

Early and Medieval Church History Online CH 501Z

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Required for M.Div. and M.A.T.S. Students: 3 Hours

Please be sure to read and familiarize yourself with ALL sections in this syllabus.

Welcome to the course, **Early and Medieval Church History**. Although I cannot give you a personal welcome as I would in an on-campus course, I do want you to know how delighted I am that you have chosen to study with us through our Virtual Campus. I am available to discuss any aspect of this course with you through the communication medium most comfortable and available to you. You may contact me by email (my preferred medium) or phone. If you cannot reach me through one of these means, please feel free to contact me at my home number. I look forward to getting to know you better and to teaching you what God has taught me through the history of his Church.

Office Hours: My office is in Columbia at Covenant Classical Christian School, a ministry of Covenant Presbyterian Church. The address is 2801 Stepp Drive, Columbia, SC 29204. I will be happy to arrange a time to meet you if you need to see me. To make an appointment please contact me by e-mail or call me at home or my office. Please make home calls after 8:00 a.m. and before 9:00 p.m.

RESOURCES

To view or download lecture notes and other resources for this course, please click on the links provided in the online classroom. I modify these files from time to time, so in order to get the most current version, you should download each one only a few days before the class to which it pertains. The links to these resources are found in the online classroom.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This survey course traces the development of the Christian Church from the end

of the Apostolic period to the division between East and West and of the Western Church up to the 15th-century Renaissance. Students examine the changing relation between Church and Empire, the development of Christian doctrine, the rise of the papacy, and the variety of patterns of Christian spirituality.

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COURSE PURPOSE

The purpose of this course is to enable students both to appreciate the rich heritage of early and Medieval Christianity and to understand the factors that paved the way for the Protestant Reformation. The course also aims to give students the tools necessary for utilizing Church history in their contemporary expressions of Christian teaching and life.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to educate persons for service in the Christian Church. As a part of that mission, one goal is that graduates be prepared to **utilize the Church's historical and theological heritage as an important resource** in their personal spiritual development and ministry. In order to begin fulfilling that goal, this course and its successor (CH 502 Reformation and Modern Church History) introduce students to the historical and theological heritage of the Christian Church.

It is the teacher's intention that by the end of the term, students will:

1. **Recall** to the major theological, intellectual, institutional, and spiritual developments of early and Medieval Church history.
 2. **Recognize** the historical, cultural, and political factors that influenced the development of Christian thought and practice during the patristic and Medieval periods.
 3. **Appraise** the depth of spirituality and **be challenged** by the concern for godly life characteristic of the best of early and Medieval Christianity.
 4. **Evaluate** the role of the historian's perspective in the re-telling and interpretation of historical events.
 5. **Assess** patristic and Medieval thought/practice and **use** that thought to develop their own expressions of Christian doctrine and spirituality.
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COURSE COMPONENTS

The purpose and objectives of this course will be achieved through four learning components. The first is the **Content Component**, the student's own mastery of historical, cultural, and philosophical material essential to an understanding of early and Medieval Christianity. This will be accomplished through e-lectures, textbook reading (requirement 1 below), and preparation for the two examinations (requirement 2 below). This component addresses objectives 1, 2, 3, and 4 above.

The second component is the **Reflective Component**, the student's reflection on the significance of early and Medieval Christian history for our Christian spiritual formation today. This will be accomplished through the students' own interaction with the material of the course in preparation for the examinations. This component addresses objectives 3, 4, and 5 above.

The third is the **Research Component**. Each student will complete one formal research project (requirement 3 below). This project will give the student the opportunity to examine one aspect of Church history in depth and to value and/or criticize that aspect as appropriate. This component addresses the general purpose of the course to enable the students to develop skills for utilizing Church history, and it touches on all five of the objectives above.

The fourth is the **Collaborative Component**: The student will collaborate in building online community. Each student is expected to actively participate in collaborative online activities, as determined by the course professor. Your participation should be done weekly and spread out over the length of the semester, not crowded into the final weeks of the course.

REQUIRED MATERIALS

Students are expected to secure their own copies of all required textbooks. The Erskine Campus Bookstore will carry a limited number of copies of every required text and orders for books can be placed through the Campus Bookstore. The seminary also has a bookstore portal on its website at

<http://www.erskineseminary.org/bookstore.html>.

Here you will find links to familiar vendors and can check availability of texts, compare prices, and place orders. While students may order their books from any source, orders placed with the vendors listed, **through the seminary's web site**, earn a small rebate, a percentage of which goes to benefit the Seminary's Student Body Association.

Ferguson, Everett. *Church History. Volume One: From Christ to Pre-Reformation*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005.

RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOK (for extra credit reading):

Noll, Mark. *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*. 2nd Edition. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2000. [Students may read the first six chapters (pp. 11-150) of Noll's book and write a brief reaction paper for three points of extra credit on their final grades.]

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS FAQ's

1. All assignments must be submitted via e-mail attachment (unless otherwise notified).
2. Please use Microsoft Word when submitting assignments electronically.
3. All assignments should be clearly marked on the e-mail subject line with the student's last name and assignment number.

COURSE PLATFORM

Erskine Seminary is accredited by the Association of Theological Schools (ATS). According to the ATS Standard 10.3.4.3, "Institutions shall ensure that distance education programs provide appropriate opportunity for collaboration, personal development, interaction among peers within a community of learning, and supervised field or internship opportunities when appropriate to the degree program." It is with this stipulation that EDEN has implemented a web-based learning platform which will serve to provide a number of collaborative learning experiences. The learning platform is Moodle and according to their website, "Moodle is a course management system designed to help educators who want to create quality online courses . . . and create effective online learning communities." You will be provided with additional information concerning Moodle tutorials, site information, and the peer mentoring program. In order to meet the online discussion component of this course, you will need:

- A computer (or access to a computer)
 - Access to the Internet
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COURSE REQUIREMENTS

All written assignments listed below are to be submitted electronically, either by posting the information in the online classroom or by emailing the assignment to the professor as an attached WORD file.

Requirement One – Content Component (10 points)

Each student will read the textbook by Ferguson in its entirety, and will view/listen to the e-lectures of the course, according to the schedule listed at the end of this syllabus. Students will keep a BRIEF reading log in which they indicate a few important things they have learned from each chapter of the textbook and will post their reading log in weekly installments in the online classroom as part of the community building experience. Students are also encouraged to post questions and comments about the lectures and to interact with the professor and/or other students through the online community section.

Requirement Two – Reflective Component (40 points)

Each student will complete mid-term and final examinations that will cover material from class lectures and the textbook. Both of these will be arranged as take-home exams. The mid-term exam is to be taken during week 6 of the term and will count 20 points. The final exam is to be taken during week 11 of the term and will count 20 points.

Requirement Three – Research Component (40 points)

Each student will complete a research project on a topic of his/her own choice. The topic must deal with one aspect of Christian history between the years of A.D. 100 and A.D. 1500. For this project, the student will do significant reading of primary sources and will consult secondary sources as appropriate. The length of the paper will be 8-10 pages (double spaced, with type size and margins similar to those used in this syllabus). The student must turn in a statement of the paper topic by the end of week 8 of the course, and the research paper is due by the end of week 14.

This project will provide an opportunity for the student to develop skill in choosing and narrowing a topic appropriately, conducting theological and historical research, and reporting the results of his/her research through clear academic writing. In carrying out the project, the student will be expected to make use of the Erskine Seminary document “Writing Theological Papers” (available at this link: <http://tinyurl.com/2em3lh7>). The student is encouraged to get in touch with the professor at any time to talk about his/her research project.

Requirement Four – Collaborative Component (10 points)

The Collaborative Component flows from the content component. After reading and watching or listening to e-lectures, students should reflect on what they have learned and share this with other students through the online forum. At times, the instructor may pose a significant question based on the e-lectures or reading.

Students should respond to this question. If the instructor poses a question, it will be posted by Monday of the week the reading is due.

Online discussions and interaction provide a rich and stimulating environment of collaboration, interaction, and community building. Students participating in online discussions tend to provide more thought-provoking comments, richly detailed responses, and insightful observations.

Each student will post an entry to the discussion board by 11:00 P.M. on **Wednesday** of each **week**. As the student completes the required reading for this course, listens to the e-lectures, or thinks through course-related issues, he or she will post an entry relating significant insights, questions, or challenges. This exercise can also be part of the *process* of the student's spiritual formation.

In order to facilitate community building, fellow students will respond by 11:00 P.M. on **Saturday** of **each week** to their peer's entries on the discussion board as a way of encouraging each other and adding to the observations posted by their classmates. Additionally, peer mentors and/or the course professor will respond **to selected entries**. Retroactive posting will not be accepted.

Please note: Since this is a required assignment, your course grade will be impacted by discussion board postings and interaction with your peers.

Course Schedule

The course is divided into three modules. The first two modules have work due at weekly intervals, as well as a major examination at the end of the module. The third module consists of the major research paper.

MODULE #1

Week	Lectures to view	Assignments
1	Lecture 1 Lecture 2 Lecture 3 Lecture 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Read Ferguson, chaps. 1-4 and post reading log.- View/listen to lectures 1-4 and post questions/comments.- Interact with other students and/or professor via on-line forum.- <i>Optional: Study the relevant pages of the Resource Booklet and read further in the primary sources listed there.</i>

2	Lecture 5 Lecture 6 Lecture 7 Lecture 8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read Ferguson, chaps. 5-7 and post reading log. - View/listen to lectures 5-8 and post questions/comments. - Interact with other students and/or professor. - <i>Optional: Study the relevant pages of the Resource Booklet and read further in the primary sources.</i>
3	Lecture 9 Lecture 10 Lecture 11 Lecture 12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read Ferguson, chaps. 8-11 and post reading log. - View/listen to lectures 9-12 and post questions/comments. - Interact with other students and/or professor. - <i>Optional: Study the relevant pages of the Resource Booklet and read further in the primary sources.</i>
4	Lecture 13 Lecture 14 Lecture 15 Lecture 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read Ferguson, chaps. 12-14 and post reading log. - View/listen to lectures 13-16 and post questions/comments. - Interact with other students and/or professor. - <i>Optional: Study the relevant pages of the Resource Booklet and read further in the primary sources.</i>
5	Review lectures 1 - 16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare for Mid-Term Exam. - Take Mid-Term Exam online by Monday of week 6

MODULE #2

Week	Lectures to view	Assignments
6	Lecture 17 Lecture 18 Lecture 19 Lecture 20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read Ferguson, chaps. 15-17 and post reading log. - View/listen to lectures 17-20 and post questions/comments. - Interact with other students and/or professor.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You may seek advice from the professor by email as you wish - <i>Optional: Study the relevant pages of the Resource Booklet and read further in the primary sources.</i>
7	Lecture 21 Lecture 22 Lecture 23 Lecture 24	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read Ferguson, chaps. 18-20 and post reading log. - View/listen to lectures 21-24 and post questions/comments. - Interact with other students and/or professor. - <i>Optional: Study the relevant pages of the Resource Booklet and read further in the primary sources.</i>
8	Lecture 25 Lecture 26 Lecture 27	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read Ferguson, chaps. 21-22 and post reading log. - View/listen to lectures 25-27 and post questions/comments. - Interact with other students and/or professor. - Turn in the topic for your research paper. - <i>Optional: Study the relevant pages of the Resource Booklet and read further in the primary sources.</i>
9	Lecture 28 Lecture 29 Lecture 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Read Ferguson, chaps. 23-24 and post reading log. - View/listen to lectures 28-30 and post questions/comments. - Interact with other students and/or professor. - <i>Optional: Study the relevant pages of the Resource Booklet and read further in the primary sources.</i>

10	Review lectures 16 - 30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare for Final Exam. - Take Final exam online by end of week 11.
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MODULE #3

Weeks	Lectures to view	Assignments
11-13		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepare your research paper, using the guidelines in "Writing Theological Papers" and "Style-Form Guidelines for Master's-Level Students." - You may seek advice from the professor by email as you wish.
14		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Turn in the paper by uploading as a WORD document by end of week 14.

Relevant Institutional and Course Policies

http://seminary.erskine.edu/content_policies/SeminaryPoliciesforETSStudents.pdf

Criteria for Grading the Research Paper:

- Writing that is grammatically correct and stylistically clear
- A form that adheres to the guidelines in Turabian, *A Manual for Writers* (7th edition)
- Adherence to the parameters of the assignment (length, scope)
- Choice of a topic that is suitable for this course and for the length of the paper
- Clear organization of material
- In the introduction, a clear statement of the topic, the specific question to be addressed, and the way the paper will address it
- In the body, evidence that the student has used relevant primary and secondary sources
- In the body, evidence that the student grasps historical and philosophical information

- In the body, evidence that the student understands theological and spiritual concepts
- In the body and the conclusion, attention to ways in which this subject teaches or challenges the Church today
- Depth and creativity in handling the topic and question

OVERALL GRADING SCALE:

100-95	A	85-84	C+	71-70	D-
94-93	A-	83-80	C		
92-91	B+	79-78	C-	69-0	F
90-88	B	77-76	D+		
87-86	B-	75-72	D		
