

NORTH PARK THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

HSTY 6210 Christian Tradition and Mission

Fall 2011: August 29 – December 16, 2011, online
Three semester hours

Course Facilitator:

Dr. Stephen R. Graham, Director, Faculty Development and Initiatives in Theological Education,
The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada

(Formerly Professor of American Church History at North Park Theological Seminary)

Phone: 412-337-6192

E mail: sgrahamats@gmail.com

I will answer e mail and work on the course at least three times per week, usually on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays.

E mail is usually the best way to contact me. The phone number is available for emergencies.

Welcome to the Course:

Welcome! I look forward to learning together with you about our common heritage as Christians. Throughout this term, we'll explore the lives and actions of members of the Body of Christ, who, along with us bear witness to Christ and the presence of the Holy Spirit in the world. I also anticipate building together a learning community as we get to know one another through this distinctive medium. To that end, we will interact regularly with each other through the discussion board and via e mail.

Catalog Description:

This introductory course surveys the history of Christian life and thought from the early church to the present. Focusing on persons, events, and developing traditions, the course also examines the missional life of the Christian church. Three hours.

Learning Goals:

Through this course, students will address the core requirements of the M. Div. and M.A. degree programs to achieve the learning goal of: "Understanding the Christian tradition and one's own place within it." In addition, students will:

1. acquire general understanding of the global character of the church and the larger Christian narrative,

2. demonstrate understanding of general developments in the Christian tradition as well as some of the most important persons, ideas, and movements in the history of Christianity,
3. analyze the different ways in which Christianity and culture have interacted through the last 2000 years and what it means for the Christian faith to be transmitted across cultures,
4. demonstrate mastery of the material, express themselves with clarity and effectiveness, analyze texts, practices, and ideas, and construct and present arguments based on historical evidence.

Required Textbooks:

Justo González, The Story of Christianity, vol. 1: Early Church to the Reformation (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984).

Justo González, The Story of Christianity, vol. 2: Reformation to the Present (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1985).

Andrew F. Walls, The Missionary Movement in Christian History: Studies in the Transmission of Faith (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996).

Course Requirements:

1. Class Participation Requirements:

Students will be required to log in regularly to the class web site and to interact consistently with the class materials and with others in the class. One of the goals of the class is to have regular discussions of developments and ideas in the history of the church. We will make regular use of forum postings that will allow students to interact with each other and the instructor in greater depth. It is *crucial* that you stay current with readings and assignments. Many students have found it most effective to designate certain times and days to work on the class. There is a lot of flexibility in a class like this, but don't be misled by that into thinking that regular, disciplined work is not needed.

2. Weekly Response Postings:

Students will be required to post initial responses of 200 – 250 words addressing the discussion questions each week based on the instructor's on-line presentations and the required readings for the week. The course "weeks" extend from Monday through Sunday. These first responses are **due on the Wednesday of the week**. Students must also post *at least two reflections* of roughly 100 words each on other students' responses to the readings and professor's presentation. The response postings are **due by the Friday of the week**. Interaction with more student postings is welcomed, but not required. The instructor will post a "reflection on the reflections," by the end of the week. Students should read the "reflection on the reflections" and raise additional questions if they wish. The grade for each week's postings will be cumulative and based on all of the student's postings.

Each week’s postings will be evaluated according to the following rubric.

CATEGORY	11-14 pts - Meets Standards	6-10 pts - Approaching Standards	0-5 pts - Below Standards
Integration of Content	Reinforces course material or challenges interpretation of material. Reflections are based on evidence and not simply opinion.	Refers to lesson content but not integrated effectively. Some use of evidence in reflections.	Does not refer to key points with no evidence participant understands the key points. Opinions are stated but lack the support of evidence.
Value of Comments	Characterized by at least 3 of the following: a. grasps concepts b. thought-provoking c. challenging d. reflective e. ties to another course concept	Characterized by two of the following: a. grasps concepts b. thought-provoking c. challenging d. reflective e. ties to another course concept	Response is none of the following: a. grasps concepts b. thought-provoking c. challenging d. reflective e. ties to another course concept
Clear Writing	Organized, concise, clearly written in understandable language.	Writing is adequate but may include inconsistencies or inaccuracies.	Writing is poor, unclear and disorganized.
Reponse Postings, Relation to Original Post	Responds with insightful analysis and probing questions to the ideas presented in the original post.	Response is somewhat related to the ideas of the original post and questions are moderately insightful and probing. Some analysis is present.	Response does not relate to the original post and does not pose important questions. Offers opinions about the post, but no analysis.

Postings submitted after the weekly Wednesday and Friday deadlines will receive reduced credit. Postings more than 3 days late will receive no credit. (The forum postings will comprise 20% of the course grade.)

3. Visit to a Congregation

In order to gain exposure to some of the variety within the Christian heritage, each student will visit a Christian congregation of a tradition not his or her own and post a 400 – 500 word report.

The report should:

- identify and briefly sketch the congregation’s identity and heritage (from what stream of Christian history does it arise?),
- note characteristics of theology and practice that are distinctive either of the longer tradition in which the congregation stands, or are local modifications of that tradition,
- describe the worship space including furniture, arrangement of the space, artwork, worship materials, symbols, etc.,
- note the congregation’s demographics,
- describe elements of the worship such as, use of Scripture, liturgical actions and roles of leaders and congregants, music, prayers, etc.
- Describe how is language used and the character of the language (it is joyful, penitential, formal, familiar, reverent, etc.?)

- analyze the focus of the service (What is the primary purpose of the service? Ultimately, why are the people there? And how do the elements described above contribute to or detract from the purpose?)

Students are required to read three of the posted reports, compare the characteristics of the different congregations and raise two or three questions with the reporters. The report is **due to be posted on September 25**. Questions from respondents are **due on September 28**, and responses to the questions are **due on September 30**. The congregational visit report and responses are worth 10% of the course grade.

4. Report on Video

Each student will select a video that depicts some aspect of the Christian tradition and prepare a report of 400 – 500 words reflecting on the historical accuracy of the portrayal of Christianity in the movie and describing aspects of the Christian tradition that are clearly revealed in the video. Students may select a video that is explicitly about the history of Christianity, such as the old black and white film produced by the Lutheran church on Martin Luther, or films like *The Mission* or *The Apostle*. Students may also select a video that is less directly about the church, but includes significant attention given to the church and its leaders, ideas, and institutions, such as *Chariots of Fire* or *A Man for All Seasons*. The report is **due on November 13**. The report on the video is worth 5% of the course grade.

5. Research Paper or Adult Education Plan:

Each student will prepare *one* of the following:

- a. A research paper on an important individual, theme, event, doctrine, or problem in the history of Christianity. Topics may be chosen in areas of special ministry interest. Papers must be between 2,000 and 2,500 words in length. Notes should be consistent and should follow a format acceptable for formal research papers. Be sure to define your topic carefully and narrow it to manageable size. As much as possible, use primary sources. The grade for the paper will depend on the strength of its thesis, the quality of its evidence, the clarity of its argument, and the style and quality of writing.
 1. A statement of the proposed topic and a preliminary bibliography including both primary and secondary sources is **due on October 3**.
 2. A preliminary thesis statement and statement of progress on research is **due on October 24**.
- b. Or, a design and plan for teaching the history of the church through two 13-week adult education series for a congregation. Unfortunately, your people have little knowledge of Christian history and theology, but (fortunately) you are going to remedy this serious lacuna. Your plan should include:
 - a. a statement of overall strategy for teaching Christian history to a congregation
 - b. a 1,000 – 1,250 word essay making your case to the congregation's adult education committee for the importance of teaching and learning Christian history
 - c. an annotated bibliography of resources you would employ (both to prepare your presentations and for use within the classes)
 - d. outlines with major and minor points for each session (about 1 page each)

- e. three *detailed* lesson plans including teaching strategy (questions, resources, etc., 3-4 pages each).
 1. The statement of overall strategy is **due on October 3**.
 2. The case-making essay is **due on October 24**.

The final paper (or project) is **due to be submitted by Monday, November 28**. Students will select and write a 400 – 500 word response to a peer’s project. For the written response, select the project of the student listed after you on the class roster. The response is due on **Monday, December 5**.

Please note: Because of the design of the course and the crucial role of interaction between students, incompletes are not permitted. Students must have access to papers and reports in time to allow them to write their responses. The deadline for the submission of paper or project is therefore inflexible, except in cases of extreme emergency. I urge you to plan ahead to deal with contingencies that might arise and hinder your ability to meet the deadline.

Students are encouraged to communicate with the instructor about their papers and projects. E mail is best.

6. Exams and Quizzes:

Brief objective practice quizzes will be available at the end of week one, and then at the end of each unit. These quizzes are not part of your grade, but you might find them to be a useful measure of how effectively you are noting important details from the readings and the professor’s presentations. They will be set up to be graded automatically and to allow more than one attempt.

There will be mid-term exam available on October 11 and **due on Saturday, October 15**. A final exam will be available on December 13 and will be **due on Thursday, December 15**. The mid-term and final exams will each involve two essay questions on major issues that have developed throughout the history of the church.

In order to help students assess their preparation for the mid-term and final exams, practice mini-exams will be available at the end of units one and three. The mini-exams will use the same format as the mid-term and final exams, but will be brief and not counted toward the course grade. The professor will evaluate the mini-exams and provide feedback that will help students prepare for the mid-term and final exams.

7. Reading Reports:

Each student shall prepare 4 brief reports (500 – 600 words), on approximately 50 pages (each) of readings in theology and/or church history from a list of sources to be distributed by the professor. One report should be submitted from a reading in each unit of the course, (i.e., one reading from the Early Church, one from the Medieval Church, one from the Reformation Church, and one from the Modern Church). The reports should contain a description of the reading, the main thesis of the selection, and your interactions with the most important ideas from the selection. The reading reports are **due on the final day of each unit**.

Grading:

The course grade is determined by class participation, measured through weekly postings and other assignments (20%), report on congregational visit (10%), report on video (5%), reading reports (10%), mid-term exam (15%), research paper or adult education plan (25%), and final exam (15%). Participants should plan to work about 135 hours total on course responsibilities (e.g. reading, assignments, online discussion). For what is expected for each assignment consult the “Grade Rubrics” book on the main course page.

Course Facilitator Responsibilities:

1. The course facilitator will design the course and learning modules in such a way that students have every opportunity to achieve the learning objectives.
2. The course facilitator will provide reactions to student responses and discussion as appropriate in order to clarify important ideas and concepts.
3. The course facilitator will provide updated information on relevant resources for the various topics of interest.
4. The course facilitator will read and critically assess students’ assignments and provide feedback within 3-5 days of receipt.
5. The course facilitator will respond to all student e-mails within 72 hours of receipt.

Class Schedule:

UNIT I. THE EARLY CHURCH

- Learning objectives for unit one: The Early Church
 - Analyze readings, identify the key ideas, analyze arguments, and express thoughts with clarity and precision.
 - Explain how ideas developed within the flow of Christian thought.
 - Demonstrate understanding of an example of the heritage and variety of Christian expressions.

Week One: August 29 – September 4

- A. Introduction; History and Christianity: Why Study Church History?
- B. Early Christianity in Historical Context
- C. Reading: González, vol. 1, chapters 1-7.

Week Two: September 5 – 11

- A. Heresy and Response: Apologists and Gnosticism

- B. Early Christian Thinkers
- C. Reading: González, vol. 1, chapters 8-12; Walls, chapter 1 (see discussion questions for Walls posted on the web site)

Week Three: September 12 – 18

- A. Trinitarian Controversy
- B. Christological Controversy
- C. Reading: González, vol. 1, chapters 13-19, 27

Week Four: September 19 – 25

- A. Christianity in Africa
- B. Augustine
- C. Reading: González, vol. 1, chapters 20-25

- **Early church reading report due September 25.**
- **Congregational visit report due September 25.**
- **Practice mini-exam available September 25 and due September 30.**

UNIT II. THE MIDDLE AGES

- Learning objectives for unit two: The Church of the Middle Ages
 - Analyze readings, identify the key ideas, analyze arguments, and express thoughts with clarity and precision.
 - Explain how ideas developed within the flow of Christian thought.
 - Analyze the flow of historical development in the early and medieval periods, and to identify key ideas, events, persons in the Christian story.

Week Five: September 26 – October 2

- A. The Beginning of the Middle Ages: East and West
- B. Monasticism and Mysticism
- C. Reading: González, vol. 1, chapters 26-29; Walls, chapters 2 and 3 (see discussion questions for Walls posted on the web site).

Week Six: October 3 – 9

- A. The Crusades
- B. Scholasticism: Faith and Reason
- C. Papacy: Height, Decline, Conciliarism
- D. Reading: González, vol. 1, chapters 30-32

Week Seven: October 10 – 16

- A. The Sacraments of the Church
- B. Renaissance and Reform
- C. Reading: González, vol. 1, chapters 33-36; Walls, chapters 4 and 6 (see discussion questions for Walls posted on the web site).
- **Medieval church reading report due October 16.**
- **Mid-term Exam, due Saturday, October 15.**

Week Eight: October 17 - 23, No Class, Reading Days

UNIT III. REFORMATION

- Learning objectives for unit three: The Church in the Era of Reformation
 - Analyze readings, identify the key ideas, analyze arguments, and express thoughts with clarity and precision.
 - Explain how ideas developed within the flow of Christian thought.
 - Analyze a popular portrayal of some aspect of the Christian tradition.

Week Nine: October 24 – 30

- A. Martin Luther
- B. Zwingli
- C. Reading: González, vol. 2, chapters 1-5

Week Ten: October 31 – November 6

- A. Radical Reformation
- B. Calvin and Reform in Geneva
- C. English Reformation
- D. Reading: González, vol. 2, chapters 5-10

Week Eleven: November 7 – 13

- A. Catholic Renewal and Reform
- B. Puritans
- C. Reading: González, vol. 2, chapters 11-17

- **Reformation church reading report due November 13.**
- **Video report due November 13.**
- **Practice mini-exam available November 13 and due November 18.**

UNIT IV. CHRISTIANITY IN THE MODERN WORLD

- Learning objectives for unit four: The Church in the Modern World
 - Analyze readings, identify the key ideas, analyze arguments, and express thoughts with clarity and precision.
 - Explain how ideas developed within the flow of Christian thought.
 - Analyze the flow of historical development, especially in the Reformation and modern periods, and identify key ideas, events, persons in the Christian story.
 - Collect, evaluate, and utilize appropriate primary and secondary sources upon which to build and effectively present an argument about a person, event, or idea within the Christian tradition, *or*
 - Summarize the Christian story, gather appropriate resources, and present the story in a way that engages, informs, and influences participants.

- Demonstrate skills of historical understanding, analysis, objectivity, appropriate critique, and evaluation.

Week Twelve: November 14 – 20

- A. Orthodoxy and Rationalism
- B. Pietism
- C. Reading: González, vol. 2, chapters 18-23

Week Thirteen: November 21 – 27

- A. Wesley and Awakening in England
- B. Colonial America and the Great Awakening
- C. The 19th Century in America
- D. Reading: González, vol. 2, chapters 24-25

Week Fourteen: November 28 – December 4

- A. The 19th Century: Great Britain and the Continent
- B. The Modern Missionary Movement
- C. Reading: González, vol. 2, chapters 26-30

Week Fifteen: December 5 – 11

- A. Social Gospel
- B. Twentieth-Century Developments in Theology
- C. Global Voices
- D. Reading: González, vol. 2, chapters 31-36; Walls, chapter 17.

- **Paper or project due November 28.**
- **Response to peer's paper or project due December 5.**
- **Modern church reading report due December 11.**
- **Final Exam, due Thursday, December 15.**

Grading:

At the completion of this course, you will receive a letter grade reflecting your performance. Letter grades (from A – F) will be awarded according to the existing policies of the Seminary. The final course grade will be computed according to the total number of points earned for all assignments as shown below:

- Discussion Forum postings: total, 200 (14 weeks, 14 points possible/week + 2 bonus points)
- Congregational Visit: total, 100 (70 points for the report, 20 for the questions, 10 for responses to questions)
- Report on Video: total, 50
- Reading Reports: total, 100 (4 reports, each worth 25 points)
- Mid-term exam: total, 150 points
- Research project and reflection on peer's project: total, 250 (200 on the project + 50 on the reflection)

- Final exam: total, 150

Total points: 1,000

Letter grades are based on the percentages in the North Park Theological Seminary Student Academic Handbook Version: 2010-2011.

A	<i>Superior work (A = 950-1,000; A- = 930-940)</i>
B	<i>Above average (B+ = 910-920; B = 880-900; B- = 860-870)</i>
C	<i>Average (C+ = 840-850; C = 800-830; C- = 780-790)</i>
D	<i>Unsatisfactory (D+ = 760-770; D = 720-750; D- = 700-710)</i>
F	<i>Failure (690 and below)</i>

Academic Honesty:

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park Theological Seminary is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion.

Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another’s work as one’s own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another’s answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one’s answers or work.

For further information on this subject you may refer to the Academic Dishonesty section of the University’s online catalog.

Support Services:

Please see the Course Information resource for the Student Support content if you need assistance during your course.

Disabilities Accommodations

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class are encouraged to contact the Seminary: (773) 244-5619.

Please do so as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely manner. If needed, appointments can be relocated.