



**ERSKINE**  
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

*For Christ and His Church*

www.erskineseminary.org

CH 551CO Survey of Church History

J-Term 2012

T. Chris Crain, Ph.D.

Adjunct Professor

### **Class Meeting Times and Location**

Saturdays, 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

1/7, 1/14, 1/21, 1/28

Erskine Theological Seminary Columbia Campus

1500 Lady Street, Suite 200

Columbia, South Carolina 29201

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### **CONTACT INFORMATION**

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### **OFFICE HOURS**

My office is in Columbia at Covenant Presbyterian Church. The address is 3100 Covenant Rd., 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.

## CATALOG DESCRIPTION

This course surveys the history of the Christian Church from its origins to the present time. Within the broad sweep of the four main periods of the Church [Early (50-600), Medieval (600-1500), Reformation (1500-1650), and Modern (1650-present)], students consider key persons, dates, developments, movements, and theological concepts. M.Div. and M.A.T.S. students may not take this course. *Required for M.A.E.M., M.A.C.M., M.A.P.M., and M.C.M students. Alternate years. Three hours.*

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

The mission of Erskine Theological Seminary is to educate persons for service in the Christian Church. The goal of this course is to acquaint students with a working knowledge of the vast sweep of Church History, to hone their historical skills for further exploration of Church History, and to help students lay a foundation for a historical understanding of theology.

Students will be able to

1. Identify the four main periods of Church History and the main events within those periods
2. Identify important dates, events, and key people in the history of the Christian Church
3. State key doctrines and their importance for the Christian Church
4. Relate historical events and ideas to present-day concerns

## REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Students are expected to secure their own copies of all required textbooks. As a convenience, the seminary has a bookstore portal of the website at <http://www.erskineseminary.org/bookstore.html>. There you will find links to familiar vendors (CBD, Amazon, B&N, and Books-A-Million) and can check availability of texts, compare prices, and place orders. The ETS SBA will receive a modest percentage of the profits from students' and professors' purchases through this portal. 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.

Noll, Mark A. *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*, 2d ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2000. Reprint, 2008.

Shelley, Bruce L. *Church History in Plain Language*, 3d ed. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2008.

## ERSKINE VIRTUAL CAMPUS (EVC):

This course utilizes the EVC website as a place to make a number of required class resources available to you. Thus, you will need frequent access to a computer with a

reliable internet connection. After you are officially registered for the course then you will receive information regarding access to the online classroom. Students should ideally have their online accounts set up by the first class session. As soon as you have received information for accessing the online classroom, you may check for important information pertaining to the class.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance— Students are required to attend all class sessions. Please be aware that due to the intensive nature of this course, no class absences will be allowed for this J-Term 2012 section. **If you miss a class session, you need to complete an official course drop/add form.**
2. Class Discussion—each class day we will spend some time discussing any questions the lecture raises as well as the Shelley reading. You should come to class ready to state your views on the issues Shelley raises as well as any issues which arise from the lectures.
3. Online Discussion—During the month of February you will participate in an asynchronous online discussion using the EVC site (see above). Each week students will select one significant idea from the Noll reading for that week. Students will post well-written, substantive posts of no less than 350 words. Each post must be made by Wednesday at 11:00 PM. By Saturday, 11:00 PM, students should respond to a classmate's post. These responses should be a substantive, scholarly exchange of at least 150 words. You should make one response post per week. These discussions will take place the weeks of January 30 to February 5, February 6 to February 12, February 14 to February 19, and February 21 to February 26.
4. Book Application—Each student will select a book on a person, event, or issue in church history to read and review. The instructor has a suggested list from which to choose. The paper should be written according to the Erskine paper requirements but in way designed for a church audience (see the link below to Erskine's policies). The following format is required:
  - a) The page requirement is five pages.
  - b) Identify what you learned from the book. What new information did you gain? What take does the author have on the subject? How is the argument made? This section should focus on the most relevant content of the book.
  - c) Apply what you learned to the Christian life. How does the book help you and your audience understand what God has done in the life of the church or appreciate a doctrine, person, or tradition you previously knew little about? This section should focus on applying the content of the book to you and your audience.

Criteria for Grading Book Critiques:

- Adherence to the instructions
- Identification of what was learned
- Application of material to audience
- Depth and originality of comments
- Proper use of English language

The Book Application should be uploaded to the EVC classroom site by February 18.

5. Final Exam—You will be tested on the lectures as well as the readings. To study for the exam I will give you a study guide with key events, people, doctrines or issues. To prepare for the exam I suggest you develop a study sheet based on the guide, using the lectures, readings, and a good dictionary of church history (e.g., *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* is recommended).

The exam will be 50% short answer questions (e.g., true/false, identification, matching, short statements) and 50% essay questions drawn from the study guide. The final exam will also include a question on the percent reading completed (note: reading does not equal skimming), which I will include as part of your final exam grade.

**Note:** For major events you should know the year they occurred (e.g., The Council of Nicea occurred in 325 A.D.). For people you should know the century they lived (e.g., John Calvin was a 16<sup>th</sup> Century Reformer).

**You will take the Final using the EVC on or by February 29. I will open the Exam on February 27.**

GRADING AND EVALUATION

1. Grading	Class Participation	5%
	Online Discussion	25%
	Book Application	25%
	Exam	45%

2. Grading Scale

Your final grade will be determined by the points you accumulate on the various requirements indicated above. The grading scale published in the seminary catalog will be used to arrive at your final grade.

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

## SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND ASSIGNMENTS

(NB: This schedule of lectures may change due to the needs of the class)

- January 7      **What is Church History and Why Study It?**
- “It Grows and We Know Not How:” The Rise of Christianity**
- “What does Athens have to do with Jerusalem?” The Apologists**
- Beware of Wolves: Heresies in the Early Church**
- Early Church Fathers: Irenaeus, Tertullian, and Cyprian**  
Reading Assignment: Shelley, Chapters 1-8
- January 14     **Dying for Christ: Persecution in the Early Church**
- “Remaining What He was, He Became What He was not:”**  
                  **Christological and Trinitarian Controversies in the Early**  
                  **Church**
- “All Theology is a Footnote to Him:” The Theology of Saint Augustine**  
Reading Assignment: Shelley, 9-16
- January 21     **Monastic Life and Rule**
- Smells and Bells: Eastern Orthodoxy**
- The Rise of the Pope and the Crusades**
- The Queen of the Sciences: Scholastic Theology**
- Reading Assignment: Shelley, Chapter 14-26
- January 28     **Post Tenebras Lux: The Reformation of Martin Luther**
- “A Heart Aflame:” The Theology of John Calvin**
- Revivals and Revivalism: The First and Second Great Awakening**
- Reading Assignment: Shelley, Chapters 27-49
- February 4     Reading Assignment: Noll Introduction and chapter 1  
                  Online Posting: Noll Post by Wednesday of week and response by  
                  Saturday
- February 11    Reading Assignment: Noll 2-3

Online Posting: Noll Post by Wednesday of week and response by Saturday

February 18 Reading Assignment: Noll 4-5  
Online Posting: Noll Post by Wednesday of week and response by Saturday  
Book Application Due

February 25 Reading Assignment: Noll 6-7  
Online Posting: Noll Post by Wednesday of week and response by Saturday

February 29 **Take Final Exam by February 29.**

### SEMINARY POLICIES

Click this link and read carefully as part of this syllabus contract:

[http://seminary.erskine.edu/content\\_policies/SeminaryPoliciesforETSSStudents.pdf](http://seminary.erskine.edu/content_policies/SeminaryPoliciesforETSSStudents.pdf)