

CH 501: SURVEY OF GLOBAL CHRISTIAN HISTORY**Spring 2016****Wednesdays 2:00-4:50 P.M.****Professor Diane Lobody****Phone: 740-362-3444****Email: dlobody@mtso.edu****Introduction**

CH 501 is a pilgrimage of sorts, so welcome to the journey! This course is your introduction to some of the significant themes, communities, events, individuals, ideas, and traditions of Christian history. During our time together we will:

- Explore some of the many ways Christians have experienced, understood, articulated, and practiced their faith;
- Examine questions that have absorbed Christians in different periods (and continue to demand our attention today);
- Experience classic spiritual practices whose roots run deep in Christian tradition;
- Create community by talking, arguing, laughing, plotting, and praying with your colleagues in the classroom as we explore the connections between past and present.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The official description can be found in the course catalogue. But here is what we are actually going to do. We will rocket through two thousand years of history in 14 weeks, exploring the story of Christianity as it has been lived out in different times and places. That is an impossibly wide terrain, and (it should go without saying) we are certainly not going to cover everything. Or even most of anything. But we will do enough to introduce you to at least some aspects of life and thought in the history of Christianity. We will examine contexts in which a variety of Christian ideas and practices took shape. And we will look at some distinctive forms of Christianity as they have emerged in diverse cultures of the world. We will also keep addressing these questions:

- Why did this happen in this way? What can we discover (about this individual person, this specific culture, this distinctive moment in history) to help us understand the particular (and sometimes peculiar) forms that Christianity has taken and continues to take?
- How did we get from there to there, and how did we get from there to here? What are the connections? What about this aspect of the past can help us understand what Christianity is in the present?
- How can we draw on this part of Christianity's history as a resource today? How might we imagine using this part of Christian tradition personally or professionally?

COURSE READINGS

Required Texts:

Ann Braude. *Sisters and Saints: Women and American Religion*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2007. We will use this text for a classroom activity.

Paul Harvey. *Through the Storm, Through the Night: A History of African American Christianity*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2013. We will use this text for a classroom activity.

Diarmaid MacCulloch. *Christianity: The First Three Thousand Years*. New York: Penguin, 2011. This is the essential background text that tells the story of global Christianity in a single and immensely detailed narrative. We will not discuss this in class. You may read this at your own pace or follow the suggestions in the course schedule. This text is also available as an audiobook, and that format might work well for those of you who have long commutes or who enjoy listening to books while you are doing other things, or who process material better by hearing it.

Peter Marshall. *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Reformation*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015. We will parcel out the chapters, so you will be reading only parts of this book. And we will use this book for a classroom activity.

Discussion Texts: Each student will select and read three of these books, but you will not make your decisions until we meet together. So please do not acquire any of these until after class begins! You do not need to purchase these--- use the resources of our library to borrow copies, and then buy them only after you have fallen in love with them.

William Andrews. *Sisters of the Spirit: Three Black Women's Autobiographies of the Nineteenth Century*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986.

Henry Chadwick. *St. Augustine: Confessions*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009.

Julian of Norwich. *Revelations of Divine Love. A New Translation by Barry Windeatt*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2015.

Martin Favata. *The Account: Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca's Relacion*. Houston, TX: Arte Publico Press, 1993.

G. Ronald Murphy. *The Heliand: The Saxon Gospel*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Graham Neville. *St. John Chrysostom: Six Books on the Priesthood*. Yonkers, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1996.

Links to additional short readings (noted in the class schedule) are posted on the Resources page under the Lessons tab on the course Populi site.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Contributions to the class community:

This course depends for its success on your active engagement and participation. This means that you need to prepare for class, reflect on the assignments ahead of time, share your informed insights in class discussions, and plunge energetically into whatever it is we are doing each day we are together.

Contributions to the classroom community will constitute 25% of your final grade.

Working with Texts:

Crucial to the study of Christian history is the careful and critical exploration of the artifacts created and preserved by the mothers and fathers of our complex and variegated tradition. Among these artifacts are writings--- all different kinds of writings--- through which Christians have narrated their experiences and beliefs. Writing is one way that Christians have communicated their understanding of the gospel to their original communities and to subsequent generations. In this class, we will have a variety of opportunities to plunge into different writings and see what we can discern about the people who authored them and the contexts that shaped them.

Each student will choose three of the optional discussion texts. Select one from each pair of titles:

St. Augustine: Confessions

OR

St. John Chrysostom, Six Books on the Priesthood

The Heliand: The Saxon Gospel

OR

Julian of Norwich, Revelations of Divine Love

The Account: Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca's Relacion

OR

Religious Experience and Journal of Mrs. Jarena Lee in William Andrews, Sisters of the Spirit

Textual Research and Discussions:

We will discuss these texts during class sessions identified on the schedule below. To prepare for these discussions, here is what you need to do:

1. Read the scholarly introduction to the text--- the one written by the editor or translator of the book.
2. Find out basic information about the text and the author (not the editor or translator---- the original author who write this centuries ago!). Look for recently written articles found in relevant encyclopedias and dictionaries specific to the field of history and religious studies. (Yes, you may start with Wikipedia, but because of the ongoing and unresolved challenges concerning their editing process, you must look to other studies to verify *everything* you find there.)
3. Read the text itself. Note especially the themes and issues that intrigue you.
4. Locate and read one or two focused scholarly studies about the text, the author, and/ or the historical context in peer reviewed academic journals or books.
5. Browse online and see if you can find some ways that people today are using or playing with the text (YouTube videos, blog posts, artwork, etc.).
6. Come to class ready to discuss the text.

Textual Interpretation Papers:

Of the three optional texts you have used for the text discussions, choose two. Each of these texts will serve as the foundation for a paper. Here is what you need to do:

- Identify a significant theme or issue that you have discerned in that particular text.
- Do some further focused research in scholarly sources (peer-reviewed articles and academic books). Seek out articles or books that specifically examine the theme or issue that you have identified.
- In the first three-quarters of the paper, provide a close, careful discussion of the theme or issue in the text. What do you see? What do other scholars have to say?
- Then, in the final quarter of the paper, reflect on the insights this text might offer to us today in relation to that theme or issue.

Each paper should be 8-10 pages in length (2000-3000 words) and must include a properly formatted bibliography of all the sources you have consulted in your research.

Please post your paper to your folder on the assignments page by midnight on the date noted on the class schedule.

Each paper will contribute 25% to your final grade.

Video Project:

Working with one of your colleagues, you are to produce a 20-minute video. You and your collaborator will determine a topic for your video, research that subject, and then translate your discoveries into image and sound. We will schedule your video to be shown in class toward the end of the semester.

I will help you identify a topic, but here are the parameters:

- Your topic must be new to both of you---- no repetition of something you already know about!
- The video must examine a limited and well-defined aspect of Christian history: an interesting person, a significant event, a work of art, a local church community, etc. Think small and specific.
- The geographical context cannot be the U.S.A. or Western Europe--- we will spend more than enough time with those histories in class. Look for a story based in Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, the Middle East, Latin America, the Caribbean, Central America, the South Pacific. Probably not Antarctica, though.

A set of hints and guidelines about this project will be posted to the Resources page under the Lessons tab on Populi.

The video project will contribute 25% to your final grade.

GENERAL POLICIES

Please see Student Handbook for sections providing policy details on the following:

ADA—MTSO seeks to remove barriers to inclusion in its learning communities. Students who feel they may need an accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability should contact the instructor privately to discuss their specific needs at the beginning of the semester. Please contact the Director of Student Services to coordinate reasonable accommodations for students with documented disabilities. Any accommodation must be agreed upon prior to the due date of the affected course requirement.

Class attendance—Regular attendance is expected in all classes. During unavoidable absences, students are responsible for missed work. An excessive number of absences may result in grade reduction or course failure, despite successful completion of all assigned work. In most cases, a student will not be allowed credit for a course if he or she is absent for 25% of the class sessions. As it relates to blended courses, students may not be allowed credit if they are absent for 25% of class meetings or if 25% of online course work is not completed. Use of Skype or similar technology is not a substitute for attendance in class.

Electronic Devices—Turn mobile devices off or “vibrate only” during class. Browsing the Internet or engaging in email or social network conversations during class is discouraged. Instructors have the right to impose grading penalties for disruptions due to electronic devices.

Human Subjects Research—Research by MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel that collects non-public information from and/or about living individuals or contemporary organizations/groups for purposes of publication or public presentation (including class assignments) must be approved by the Human Subjects Research Committee. MTSO faculty, students, or affiliated personnel should err on the side of caution and apply for committee approval of any activity that may fit this description.

Inclusive Language—In accordance with MTSO’s policy on inclusive language, all students are expected to use gender inclusive or gender neutral language in their writing and in the classroom discussions when referring to human beings.

Incompletes—To receive a course grade of Incomplete, students must submit the petition form from the Registrar with all signatures to the Dean’s Office before the last day of regularly scheduled classes. See Student Handbook for intensive term deadlines. Any petition submitted without a due date for outstanding work will be denied. If work is not complete by the due date the Registrar will record the grade of F for the course.

Pass/Fail—The decision to exercise this option must be made before the end of the second week of the course by completing the appropriate form available through the Registrar. To receive a grade of "pass" the student must do at least the equivalent of C minus work in the course.

Plagiarism—Plagiarism is a serious matter of academic, professional, and personal integrity. All students at the master’s level are expected to understand the requirement to provide attribution when the work of others is used. Students are also expected to be familiar with and understand the school’s policy on Academic Misconduct found in the Student Handbook. If students have questions about attribution, citation, and how to avoid plagiarism they should consult the course instructor, the school’s writing instructor, or library staff. When in doubt it is better to provide attribution even if one is uncertain about the proper citation form. Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct that results in disciplinary actions per the Student Handbook that may range from failing an assignment or course to expulsion.

CLASS SCHEDULE

- 2/3 Introduction to the course and to one another
- 2/10 Thinking historically about Christianity
 Discussion texts (on the Resources page under the Lessons tab on Populi):
 “The Passion of Saints Perpetua and Felicity”
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/perpetua.asp>
The Didache
<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/richardson/fathers.viii.i.iii.html>
 Jonathan Draper, “The Apostolic Fathers: The Didache”
 Background reading: MacCulloch, 1-111 (chapters 1-3)
- 2/17 Early Christian life and community
 Discussion texts (on the Resources page under the Lessons tab on Populi):
 “The Odes of Solomon”
<http://users.misericordia.edu/davies/thomas/odes.htm>
 Select and read any one of the Gnostic writings found here:
<http://www.gnosis.org/naghamm/nhl.html> Scroll down the page to the section, “An Overview of the Nag Hammadi Scriptures” and then follow the link that you find most interesting.
 Background reading: MacCulloch, 112-188 (chapters 4-5)
- 2/24 Imperial Christianity
 Discussion texts:
St. John Chrysostom, On the Priesthood
St. Augustine: Confessions
- 3/2 Doctrine and Controversies
 Assignment: Research a designated Christology
 Background reading: MacCulloch, 189-284 (chapters 6-8)
- 3/9 Authority and Society
 Discussion text (on the Resources page under the Lessons tab on Populi):
 Selections from Elizabeth Clark, *Women in the Early Church*
 Background reading: MacCulloch, 289-423 (chapters 9-12)
If you are writing a paper about *St. Augustine, Confessions* or about *John Chrysostom, Six Books on the Priesthood*, your paper is due by midnight tonight.
- 3/16 No class--- MACM 30 Events (see MTSO website for details about presentations and workshops)
- 3/23 Spring break: no class
 See Populi site for online resources and activities

- 3/30 Spring break: no class
- 4/6 Monasteries, Mission, and Mystics
 Discussion texts:
The Heliand: The Saxon Gospel
Julian of Norwich: Revelations of Divine Love
 Background reading: MacCulloch, 427-603 (chapters 13-16)
- 4/13 Church Reformations in the West
 Classroom activity text:
 Marshall, *Oxford Illustrated History of the Reformation* (assigned chapters)
 Background reading: MacCulloch: 604-688 (chapters 17-18)
If you are writing a paper about *The Heliand: The Saxon Gospel* or about *Julian of Norwich: Revelations of Divine Love*, it is due by midnight tonight
- 4/20 Colonizations and Cultural Encounters
 Enlightenment and Awakenings

 Discussion texts:
The Account: Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca's Relacion
Religious Experience and Journal of Mrs. Jarena Lee in Andrews, *Sisters of the Spirit*
 Background reading: MacCulloch, 689-865 (chapters 19-22)
- 4/27 Missions and Cultures
 Classroom activity text: Harvey, *Through the Storm*
 Background reading: MacCulloch, 866-914 (chapter 23)
- 5/4 World Wars and Consequences
 Background reading: MacCulloch, 915-966 (chapter 24)
If you are writing a paper about *The Account: Alvar Nunez Cabeza de Vaca's Relacion* or about the *Religious Experience and Journal of Mrs. Jarena Lee*, it is due by midnight tonight.
- 5/11 Power and Liberation
 Classroom activity text: Braude, *Sisters and Saints*
- 5/18 Emerging Christianities
 Background reading: MacCulloch, 967-1016 (chapter 25)
- 5/20 Last day of the semester