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CH 501 X Church History I

J. Steven O'Malley

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CH 501
CHURCH HISTORY I
FALL 1998

J. Steven O'Malley, Instructor

Credit: Two Semester Hours

Email address: steve_omalley@ats.wilmore.ky.us

Online office hours: Monday and Friday, 12-2 pm (E.S.T.)

Office Phone: 606 858 2260 (with voice mail)

This syllabus may be amended prior to the beginning of class.

Note: "The development of this extended learning syllabus is intended for distribution to members of the course and others by my permission. It is not intended for general distribution on the internet. Permission to copy, whole or in part, must be requested from the professor."

Welcome to our class! I am delighted to be joining with you in a new learning venture. Let me take a moment to introduce myself to you and to begin laying some plans for our work together. Instructing students in church history is for me to join with you in exploring and sharing in the odyssey of a remarkable company of women and men; it is to communicate the heritage of the living message of the Body of Christ to its reigning Lord. It is to acknowledge our dependence upon that mighty "cloud of witnesses" (Hebrews 12:1) who have given testimony by word, deed, and life to His claim upon this universe. It is to recognize that we are not alone in ministry; instead, it is to discover that there are vital resources from the past that might empower and guide each of us who seeks to become a partaker in that vital company of the committed—a vehicle through which God has incredibly transformed this planet over the past two millenia. It is a company filled with its share of failures as well as achievements in faith, and our awareness of both can hopefully enhance our capacity to live out our ministry with discernment and greater faithfulness to the Lord of the Church.

I appreciate your inviting me into your home to explore this with you and look forward to learning something about you. Before we begin our journey together, please send me an email (50 words max is preferred!) indicating either (a.) what kinds of experience help you learn best? or (b.) How do you think this course may help you live a life pleasing to God? The way in which you think and feel in this course is important to me, and I want to provide regular evaluative feedback that might be helpful in your work.

NOTE: Our learning activities will be structured around one-week modules, with a week beginning at 9 am Sunday (EST). Please send me your first email within this time frame.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is the first part of a two-semester study that intends to introduce students to the development of the Christian Church from the Apostolic Period to the end of the Modern Era. During the first semester, our study will proceed to the end of the Medieval Era, and we will begin with the Reformation in the spring semester. Our emphasis will be upon the central historical movements, figures, and theological issues, with attention given to their relevance for our ministry today. Emphasis will be placed upon important primary texts, as well as interpretive studies.

We may be grateful that there is a capable support team in place to assist us in our tasks. Jim Payne provides us with hardware or software support (exl support@ats.wilmore.ky.us); Zoe Payne assists with institutional and exL support (exlsupport@ats.wilmore.ky.us); Hannah Kirsch is our ExL librarian (Hannah.Kirsch@ats.wilmore.ky.us).

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

During this fall semester, I expect that you will be able to 1) identify the major historical figures and movements which have contributed significantly to the formation of the doctrinal and institutional expressions of Early and Medieval Christianity; 2) explain the significant issues involved in clarifying the Person and work of Jesus Christ in the first five centuries after Christ, which took shape in the context of the quest to define orthodoxy over against heresy; 3) recognize and evaluate the major issues involved in the effort of the Christian Church to relate to the social and political structures of the ancient and medieval worlds; 4) explore and assess the different concepts of soteriology that emerged in the East and the West in this period; 5) examine the developing views of authority – both institutional and doctrinal – that were formulated to provide grounding for the several theological and ethical systems that predominated in early and medieval Christianity; and 6) to write about your understanding of these issues with increased precision and insight.

COURSE ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

- * We will have two comprehensive essay exams of lectures and readings, one at mid-term and one at the end of the semester.
- Videotaped lectures will be mailed to you for your study in conjunction with the assigned readings.
- There will be three quizzes on the content of Gonzalez (volume one), that will be taken and graded by the student. After each quiz, you are requested to send me an email (50 words max.) that reports your score and evaluates where you perceive your learning gaps and strengths to be in terms of that quiz. My evaluation will be based upon the quality and precision of your responses.
- To help you think through issues of consequence, we will engage in two online teaching exercises that will involve “pro-contra-reply” and also “personal analogy”. One of these will be scheduled before the mid-term and the other before the final exam.

Grading: Points will be assigned for the completion of the above course requirements as follows:

Quiz 1	20
Quiz 2.....	20
Quiz 3.....	20
Teaching Exercise 1....	20
Teaching Exercise 2...	20
Mid-Term Exam.....	50
Final Exam.....	100
	250

Upon completion of all requirements, grades will be determined in the following manner:

225-250	A	(90 – 100%)
200-224	B	(80 – 90%)
175 - 199	C	(70 – 80%)
150 – 174	D	(60 – 70%)

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Bettenson, Henry. Documents of the Christian Church. (Oxford paperback). This is a record of crucial letters and texts of official church proclamations that shaped the direction of church leadership in the history of the church.

Gonzalez, Justo. The Story of Christianity. Vol. I. (Abingdon paper ed.)

A concise but insightful analysis of the history of early Christianity, through the Middle Ages, that weaves a narrative that is often compelling for the reader.

Kerr, Hugh T., ed. Readings in Christian Thought. (Abingdon paper ed.). A concise collection of selected texts illustrating style and message of major writers in the history of Christian thought (through the modern era).

(note: the first and third texts will be used through the second semester).

Collateral texts:

J. S. O'Malley, Pilgrimage of Faith; The Legacy of the Otterbeins (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow, 1973)

J.S. O'Malley, Early German-American Evangelicalism (Lanham, NJ: Scarecrow/University Press of America, 1995)

Randy – McNally Historical Atlas of the World (paperback ed.)

Recognizing that this course is primarily an introduction to the history of Christianity, we are also provided with an attached bibliography of primary and secondary works that will enable us to begin an ongoing reading program in the literature of the history of the church (ATS library call numbers are included). I would also encourage you to begin building a good library with tools that will be useful to you on a long-term basis. Be sure to allocate enough time and resources to acquire the tools you need. In addition, we are provided with a bibliography of primary and secondary works, that will enable us to undertake an ongoing reading program in the history of Christianity, that will hopefully extend beyond this course.

READING AND LECTURE SCHEDULE

You are strongly encouraged to start early and keep up with our reading schedule (and even get ahead!). Another reading tip that will be important in our learning is to read an assignment early in the week in which it is to be discussed, and before viewing the videotape for that week. Then, after the videotape and our discussion, reread the same material (an in-depth reading!) before proceeding to the next assignment.

(NOTE: Lectures on Video Correspond to Modules)

Module One. (week one)

The Fullness of Time: The First Hundred Years

Gonzalez, Chs. 2 – 5

Module Two (week two)

The Age of Martyrs and Apologists

Gonzalez, Chs. 6 – 7; Kerr, I (=Section numbers); Bettenson, I, 1, 1-6 (=Part One, Section One, pages 1 – 6.

(Evaluation of first quiz will be due at end of week two).

Module Three (week three)

Heresy and the Formation of Orthodoxy

Gonzalez, Chs. 8 – 9, Kerr, 3 – 5; Bettenson, I, 3, 4 (29 – 33, 35 – 38)

Module Four (week four)

Pastoral Care, Worship, and Church Life in the Apostolic Church

Gonzalez, Chs. 10 – 12, Bettenson, I, 1, 7 – 23.

(Evaluation of second quiz will be due at end of week four)

Module Five (week five)

Constantine and the Response of the Christian Community

Gonzalez, Chs. 13 – 16

Module Six (week six)

Arius and the Age of Nicea

Gonzalez, Chs. 17 – 21; Kerr, 8 (creeds 1, 2, & 4); Bettenson, I, 4, 33 – 35, 39 – 44

(Mid term exam will be due at the end of week six)

Module Seven (week seven)

Augustine and the End of an Era

Gonzalez, Chs. 22- 25; Kerr 6; Bettenson, I, 6.

Module Eight (week eight)

Theology East and West: Chalcedon and Charlemagne

Gonzalez, Chs. 26 – 28; Kerr, 8 (third creed); Bettenson, I, 5.

(Third quiz will be due at the end of week eight)

Module Nine (week nine)

Roman Catholic Ascendancy and Scholasticism

Gonzalez, Chs 29 – 31; Kerr, 9, 10, 12, 14; Bettenson, II, 2

Module Ten (week ten)

Decline and its Cohorts: Pre-Reformers and Mystics

Gonzalez, Chs 32 – 33; Kerr, 11, 13

Module Eleven (week eleven)

Nominalism and Humanism

Gonzalez, 34; Kerr, 16 –19

Module 12 (week twelve)

The Dawn of the Western Hemisphere

Gonzalez, 35 - 36

(Final Exam will be due at the end of the thirteenth week).

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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