

History 5285

Global History of Christianity

Spring 2016

Instructor: Dr. Dan Williams
Office Hours: TLC 3207
TTh, 10-10:45am
Wed., 10am-5pm
(Additional office hours available by appointment)
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Class Location:
Pafford 208
TTh, 2:00-3:20pm

Description:

This is a course about the development of Christianity over the past 2,000 years and the way in which it has shaped world history. This course will explore the development of Christianity as a global religion, and will examine its diverse manifestations on multiple continents. The course will look at theological and organizational developments in Christianity's 2,000-year history, and explore the religious practices of Christians from a wide range of cultures across the globe. The course will examine the impact that Christianity has had on political, intellectual, cultural, and social movements around the world.

Learning Outcomes:

This course has the following learning outcomes, which will be assessed through the assignments in this course:

- Demonstrate general knowledge of the global history of Christianity from the first century of the common era to the present (assessed through exam essays)
- Conduct original historical research (assessed through research paper)
- Formulate and defend a historical argument in standard English (assessed through research paper)

Assessment:

Students' final grade will be determined as follows:

Midterm exam essay	20%
Research paper	35%
Class participation	20%
Final exam essay	25%

There will be no opportunity for extra-credit assignments in this course.

Grading Methodology: This university does not use a plus / minus grading system, but during the course of the semester, I will use plus / minus grades, as well as split-letter grades (e.g., an A- / B+), in order to evaluate students' written work with precision. In computing final course grades, I convert all grades into numeric scores according to the following system:

A = 95

A/A- = 94

A- = 92

A-/B+ = 90

B+ = 88

B+/B = 87

B = 85

B/B- = 84

B- = 82

B-/C+ = 80

(A similar pattern is used for grades in the C-range).

In computing final course grades, a grade average of 89.5 or higher converts to a course grade of A, a grade average between 79.5 and 89.49 converts to a course grade of B, and a grade average between 69.5 and 79.49 converts to a course grade of C. A grade average of 69.5, which converts to a C, is the lowest possible passing grade in the course.

A-range grades, including the grade of A-/B+, are reserved for work that is of exceptional quality. In order to receive an A-range grade on an essay assignment, a student's essay must show evidence of original thinking and the ability to synthesize information from a wide variety of sources, as well as an accurate understanding of the material and good writing technique. Papers that receive a grade of 90 or above must be cogent and persuasive in their argumentation, and they must be well written, well researched, historically accurate, and tightly organized around a strong thesis. Research papers that receive a grade of A must also demonstrate a good understanding of the relevant scholarship on the topic. In short, a paper that receives an A-range grade not only meets the basic requirements for the assignment, but also demonstrates that a student has mastered the interpretative, analytical, and writing skills expected for a course at this level.

B-range grades are given to essays that demonstrate a student's accurate understanding of the material, adequate use of the relevant documents, and competence in writing. They rarely contain the sophisticated analysis required for an A-range essay, but they meet the requirements and expectations for the assignment.

C-range grades are given to essays that contain factual inaccuracies, errors in interpretation, inadequate use of relevant sources, or poor writing technique, even though they usually meet most of the basic requirements for the assignment.

Exams: Graduate students will take two take-home exams in this course. You will receive the midterm exam essay question on Thursday, March 3, and you will have until 11:59pm on Friday, March 11 to submit an 8-10 page essay in response to that question.

The take-home final exam will also require you to respond to an essay question. I will give you the essay question on April 19, and you will have until 11:59pm on April 26 to write 8-10 pages in response. The midterm and final exams will test your ability to analyze the concepts covered in class readings, discussions, and lectures. The questions for both exams will be based heavily on the information covered in the assigned graduate readings.

Research paper: The research paper is a major component of this course. The research paper may cover any topic of your choice on the history of Christianity from antiquity to the present. If you are a graduate student pursuing an M.A. in history, your research paper should be approximately 15-18 pages long. If you are a graduate student pursuing an M.Ed., MAT, MBA, M.A. in a non-historical field, or any degree other than an M.A. in history, you may submit a research paper that is only 8-12 pages in length. Consult the online guidelines for research papers for more information about this assignment.

Papers that are turned in after the assigned date will be marked down 1/3 of a letter grade for each day they are overdue.

Plagiarism policy: Plagiarism, which is the presentation of someone else's words or ideas as your own, is a serious offense that will not be tolerated. It should go without saying that all papers that you write in this course must be your own work. Any students who are caught copying words or ideas from another student's work, a website, a textbook, or any other source, and presenting these words or ideas as their own work without proper attribution, will be charged with plagiarism. Students who have engaged in academic dishonesty will automatically fail this course and will be reported to the university administration for possible further disciplinary action. Please look at the course website to find guidelines on proper footnoting procedures, tips for avoiding inadvertent plagiarism, and a detailed explanation of what constitutes plagiarism. If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism or how to properly cite sources, please ask, because I will be happy to provide explanations. Ignorance is not an excuse for plagiarism; it is your responsibility to read the materials on plagiarism that are posted on the course website and to take all necessary steps to avoid plagiarizing someone else's work.

The UWG history department's policy on plagiarism can be found here: http://www.westga.edu/~histgrad/academic_honesty.html. As this document states, "Any use of the ideas, information, or words of anyone else, including paraphrasing of the words and ideas, without crediting them is plagiarism and is a crime. A direct quote of the words (even only a few words) of someone else must be in quotation marks as well as have a note indicating its source."

More information about the university's honor code and the consequences for violating it can be found here:

http://www.westga.edu/assetsDept/vpaa/Common_Language_for_Course_Syllabi.pdf.

All of your written work for this class must be original; you are not allowed to submit essays that you have written for other courses or that you have completed prior to this semester.

Class participation: Classes will consist of interactive lectures, which will give you a chance to ask questions and discuss the ideas presented in the readings. I will also expect you to attend weekly discussion sessions that I will hold for the graduate students. Most of your class participation grade will be based on your participation in these weekly meetings. At these sessions, we will discuss historiographical questions and the readings in greater depth, and will also discuss some of the graduate readings that do not appear on the undergraduate syllabus.

Class readings: The undergraduates in this class are required to read online primary source documents that are listed on the syllabus and to prepare short class presentations based on those documents. As a graduate student, you should give priority to completing the assigned graduate readings that we will analyze in the weekly graduate student discussion sessions, but I think that you will also find it helpful to read (or at least skim through) the primary source documents that are assigned to undergraduates, since many class sessions will be devoted partly to an analysis of those documents.

Class communication: I may send out periodic email communiqués to students in this course, so please check your UWG email account regularly. The university administration has stipulated that all email communication between faculty and students should take place on UWG email accounts, so please use your UWG email account for all electronic communications that you send me.

To protect students' privacy rights, I will not return graded papers or exams to any third party (e.g., a student's friend or relative who asks to pick up a student's work on that person's behalf) unless a student gives me permission in writing (e.g., an email) to do so. There are occasions when I must disclose a student's grade to university administrators or other history department faculty (e.g., the department chair, students' advisors, or the graduate studies coordinator), but in all other cases, I will make every effort to maintain the confidentiality of students' grades.

I would like to do whatever I can to help you succeed in this course. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have a question about any subject pertaining to this class. I make it a priority to respond promptly to emails from students, and I am happy to talk with students during my office hours, so please feel free to stop by my office anytime that you want to discuss your concerns about this course. I believe that this will be an excellent semester, and I'm pleased to welcome you to this class.

Required readings:

Graduate students in this course will follow a reading list that differs from that of the undergraduates who are taking HIST 4285. The following books are required for graduate student discussions, and can be ordered online or at the university library through GIL Express:

Robert Louis Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them* (Yale University Press, 2003)

Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo* (University of California Press, 1967, 2000)

Richard Fletcher, *The Cross and the Crescent: The Dramatic Story of the Earliest Encounters between Christians and Muslims* (Penguin Books, 2003)

Amanda Porterfield, *Healing in the History of Christianity* (Oxford University Press, 2005)

Liam Matthew Brockey, *Journey to the East: The Jesuit Mission to China, 1579-1724* (Harvard University Press, 2007)

Jon Sensbach, *Rebecca's Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World* (Harvard University Press, 2005)

Timothy Larsen, *Crisis of Doubt: Honest Faith in Nineteenth-Century England* (Oxford University Press, 2006)

Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (Oxford University Press, 2006)

Class Schedule:

- 1/12 Introduction: The Greco-Roman Religious Context
- 1/14 Jesus and the Jewish Origins of Christianity
 Reading assignment and class discussion: Isaiah 9:1-7; Isaiah 53:1-17; Mark 14:12-16:8; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Philippians 2:5-11 (available online at biblegateway.com; recommended translations include the New Revised Standard Version, New International Version, and the English Standard Version, although any translation is acceptable)
 1 Enoch 46:1-48:11 (http://www.johnpratt.com/items/docs/enoch.html#Enoch_46)
- 1/19 From Paul to Perpetua: Christianity's First Two Centuries
 First presentation and reading assignment: 1 Peter 1:1-12, 2:11-25, 4:12-19 (available online at biblegateway.com); and Pliny's correspondence with the emperor Trajan (<http://www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/jod/texts/pliny.html>)
 Second presentation and reading assignment: The Martyrdom of Polycarp (<http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/martyrdompolycarp-lake.html>)
 Third presentation and reading assignment: The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicity (<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/maps/primary/perpetua.html>)
Graduate discussion: Robert Louis Wilken, *The Christians as the Romans Saw Them*
- 1/21 Orthodoxy and Heresy
 Fourth presentation and reading assignment: Infancy Gospel of Thomas (<http://www.tonyburke.ca/infancy-gospel-of-thomas/the-childhood-of-the-saviour-infancy-gospel-of-thomas-a-new-translation/>).
 Fifth presentation and reading assignment: The Gospel of Thomas (<http://gnosis.org/naghamm/gthlamb.html>).
 Sixth presentation and reading assignment: The Gospel According to Mary Magdalene (<http://gnosis.org/library/marygosp.htm>).
- 1/26 The Church after Constantine: Christendom and the Christianization of Europe
 Seventh presentation and reading assignment: Nicene Creed (<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3801.htm> - read first paragraph and Synodal Letter at end of document)
 No graduate discussion
- 1/28 Monastics and Saints
 Undergraduate book discussion: *The Life of St. Macrina* and *The Life of Antony*
- 2/2 Christianity in the Greek-Speaking East
 Eighth presentation and reading assignment: John of Damascus, "In Defense of Icons" (<https://legacy.fordham.edu/halsall/source/johndam-icons.asp>)
Graduate discussion: Peter Brown, *Augustine of Hippo*
Research paper topic due
- 2/4 The Church of the East: Christianity in Arabia, India, and China

- Ninth presentation and reading assignment: Timothy's dialogue with the caliph (read first four pages) (http://www.tertullian.org/fathers/timothy_i_apology_01_text.htm)
- 2/9 Medieval European Christianity
Tenth presentation and reading assignment: Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ* (<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/kempis/imitation.ONE.1.html>) – Read chapters 1-14 of book 1.
Eleventh presentation and reading assignment: Julian of Norwich, *Revelations of Divine Love* (<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/julian/revelations.i.ii.html>) – Read chapters 2-5.
Graduate discussion: Richard Fletcher, *The Cross and the Crescent*
- 2/11 Christianity and Islam: The Historical Background of the Crusades
Undergraduate book discussion: *The Cross and the Crescent*
- 2/16 Medieval European Christian Theology from Augustine to Thomas Aquinas
Twelfth presentation and reading assignment: Augustine, *Confessions*, book 2 (read chapters 1-10) (<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/augustine/confess.iii.i.html>)
Thirteenth presentation and reading assignment: Thomas Aquinas, Proof of the Existence of God (<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/aquinas3.asp>)
No graduate discussion
Source list for research paper due
- 2/18 Crises in the Late Medieval Western Church
- 2/23 The Reformation: Luther and other Early Reformers
Fourteenth presentation and reading assignment: Luther's 95 Theses (<http://www.luther.de/en/95thesen.html>)
Graduate discussion: Amanda Porterfield, *Healing in the History of Christianity*
- 2/25 The Radical Reformation and the Catholic Reformation
Fifteenth presentation and reading assignment: Menno Simons on baptism (<http://www.mennosimons.net/baptism.html>)
Sixteenth presentation and reading assignment: Ignatius Loyola, *Rules for Thinking with the Church* (<http://www.sacred-texts.com/chr/seil/seil82.htm>)
Seventeenth presentation and reading assignment: Excerpts from the Council of Trent (<https://history.hanover.edu/texts/trent/ct07.html>)
- 3/1 Calvin and His Influence on the English and Dutch Reformations
Graduate discussion: Liam Matthew Brockey, *Journey to the East*
- 3/3 Protestant and Catholic Christianity after the Reformation
Eighteenth presentation and reading assignment: Pierre Cholonec, excerpt on life of Catherine (Kateri) Tekakwitha (document 6 in *Converging Worlds*, ed. Louise A. Breen, available on GoogleBooks)
- 3/8 The Fracture of Protestantism and the Rise of Deism

- Nineteenth presentation and reading assignment: Benjamin Franklin's letter to Ezra Stiles (<http://www.constitution.org/primarysources/franklin-stiles.html>)
No graduate discussion
- 3/10 No class (midterm exam for undergraduates)
- 3/11 **Midterm exam essay due by 11:59pm**
- 3/14-3/18 Spring break (no classes)
- 3/22 Pietism and Evangelicalism
Twentieth presentation and reading assignment: Jonathan Edwards, Personal Narrative of Conversion (<http://www.calltoworship.org/calltoworship/testimony/jonathan.html>)
Graduate discussion: Jon Sensbach, *Rebecca's Revival*
- 3/24 Black Christianity in the New World
Discussion of *Rebecca's Revival* (CourseDen post due by 11:59pm on 3/23)
- 3/29 Christian Missions and the Expansion of Global Christianity
First draft of research paper due by 11:59pm
No graduate discussion
- 3/31 American Sects: Mormonism and Other Nineteenth-Century Religious Movements
Twenty-first presentation and reading assignment: Joseph Smith, History (<https://www.lds.org/scriptures/pgp/js-h/1?lang=eng>)
- 4/5 Liberal Protestantism and Unitarianism
Twenty-second presentation and reading assignment:
Harry Emerson Fosdick, "Shall the Fundamentalists Win?" (<http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5070/>)
Graduate discussion: Timothy Larsen, *Crisis of Doubt*
- 4/7 No class (instructor at a conference)
- 4/12 Fundamentalism and Pentecostalism
Twenty-third presentation and reading assignment:
Testimony of Florence Crawford (<http://www.azusastreet.org/AzusaStreetCrawford.htm>)
No graduate discussion
- 4/14 Catholicism in the Modern World: Before and after Vatican II
Twenty-fourth presentation and reading assignment:
Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum* (http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum_en.html)
Twenty-fifth presentation and reading assignment:
Vatican II, *The Church in the Modern World*, chapter 2: "The Community of Mankind"

http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html

- 4/19 Christianity in the Global South
Undergraduate discussion of *The New Faces of Christianity*
Graduate discussion: Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity*
- 4/21 Christianity, Secularism, and Religious Pluralism
Final version of research paper due by 11:59pm
- 4/26 **Final exam essay due at 11:59pm**