp. 226-357. <sup>(131)</sup>	<b>September 26</b>
<b><i>Content Mastery Exam Four:</i></b> Vol. 2: Pp. 1-90. <sup>(90)</sup>	<b>September 29</b>
<b><i>Content Mastery Exam Five:</i></b> Vol. 2: Pp. 91-198 <sup>(107)</sup>	<b>October 3</b>
<b><i>Content Mastery Exam Six:</i></b> Vol. 3: Pp. 1-95 <sup>(95)</sup>	<b>October 10</b>
<b><i>Content Master Exam Seven:</i></b> Vol. 3: Pp. 96-214 <sup>(118)</sup>	<b>October 17</b>
<b><i>Content Mastery Exam Eight:</i></b> Vol. 3: Pp. 215-307 <sup>(92)</sup>	<b>October 24</b>
<b>Total Pages of Reading: 956</b>	

**3. A Research Group Paper - *RGP* - *Council of Nicea (325) or Chalcedon (451) Synod of Orange (529)*:**

Following the Seminary Schedule for Modules, this research assignment is due no later than **Friday, November 7, 2008**. This **Research Group Paper** will constitute 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of your final grade.

This research will be carried out in groups of 6 research participants. Each group (no larger than 6 research participants) will be assigned to a **Blackboard 'Research-Group Paper.'** Each '**Research-Group Paper**' (*RGP*) should plan to participate in the Blackboard thread no less than 3 times a week. I will periodically drop into the threaded discussion. I may or may not offer response(s) to the ongoing dialogue. Part of your final grade will be determined by your responsible involvement "**documented**" on the Blackboard with the *RGP*.

The final product of each *RGP* will comprise a 20 page typewritten research paper that is fully footnoted, with bibliography, table of contents, and in Turabian format. This is a collaboratively earned grade, unless it can be determined by the members of the group and the threaded blackboard discussion that full participation was missing. This paper is to be placed in the specific digital drop box designated for each *RGP*. This *RGP Paper* will constitute 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of your final grade. The final due date is *Friday, November 7, 2008*.

Each *RGP* will select something from one of the following Councils—**Nicea** (325), **Chalcedon** (451), **Orange** (529) or something from the **Medieval Synthesis** and develop a *Research Question* to be explored. For example, “Why was Arius a threat to the Christian notion of salvation as mediated through Christ? Once your *Research Question* has been formulated, the *RGP* should work collaboratively in thinking through the historical, theological, philosophical, and of course biblical issues associated the question. How did the Church resolve the question in her *teaching, believing* and *confession*? What are the ramifications of this confession and orthodoxy for the Church today? What are the contemporary expressions and issues of these *orthodoxies* and *heresies* of the local Church? How? Why?

As part of the final assignment for the *RGP*, at the end of the *Research Question Paper*, each group is to collaboratively re-write the **Creed** that deals with the particular *Research Question* of the *RGP*. For example, in the case of Arius, the **Nicene Creed** is to be rewritten collectively by the *RGP*. If your *RGP* took the *Research Question*: Did Pelagius get a bum steer? Then your *RGP* would rewrite the **Canons of Orange**. If your *RGP* took the *Research Question*: Was Nestorius wrongly condemned as heretical, largely due to the nasty influence of Cyril of Alexandria? Then your *RGP* would rewrite the **Definition of Chalcedon**. If the *RGP* takes a *Research Question* from **The Medieval Synthesis**, then their task is to demonstrate how there is either continuity or discontinuity with one of the **Creeds**. Once a particular *Research Question* has been located with or in one of the **Creed's** then your *RGP* would rewrite that particular **Creed**.

#### 4. Texts:

Ages Digital Library. **The Master Christian Library**. Version 8, 2 CD ROMS. (Rio, Wisconsin: Ages Software, Inc., 2000)

Pelikan, Jaroslav. **The Christian Tradition**. Vols. 1-5. (Chicago & London: The University of Chicago Press, 1971, 1974, 1978).

#### 5. Class Policy on Incompletes:

Only under the rarest of circumstances will an incomplete be approved by the professor. Only '*Death in the family*' or the '*prolonged illness*' of the student will be considered as a justifiable cause for petition. For the **most** part, all other requests will not be considered. And yet, if the rarest of unforeseeable circumstances do arise, and those circumstances are not the abovementioned ('*death in the family*' and '*prolonged illness*'), then, and only then, **may** an incomplete be granted by the professor. And, if the incomplete is to be granted for reasons other than '*death in the family*' and '*prolonged illness*,' it will be given with a letter grade penalty. For example, if the final grade earned in the class results in an A, and an incomplete was granted for other reasons besides '*death and prolonged illness*,' then the final grade to be submitted to the registrar will be a B.