

HST 328  
History of the Christian Church to the Reformation  
Instructor: Dr. David Leinweber  
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I. Course Objectives:

- A. To gain a greater understanding of the issues, events, and trends, which constitute the history of the Christian Church from the advent of Christianity to the Reformation.
- B. To develop critical writing and thinking skills.
- C. To reflect on the sometimes difficult relationship between religion and scholarship.

II. Assigned Readings:

*The Holy Bible* (Recommended: The New Oxford Annotated Bible, Revised Standard Version.)

Bruce Shelly, *Church History in Plain Language*

St. Augustine, *The Confessions*

Thomas a Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*

George Marsden, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*

Special readings will occasionally be distributed to students, or placed on reserve in the Oxford Library. These will also be required readings.

III. Course Policies:

A. Grading: The final grade will be averaged from Two Gradesgrades. Grading components are as follows:

1. Grading Unit #1: Shorter Papers, Quizzes, and Examinations: There will be two short papers due in this class, quizzes, and two

examinations. The average of the grades for these items will constitute %50 of the final grade.

- There will be two shorter papers of a single-page, double-sided, single-space, 10 pitch font paper. One shorter paper will be a review of the George Marsden book *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*. The other will focus on Augustine's *The Confessions*. Short Paper Value of Grading Unit #1: 40%
  - A Mid-Term Examination and a Final Examination. These will be blue-book, essay exams administered in class. Examination Value of Grading Unit #1: 40%
  - Quizzes based on Shelly readings, or other class topics, generally announced one-class prior. 20% of grading unit.
  - Term Paper: Students will complete a 15 page paper, focussing on some issue which the instructor will provide. The term paper will count for 50% of a students' grade.
    - Rough Drafts: Students will be expected to complete a major rough draft of the term paper and review their progress towards the paper's completion in at least one formal, scheduled office appointment with the professor.
2. Presentation: Scheduling factors permitting, a PowerPoint presentation will be made to the class providing an overview of the student's major research project for that semester. There will be no grade given for this presentation, provided the student makes a good faith effort. An unprepared or sloppy presentation may result in a lowering of the student's paper grade, at the discretion of the instructor.

Also note the following:

- LearnLink Participation: From time to time, the instructor may ask students to produce topic paragraphs, or short essays on LearnLink. These will need to be done according to the professor's dictates.
- The instructor may add, detract, or alter the above grading distributions and assignments as he sees fit, according to the particular way the class evolves.
- All work is, of course, done in accordance with the Honor Code of Oxford College.
- Everybody takes and uses their own notes, no exceptions.

B. Attendance: Attendance is encouraged, expected, and an important consideration in any judgement calls which may arise during the distribution of final grades.

III. Course Schedule: The course is divided into four units. Each unit will conclude with a blue-book examination. Broad unit themes, readings, and examination dates, are given below. Remember that additional readings may be assigned, in addition to those given below.

Unit 1: Early Christianity (Shelly, 1-87)

- The Ancient Background to Christianity
- The Historical Christ and the Apostolic Age
  - Film: September 11, Library VCC, 8:30-11:30

Unit 2: Christianity and the Roman Empire (Shelly, 91-160)

- Christianity's Ascent in the Roman Empire
- The Christianization of the Roman Empire
  - Augustine Short Paper Due, September 22

Mid-Term Examination: September 27

Unit 3: The Rise and Heyday of European Christianity (Shelly, 163-214)

- The Conversion of 'barbarian' Europe
- The Highwater Mark of Papal Supremacy and Roman Catholic Europe

Marsden Papers Due, October 17<sup>th</sup>

Unit 4: The Decline of Medieval Christianity and the Reformation (Shelly, 215-270)

- The Decline of the Church and the Papacy
- The Reformation (Lutheran, Calvinist, Anglican)

November 14-23: Rough Drafts Due in Scheduled Office Appointments  
Papers Due on the Last Day of Class

Final Exam Date in accordance with the University schedule for final examinations.