
CH501 Online Course: The Church to the Reformation | Fall 2020

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Credit Hours: 3

This course occurs completely online with no scheduled classroom time. This course follows a weekly schedule that runs for 14 Weeks from Tuesday, September 8 – Monday, December 21, 2020. A week in this course begins on Tuesday and ends on Monday with the exception of the first week, which runs from Monday through Monday. You will have required activities due on certain days each week.

Course Information

Office Hours

Your instructor is available for email correspondence. If you have a question about the course, you can contact your instructor via email.

Technical Support

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary offers technical support during regular business hours. If you have a technical issue with your course, please email servicedesk@gordonconwell.edu.

Course Description

A general survey of the Christian Church from its founding at Pentecost to the Protestant Reformation of the Sixteenth Century. Designed to fulfill one of the two Church History requirements for the Master of Divinity and other master's programs.

Gordon-Conwell Mission

This course satisfies the following institutional learning objectives

- Article 2: To maintain academic excellence in the highest tradition of Christian scholarship in the teaching of the biblical, historical and theological disciplines.

Course Learning Objectives

This course is designed to give students a working knowledge of the major themes, issues, and personalities of Church history prior to the Reformation, to help them to appreciate and make use of the rich resources of the pre-Reformation Church in their personal spiritual lives and ministries, and to enhance their understanding of the background to the Protestant Reformation. I intend that upon completing this course, you will:

1. Critically compare the various Christian traditions to each other and to your own tradition in light of their respective historical developments.
2. Describe key indicators of a historian's perspective and assess the role that perspective plays in the retelling and interpretation of historical events.
3. Accurately identify key moments, people and places in the history of God's church around the world prior to the Protestant Reformation in Western Europe and apply these things to contemporary issues of faith.
4. Describe important stages in the development of Christian doctrine, differentiate between helpful and problematic developments and explain the importance of historical doctrinal formulation in helping us understand the Bible's core teachings.
5. Summarize the strengths and weaknesses of medieval Roman Catholicism and evaluate the impact of those strengths/weaknesses on the Protestant Reformation.

Weekly Lessons

Over 14 weeks, you will cover the following topics and lessons:

- **Module A: Introduction to Church History**
 - Lesson 1: The Significance of One's Perspective on Christian History (Week 1)
- **Module B: The Church in the Pagan World**
 - Lesson 2: Church History and World History (Week 2)
 - Lesson 3: Orthodoxy and Heresy, part 1 (Week 3)
 - Lesson 4: Early Church Worship and Practice (Week 4)
- **Module C: The Christian Kingdoms before the Rise of Islam**
 - Lesson 5: The Rise of the Christian Kingdoms (Week 5)
 - Lesson 6: Orthodoxy and Heresy, part 2 (Week 6)
 - Lesson 7: The Transformation of the Latin Church (Week 7)
- **Module D: Islam and the Fracturing of Christianity**
 - Lesson 8: Islam's Impact on the Church (Week 8)
 - Lesson 9: Orthodoxy and Heresy, part 3 (Week 9)
 - Lesson 10: Isolation and Rivalry (Week 10)
- **Module E: The Church in Medieval Europe**
 - Lesson 11: High Medieval Christianity (Week 11)
 - Lesson 12: Medieval Doctrinal Developments (Week 12)
 - Lesson 13: Toward the Reformation (Week 13)
- **Module F: The Pre-Reformation Church and You**
 - Lesson 14: Personal Reflections (Week 14)

Required Materials

Before enrolling in this course, you must ensure that you have regular access to the required materials you will use in this course.

Reading

Links to catalog items are provided. E-book editions may be available in GCTS collections, so check the library catalog item to see if electronic resources are available.

- Coakley, John W. and Andrea Sterk. [*Readings in World Christian History. Vol. 1: Earliest Christianity to 1453*](#). Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis, 2004. (ISBN of paperback: 978-1570755200; ASIN of e-book: B00GXC0UGI).
- Logan, F. Donald. [*A History of the Church in the Middle Ages*](#). Second edition. London: Routledge, 2012. (ISBN of paperback: 978-0415669948; ASIN of e-book: 0415669944).
- Swan, Laura. [*The Forgotten Desert Mothers: Sayings, Lives, and Stories of Early Christian Women*](#). New York: Paulist, 2001. (ISBN of paperback: 978-0809140169; ASIN of e-book: B00DRE2BIA).
- Wilken, Robert L. [*The First Thousand Years: A Global History of Christianity*](#). New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 2012. (ISBN of paperback: 978-0300198386; ASIN of e-book: B00B4QTRJO).

Please note that in all assignments, the four books above will be cited by author's/editor's last name (Coakley/Sterk, Logan, Swan, Wilken).

Technology

Computer and Internet Connection

You will need regular access to a computer with high-speed internet and capable of downloading files and streaming multimedia presentations.

Software

You will need Microsoft Word or a comparable word processor installed on your computer.

Required Activities

To demonstrate achievement of course objectives, you will participate in various required activities. You will find detailed descriptions of these activities on your course site, but an overview of these requirements is given below:

Watch Lectures

Unless otherwise noted, you will begin each lesson by watching assigned lectures.

Read Required Texts

You will read the required texts as assigned. By the end of the course, you must have read all the required texts in their entirety.

Contribute to Discussions

Unless otherwise noted, you will contribute to class discussion every week. These posts should demonstrate understanding of and critical engagement with lesson material. For each discussion, you will also respond to at least one of your peers.

Write a Paper on the Perspective of the Historian

During Week 1, you will write a paper engaging lecture material and discussion with other students to write your own paper on the perspective of the historian.

Write in your Application Journal

During Weeks 2-13, you must keep a journal in which you note and comment on significant people, places, events, teaching, etc. from Christian history. This journal should grow out of the application forum, and thus you should cut and paste important posts from that forum into your journal throughout the course. The journal should also demonstrate your own independent reflection on the material, in addition to the forum discussions.

Write a Paper on Non-Western Tradition

During Week 8, you must choose a non-Western ancient Christian tradition (Chalcedonian Eastern Orthodox, Oriental [non-Chalcedonian] Orthodox, Church of the East, Church of the Thomas Christians, etc.) and begin learning about that tradition.

Write a Paper on Roman Catholicism

Once during the first two weeks of the course and once during the last two weeks of the course, you will go to a Roman Catholic worship service. By the end of the course, you will reflect on your experiences and write a paper on Roman Catholicism in light of what you have learned in this course.

Grading

Your assignments are categorized and weighted for grading as follows

Course Assignment	% of grade
Reading and Lecture Viewing Report	11%
Perspective Discussion	1.8%
Application Discussions	17.2%

Perspective Paper	16%
Application Journal	14%
Non-Western Tradition Paper	20%
Roman Catholicism Paper	20%

You must follow the criteria detailed in the Assignment Instructions posted on your course site. Grading will be based on your work's alignment with the performance criteria in the Assignment Instructions. You must also submit work by the "due by" dates listed in the Course Summary on the Syllabus tool of the course site. Any work submitted after these "due by" dates will be penalized 5 points per day beyond the due date unless you make arrangements with you instructor ahead of time.

The grading scale will be as follows:

A 95, A- 90, B+ 87, B 83, B- 80, C+ 77, C 73, C- 70, D+ 67, D 63, D- 60, F below 60

Course Policies

Instructor Feedback

Your instructor will reply to email within 1-2 business days. He or she will give feedback on assignments within one week of submission and post grades and any additional comments in the course gradebook within two weeks of submission.

Writing Standards and Submitting Written Assignments

Papers must be double-spaced with 1" margins (side margins as well as top and bottom margins of each page), using Times New Roman or Arial 12-point font. Do not exceed page limits. Sources must be properly documented using notes and bibliography. Citations should be professionally formatted, meaning that it should adhere to either Turabian or APA style. Written assignments should be submitted as a Word or PDF file.

Discussion Posts

When quoting from or paraphrasing course readings, provide the author's name and page(s) in parentheses. If quoting from other sources, provide appropriate documentation. Similarly, when referring to a specific lecture, identify it using the title of the segment.

Netiquette

Gordon-Conwell does not tolerate disruptive or disrespectful behavior in the online communications in any course. Students should review the netiquette policy in the *Student Handbook* and this website: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette>.

Additional Seminary Policies

For additional seminary policies that may pertain to this course please refer to the Syllabus Addendum below.

Syllabus Addendum

Academic Standards

Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person's distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one's own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over-dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one's writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.

ADA Policy/ Disability and Accessibility

The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook. Any student who has a learning, orthopedic, sensory or psychiatric condition that substantially limits one or more major life activities and who would benefit from accommodations may be eligible for assistance. Please contact Deana Nail (dnail@gordonconwell.edu; 704-527-9909 x5810), the Charlotte Dean of Students, who coordinates services for students with disabilities at the Charlotte campus. It is the responsibility of the student to notify the professor of the documented accommodations at the beginning of the semester.

Cancellation of Class

In the event the seminary has to cancel a class meeting (due to an impending storm, professor illness, etc.), the Registration Office will send out an email notification (via the GCTS email account) to all students registered in the affected course. If the cancellation occurs the day of the scheduled meeting, the Registration Office will also attempt to contact students via their primary phone contact on record. The professor will contact the students (via GCTS account and/or Canvas) regarding make-up. If a weekend class is cancelled, the class will be made up during the scheduled Make-Up weekend (see the *Academic Calendar* for the designated dates). For more info, consult your Student Handbook.

Extension Policy

Arrangements for submission of late work on or before the end date for the semester or term (as noted in the seminary's *Academic Calendar*) are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required in these cases. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams. However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized end date for the semester or term must be approved by the Registration Office. An Extension Petition, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the stated date (see the *Academic Calendar* for the designated dates). Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Extension Petition and Student Handbook.

Grades

Faculty are expected to turn in final grades 3 weeks after the end of the term. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted grades (unless instructed otherwise). Those individuals who need an official grade report issued to a third party should put their request in writing to the Registration Office.

Writing Center

The Writing Center is available online to all Gordon-Conwell students. The Writing Center offers editing and revision services for students' writing. During any given semester, students can submit work as they need support. The online submission process is easy to use, and feedback is provided promptly. If students have any questions about the Writing Center, they can contact: WritingCenter@gordonconwell.edu. Students can sign up today for Writing Center support through the following site: www.GordonConwell.store.