

## Mount St. Mary's Seminary

### Fall 2024

CHUR 501: First Millennium: Patrology  
Owen M. Phelan  
Professor, PhD University of Notre Dame

MTh 9:50-11:05  
OLH  
Office Hours by appointment

### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course provides a full panorama of Patrology and the early History of the Church. Lectures will focus on the origin and development of the Church as the People of God which spreads out in time and space. Special attention will be given to the progress of theological doctrines which have exercised the strongest influence in the history of the Church. Attention will also be given to practical social, economic and political situation of the Church. Throughout the semester students will be asked to examine scientifically the historical sources. Both by lectures and discussion students will be invited to discover the wonderful encounter of divine and human action in the life of the community of believers, and come to a genuine sense of the Church and of its Tradition.

### PLACE OF THIS COURSE IN THE INTELLECTUAL FORMATION PROGRAM:

The following intellectual formation dimension goals are addressed:

- 1) **1.d.** Grasps the rich history of the Church from the apostolic age to the present day.
- 2) **3.a.** Demonstrates the ability to preach, teach, and defend the Catholic faith, particularly in homilies and classroom presentations.
- 3) **4.a.** Demonstrates a habit of reading, particularly through the completion of assigned readings and dedication to further theological and non-theological reading.
- 4) **4.b.** Practices critical thinking as evidenced in class participation, exams, and/or papers.

### PLACE OF THIS COURSE IN THE DEGREE PROGRAM(S)

This course is required in the M.Div., the STB, and the ordination program. Is the first of four required courses covering church history (3 treating the history of the universal church, one the history of the Church in the United States).

### COURSE GOALS/LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will have gained *the theological and pastoral competence* necessary to:

- Explain basic ideas of early Christian thinkers
- Understand a seminal epoch in Church History
- Use basic theoretical and methodological tools for understanding history

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING:

Student will take a **mid-term examination** worth **thirty percent (30%)** of their final grade.

Students will work in groups to complete **six two-page primary source reviews** worth **thirty percent (30%)** of their final grade. The goal of the reviews is twofold. First, students will demonstrate having carefully read and considered the work. Second, students will display the ability to identify and develop insights into the wisdom of patristic thinkers within the context of a small group of their peers. Readings must be completed before the discussion day. Papers for each text are due on discussion day.

Students will take a **final examination** worth **forty percent (40%)** of their final grade.

Seminary Grade Scale:

Grade	Grade point	Grade range	Description
A	4.00	96-100	Exceptional performance
A-	3.67	93-95	Excellent work
B+	3.33	89-92	Very good work
B	3.00	83-88	Good work
B-	2.67	80-82	Acceptable work
C+	2.33	77-79	Below average for graduate work
C	2.00	74-76	Poor work for a graduate degree
C-	1.67	70-73	Deficient work for a graduate degree
F	0.00	Less than 70	Failure

**REQUIRED TEXTS SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

- *Early Christian Writings*, ed. Andrew Louth, trans. Maxwell Staniforth (New York: Penguin Press, 1987)
- Ambrose, *On the Duties of the Clergy* (<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3401.htm>)
- Gregory the Great, *The Book of Pastoral Rule.*, ed. George E Demacopoulos (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2007)
- John Chrysostom, *On the Priesthood*, ed. Graham Neville (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2002)
- Augustine, *Teaching Christianity*, ed. Edmund Hill (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 2007)
- Hrabanus Maurus, *On Priestly Formation*, trans. Owen M. Phelan (Washington, DC: CUA Press (2023)

**RECOMMENDED TEXTS**

- James Hitchcock, *History of the Catholic Church* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012)

**EXAMS/QUIZZES:**

Half way through the semester, student will take a **mid-term examination** worth **thirty percent (30%)** of their final grade. The exam will consist of two essay prompts.

At the end of the semester, at a time selected by the Seminary registrar, students will take a **final examination** worth **forty percent (40%)** of their final grade. It will consist of two essay prompts.

**PAPERS:**

PLEASE REVIEW THE ACADEMIC NORMS MADE AVAILABLE TO ALL SEMINARY STUDENTS. NOTE ESPECIALLY THE SEMINARY'S PLAGIARISM POLICY AS WELL AS THE PREFERENCE FOR TURABIAN STYLE. STUDENTS WILL WORK IN GROUPS TO COMPLETE **SIX TWO-PAGE PRIMARY SOURCE REVIEWS** WORTH **THIRTYPERCENT (30%)** OF THEIR FINAL GRADE. THE GOAL OF THE REVIEWS IS TWOFOLD. FIRST, STUDENTS WILL DEMONSTRATE HAVING CAREFULLY READ AND CONSIDERED THE WORK. SECOND, STUDENTS WILL DISPLAY THE ABILITY TO IDENTIFY AND DEVELOP INSIGHTS INTO THE WISDOM OF PATRISTIC THINKERS WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF A SMALL GROUP OF THEIR PEERS. READINGS MUST BE COMPLETED BEFORE THE DISCUSSION DAY. PAPERS FOR EACH TEXT ARE DUE ON

**PAPER GRADING STANDARDS CHART**

Assessment Areas	"A" range Exemplary	"B" range Competent	"C" range Developing
<b>Research 20%</b>	The author has narrowed the topic appropriately and located excellent print and electronic primary and secondary resources (e.g., primary resources, reference works, theological journals, and well-established authors).	The author has narrowed the topic appropriately, located adequate print and electronic primary and secondary resources to treat the topic.	The author has failed to locate the print and electronic sources necessary to treat the topic appropriately, or has failed to discriminate between popular and professional resources, robust and superficial resources, etc.
<b>Comprehension 30%</b>	The author demonstrates an excellent grasp of the main points and nuances in the material researched.	The author demonstrates a good grasp of the substantial arguments and some but not all of the important nuances.	The author misses or misunderstands important points of the argument or exposition in the materials he researched.
<b>Composition 40%</b>	An "A" paper is written clearly and coherently. It is not prolix or repetitious. The student's own words are supported by appropriate quotation of sources, avoiding excessive (more than 25% of his text) or inordinately lengthy (more than 5 line) quotations.	A "B" paper is written in a generally clear and coherent fashion, in the student's own words supported by appropriate quotation of sources, avoiding excessive (more than 25% of his text) or inordinately lengthy (more than 5 line) quotations. The paper may suffer from wordiness or repetition.	A "C" paper is written with a general lack of clarity or coherence, and/or misuses quotations, for example, by repeated use of inordinately lengthy quotations, long series of <i>ibid.</i> 's, or by replacing demonstrated grasp of good argumentation with merely extended quotes from resources. A "C" paper may not stay on topic, or may resemble a series of notes taken on a reading rather than an exposition or argument.
<b>Mechanics 10%</b>	The paper is free of grammar and spelling errors, is turned in on time, and follows the Turabian style for the title page, headings (if used), citations, and bibliography.	The paper is substantially free of grammar and spelling errors, is turned in on time, and follows the Turabian style for the title page, headings (if used), citations, and bibliography.	The paper has numerous grammar and spelling errors. It may have been turned in late. It may have failed to follow the Turabian style for the title page, headings (if used), citations, and bibliography.
<i>Note: Papers which do not attain at least a C level will be returned to be rewritten. The maximum grade for a resubmitted paper is "C." Papers submitted late for due cause will not be penalized.</i>			

**SEMINARY PLAGIARISM POLICY:**

Plagiarism consists of presenting the words or ideas of another as one's own. It ranges from careless negligence in the handling/citing the work of others to deliberate dishonesty. Plagiarism may involve printed as well as electronically retrieved materials. The Mount St. Mary's University campus-wide *Technology Acceptable Use Policy* is to be followed

**GRADING:**

Our **mid-term examination** is worth **thirty percent (35%)** of the final grade.

Our **six two-page primary source reviews** are worth **thirty percent (20%)** of the final grade.

Our **final examination** is worth **forty percent (45%)** of the final grade.

**TENTATIVE SCHEDULE/OUTLINE OF COURSE:**

8/19 Introduction

8/22 Jewish Christianity

8/26	The Pagan World
8/29	Post-Apostolic Fathers
9/2	<b>Discussion:</b> <i>Early Christian Writings</i>
9/5	The Church in the Second Century
9/9	Third Century Consolidation
9/12	The “Victory” of the Church
9/16	<b>Discussion:</b> <i>John Chrysostom: On the Priesthood</i>
9/19	Imperial Christianity
9/23	East and West in the Fifth Century
9/26	From Nicaea to Chalcedon: Growth in the Church’s Inner Life
9/30	East Roman Christianity
10/3	<b>Discussion:</b> <i>Ambrose: On Offices</i>
10/7	FALL BREAK
10/10	FALL BREAK
10/14	Missionary Theology of the Latin Church
10/17	<b>MID-TERM EXAMINATION</b>
10/21	Western Christianity to the Seventh Century
10/24	The Papacy between Constantinople and Aachen
10/28	Iconoclasm
10/31	<b>Discussion:</b> <i>Gregory the Great: Pastoral Care</i>
11/4	Carolingian Christianity
11/7	The Dissolution of the Western Christianity
11/11	The Church in the Kingdoms of the West of the 10 <sup>th</sup> Century
11/14	<b>Discussion:</b> <i>Augustine: Teaching Christianity</i>
11/18	Theology and Church Infrastructure to 1050

11/21	The Eleventh Century Pivot**
11/25	Renewal and Reform before Gregory VII
12/2	<b>Discussion:</b> <i>Hrabanus Maurus: On Priestly Formation</i>
12/5	Review and Recap

### **SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

CHURCH HISTORY  
 REVUE D'HISTOIRE ECCLÉSIASTIQUE  
 STUDIES IN CHURCH HISTORY  
 SPECULUM  
 JOURNAL OF EARLY CHRISTIAN STUDIES

OXFORD HANDBOOKS  
 CAMBRIDGE HISTORIES

(Revised: ay2013/14)