



THE
SOUTHERN BAPTIST
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

25100: Church History I Sample Syllabus

School of Theology, NRT 146

Telephone: 502-897-4232

theology@sbts.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course will cover the history of Christianity from its inception to the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century. We will survey the major movements, doctrines, persons, and institutions that arose within the church and affected its development during this time. Our emphasis will be the development of doctrinal understanding in the church as well as careful study of selected key individuals whose lives should inspire us to biblical faithfulness today.

Textbooks

Justo Gonzalez. *The Story of Christianity*. Vol. 1. Revised ed. New York: HarperCollins, 2010.

Alister McGrath. *Historical Theology: An Introduction to the History of Christian Thought*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1998. (Later editions are fine, but the student is responsible for comparing the table of contents with the 1998 edition to ensure the reading of the correct pages. This can be done on Amazon or similar sites.)

William Rusch, ed. and trans. *The Trinitarian Controversy*. Philadelphia: Fortress, 1980.

Michael A. G. Haykin. *Rediscovering the Church Fathers: Who They Were and How They Shaped the Church*. Wheaton: Crossway, 2011.

Primary sources.

Course Objectives

The student who completes this course should

- Have a general knowledge of the history of the church from the end of the first century through the early sixteenth century

- Have an understanding of the major theological developments in the history of the church from the end of the first century through the early sixteenth century
- Have a deepened understanding of major ecclesiastical traditions that exist today through being acquainted with the history of their doctrines and practices
- Be familiar with some of the more important theological terms and concepts and thus better equipped to understand and engage intelligently in theological discussion
- Be spiritually enriched through an encounter with the work of great Christians of the past
- Be able better to struggle with the difference between truth and error through an encounter with the thought of past generations of professing Christians. The goal is to become more faithful interpreters of God's word and better servants of the Lord

Requirements

1. Midterm Examination

The exam will cover lectures 1–13 and the corresponding reading as indicated in the course calendar. The exam will require both a knowledge of the facts and an understanding of their significance. It will be objective, consisting mainly of multiple choice questions and also dates and quotations to be matched with their appropriate sources. No books, notes, or other resources may be consulted when taking the exam. Students will have seventy-five minutes to take the exam.

2. Outline 1

Students will outline selections from Rusch, ed., *The Trinitarian Controversy*. The sections to be outlined are Arius's letters and Athanasius's *Orations* (pp. 29-32, 61-129). The outline should be detailed enough (3-5 single-spaced pages) for students to trace the flow of Arius's and Athanasius's arguments.

3. Outline 2

Students will outline the eleventh primary source selection (Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo*). The outline should be detailed enough for students to trace Anselm's flow of thought.

5. Final Examination

The exam will be similar to the midterm and will cover the reading assignments and lectures for the entire course. No books, notes, or other resources may be consulted when taking the exam. Students will have 2 hours to take the exam.

6. Paper

Students will write a 2250 to 2500 word paper (excluding footnotes) from the sixth and seventh primary source readings. The paper should answer the question, Was Augustine's or Cassian's understanding of the relationship between the sovereignty of God and human responsibility more biblical? Students must consult secondary sources for assistance, but the bulk of their argument should come directly from the primary sources.

Papers should cogently argue a thesis. Grammar, syntax, and form must conform to the *Southern Seminary Manual of Style*. Papers with grammatical and spelling errors will be penalized; papers with excessive errors will be returned to students to be re-written within four days and will be penalized two quality points. Papers must be double-spaced, in 12 point

Times New Roman font. Papers exceeding the word limit will not be received. On a final, separate page, students must include a word count for the paper (excluding title page, footnotes, and bibliography) and sign the seminary's honor code: "On my honor, I have neither given nor taken improper assistance in completing this assignment."

Course Schedule

Lecture Topics	Reading	Assignments Due
Lecture 1: Introduction Lecture 2: Introduction (cont.) & Philosophy of History Lecture 3: Philosophy of History (cont.) & Periodization Lecture 4: Heresy & Apostolic Fathers Lecture 5: Apostolic Fathers (cont.) & Apologists & Persecution Lecture 6: Persecution (cont.) Lecture 7: Persecution (cont.) & Ecclesiology Lecture 8: Ecclesiology (cont.) & NT Canon Lecture 9: NT Canon (cont.) Lecture 10: Baptism Lecture 11: Baptism (cont.) & Challenges from Within Lecture 12: Biblical Interpretation Lecture 13: Biblical Interpretation (cont.) & Trinitarian Controversies	Gonzalez, 41-325 Haykin, 13-69 McGrath, 17-85 Rusch, 1-129 Reading 1-6, 11	
		Midterm Exam to be completed online Outline 1 to be uploaded Outline 2 to be uploaded
Lecture 14: Trinitarian Controversies (cont.)	Gonzalez, 327-445 Haykin, 69-156	Final examination to be completed online

<p>Lecture 15: Christological Controversies</p> <p>Lecture 16: Christological Controversies (cont.) & Augustine</p> <p>Lecture 17: Augustine</p> <p>Lecture 18: Augustine (cont.) & The Middle Ages</p> <p>Lecture 19: The Middle Ages (cont.)</p> <p>Lecture 20: The Middle Ages (cont.) & Eastern Orthodoxy</p> <p>Lecture 21: Scholasticism & Medieval Soteriology</p> <p>Lecture 22: Medieval Soteriology (cont.) & The Sacraments & Medieval Dissent</p> <p>Lecture 23: Medieval Dissent & The Renaissance & The Eve of the Reformation</p>	<p>McGrath, 86-155</p> <p>Reading 7-10, 12</p>	
		<p>Paper to be uploaded</p>

Course Grade Scale

A 95-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D+ 67-69	F 59 and below
A- 90-94	B 83-86	C 73-76	D 63-66	
	B- 80-82	C- 70-72	D- 60-62	

PRIMARY SOURCES

Students may be assessed on the contents of the below sources

Patristic Era

- Letter to Diognetus
- Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*
- Cyprian, *On the Lapsed*
- Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures*
- Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 8

- Augustine, *On the Predestination of the Saints*
- John Cassian, *On the Protection of God*
- Gregory, *The Book of Pastoral Rule*

Orthodoxy

- John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, 1.1-1.6
- John of Damascus, *An Exact Exposition of the Orthodox Faith*, 4.12-4.17

Medieval

- Anselm of Canterbury, *Cur Deus Homo*
- Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, First Part, Question 2