

Mennonite Brethren Biblical Seminary
HISTORY OF CHRISTIANITY

Professor: Valerie Rempel, Ph.D.

Semester: Spring 2009 (August 27 - December 14)
Tuesdays, 8:30 p.m. – 11:30 a.m.

Office phone: 452-1722

E-mail: vrempel@mbseminary.edu

Office hours: as posted or by app't

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is a study of the development of Christianity from apostolic times to the present. It is a prerequisite to all Church History courses at MBBS.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the completion of the course students will be able to:

1. Demonstrate familiarity with the Church's history, confessions and heritage including key individuals and events in the development of Western Christianity.
2. Assess the significance of cultural context for interpreting Scripture within and across cultures.
3. Identify ways in which the institutional church has both shaped and been shaped by society.
4. Explain the way church leaders help form God's people for the sake of the worlds in which they live.
5. Reflect openness to learn from the Church's past, both its successes and failures, as it has attempted to be the people of God on earth.
6. Demonstrate basic skills in historical research and writing.

RELATED DEGREE OBJECTIVES

Within the larger curriculum goals of the Seminary, this course will facilitate growth in ability to:

1. Describe personal and denominational theological positions in dialogue with the values of Anabaptism and the rest of the Christian tradition.
2. Explain the central themes/doctrines of the Christian faith.
3. Describe the influence of the context on church leaders and the systematic nature of leadership issues.
4. Analyze contemporary issues using a biblical theological paradigm.
5. Describe the mission Dei view of church in dialogue with personal and denominational theology/history/sociology of church.
6. Describe the biblical, historical, and theological foundations of Christian worship.

TEXTS FOR THE COURSE

Required texts are recommended for purchase at Pacific Bookshop. Used copies are available via various internet websites. The texts will also be on reserve at Hiebert Library.

Bettenson, Henry, ed. Documents of the Christian Church. Oxford Univ. Press, 3rd ed., 1999.

Justo L. Gonzalez, The Story of Christianity. 2 volumes. Harper and Row, 1984.

Ruth A. Tucker and Walter Liefeld, Daughters of the Church. Academic Books, 1987.

NATURE OF THE COURSE

Our goal is to survey nearly 2000 years of church history in order to become acquainted with critical events that have shaped the development of the Christian tradition and to reflect on their meaning for the life of the church. Because that is a rather daunting prospect for a one-semester course our study will be organized around a series of events and issues arising in church history. The two-volume text by Gonzalez will provide a framework on which we can build our study of particular individuals, events and theological developments, the Tucker and Liefeld book will serve as supplement to the Gonzalez texts, and Bettenson's collection of documents will provide an introduction to some of the primary source material. The course will rely on lectures, videos, discussions and written assignments to achieve its objectives.

REQUIREMENTS

1. **Readings.** Students are expected to read the texts and other assigned materials in a timely fashion.
2. **Discussions.** Frequent discussion periods will be used to examine assigned topics and questions as they arise. Successful completion of the course will require participation and adequate preparation for the sessions by careful reading and consideration of the assigned texts.
3. **Class attendance.** Students are expected to attend class regularly. The use of videos, supplemental material given through lectures, and group discussions work together to make class attendance very important. Multiple absences will negatively impact your grade.
4. **Papers.** Each student will write two short papers, approximately 4-5 pages in length and double-spaced, using standard research form and documentation. Students will choose one person *and* one event, issue, or development from the attached “Person, Place or Thing” list. (Assignments will be made at the first class meeting.) Please note that the topic chosen will be *briefly* presented in class. Papers which are not ready for presentation on the assigned date will be marked down 5 percentage points.

Due dates: 1st paper must be completed by **March 10** and presented by **March 31**. The 2nd paper must be completed by **April 28** and presented by **May 12**. **Please submit a hard copy of the paper by the appropriate due dates.**

Papers should be focused as follows:

- **Person** - Choose an individual from the attached list. Write a short paper addressing the following: (1) brief biography explaining who the person is, (2) why he or she is significant for the history of the church, and (3) how this person either represents the age or helped change the age in which he or she lived. Your bibliography for each paper should include 4-5 sources which may include textbooks, encyclopedias, journal articles, monographs and other material as appropriate but not more than two websites. Please, no handwritten papers.
 - **Event, Issue or Development** - Write a brief exploration of a particular issue, development or event in the history of Christianity (see attached list). Your paper should explore the following: (1) what the issue or event is, (2) why it happened, and (3) what its significance is for the life of the Church. Again, your bibliography for each paper should include at least 4-5 sources which may include textbooks, encyclopedias, journal articles, monographs and other material as appropriate but not more than two websites. Please, no handwritten papers.
5. **Exams.** Two take-home exams will be given, one covering the ancient and medieval periods, and a final exam covering the reformation and modern periods. Exams will ask for essays on critical issues that arise out of your reading assignments. Good exams will require 10-15 pages of writing in order to produce thoughtful essays. Students will be expected to reflect on the assigned readings, information from lectures and videos, as well as their own understanding/reflection on movements and events. Independent work is expected. The first exam is due **Tuesday, March 24**. The second exam is due **Friday, May 15**. LATE EXAMS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED.

COURSE LOAD

Course load is calculated on 135 hours for a 3-unit class.

Class time	= 42 hours (14 sessions @ 3 hours)
830 pages of Gonzalez	= 25 hours (35 pages/hour)
660 pages of Tucker/Liefeld, Bettenson	= 15 hours (45 pages/hour)
8-10 pages of research papers	= 25 hours (12-13 hours per paper)
Exams	= 28 hours (14 hours per exam)

GRADING

A detailed statement of MBBS grading standards is printed in the current Academic Handbook and serves as the basis for all class evaluations. Plagiarism is unacceptable and work deemed as such will be given a

failing grade. Papers and essay exams will be graded on clarity of thought, accuracy, comprehensiveness, and originality. Successful completion of the course requires all assignments to be completed. Percentage points will be deducted for late papers.

1 st paper	20%
mid-term exam	25%
2 nd paper	20%
final exam	30%
participation	-5 to +5%

POLICY NOTES

MBBS academic policies are described at www.mbseminary.edu/fresno/policies. These policies provide guidance on academic integrity and plagiarism, incomplete course work, extensions, dates for changing registration, non-discriminatory and inclusive language, appeals, etc. Students are expected to be familiar with these policies and will be held responsible for adhering to them. If you have questions about how these policies relate to you or to a situation that you face in your studies, please speak to the professor or consult the Registrar or Academic Dean.

For this course: Unless special arrangements are made, all assignments are due in hard copy format by the end of the business day in accordance with the course schedule, or at class time. As a courtesy to other students, late exams will not be accepted.

COURSE SCHEDULE

January 27

Introduction
The Church Dispersed

February 3

Living in the Empire - Before and After Constantine
read Gonzalez: Vol. 1, Part I and II
read Tucker and Liefeld: ch. 1 and 2
read Bettenson: Part I, Section I, II, III, IV & VII

February 10

Who is Jesus? - Council of Chalcedon
read Gonzalez: Vol. 1, Part III, ch. 26-27
read Tucker and Liefeld: ch. 3
read Bettenson: Part I, Section V and VI

February 17

Coronations and Christendom - Crowning Charlemagne
read Gonzalez: Vol. 1, Part III, ch. 28
read Bettenson: Part II, Section II

February 24

Monasticism- From the Rule to Reform
read Gonzalez: Vol. 1, Part III, ch. 29-31
read Tucker and Liefeld: ch. 4
read Bettenson: Part II, Section III, IV & V

March 2-6 -- Intensive Week - No Class

March 10

The Great Schism - East is East and West is West
read Gonzalez: Vol. 1, Part III, ch. 32-34
read Bettenson: Part I, Section VIII, and Part II, Section I

First person/place/thing PAPER DUE March 10

March 17 – Professor absence - No Class

March 24

Protestant Voices - Questioning the Church
read Gonzalez: Vol. 2, Part 1, ch. 1-3
read Bettenson: Part II, Section VIII

Hard copy of MIDTERM EXAM DUE in class, March 24

March 31

Protestant Voices: Instituting Change
read Gonzalez: Vol. 2, Part 1, ch. 4-7
read Tucker and Liefeld: ch. 5

April 7

The Rights of the Crown Embraced (Great Britain) and Rejected (the Anabaptists)
read Gonzalez: Vol. 2, Part 1, ch. 8-11
read Tucker and Liefeld: ch. 6
read Bettenson: Part II, Section IX

April 14

Catholic Reform and the Missionary Impulse - The Jesuits go forth
read Gonzalez: Vol. 1, Part IV; Vol. 2, Part 1, ch. 12-13
read Bettenson:
White - Part II, Section XI (#I, II, III)
Blue - Part II, Section X (#I, II, III)

April 21

Other Voices -Pietists in Particular
read Gonzalez: Vol. 2, Part II
read Tucker and Liefeld: ch. 7
read Bettenson: White - Part II, Section X
Blue Section XI (#IV, V, IX, XII) Section XII (#II)

April 28

Discontents and Revolutionaries - Reason and Revolution
read Gonzalez: Vol. 2, Part III, ch. 25-29
read Bettenson: White - Part II, Section XII
Blue - Part II, Section XI (#1, II, III, VI, VII, VIII, X, XI, XIII)

Second person/place/thing PAPER DUE April 28

May 5

Protestants Answer the Great Commission
read Gonzalez: Vol. 2, Part III, ch. 30; and Part IV, ch. 31-32
read Tucker and Liefeld: ch. 8-9
read Bettenson: White - Part II, Section XIV
Blue - Part II, Section XVI (#I, IV, V)

May 12

Where are we now?
read Gonzalez: Vol. 2, Part IV, 33-36
read Tucker and Liefeld: ch. 10 & Conclusion, p.435.

Hard copy of FINAL EXAM DUE

May 15, 5:00 p.m.

THE PERSON, PLACE OR THING LIST

February 3

Person: Eusebius
Tertullian
Origen
Justin Martyr

Place or Thing: Gnosticism
Manichaeism
Fall of Jerusalem
Early Christian Worship & Calendar

PAPERS DUE: March 10 and April 28

February 10

Person: Constantine
Perpetua
Ambrose of Milan

Place or Thing: Early Christian Art & Architecture
Donatism
Monastic beginnings/Asceticism

April 7

Person: Menno Simons
Thomas Cranmer

Place or Thing: Muenster
Schleitheim Confession
Book of Common Prayer

February 17

Person: Jerome

Place or Thing: Rome
Constantinople
Monophysitism
Coptic Church

April 14

Person: Teresa of Avila
Ignatius of Loyola
Frances Xavier

Place or Thing: Council of Trent
The Baroque Style

February 24

Person: St. Boniface
Bernard of Clairveux
Francis of Assisi
The Poor Clares

Place or Thing: Medieval Monastic life
Celtic Christianity
Rise of the University

April 21

Person: George Fox and Quakers
Count von Zinzendorf
George Whitefield
Selina, Countess of Huntingdon

Place or Thing: University of Halle
The Great Awakening
Church Music-Hymnody

March 10

Person: Julian of Norwich
Catherine of Sienna
Anselm

Place or Thing: Gothic Architecture
Iconoclastic Controversy
Scholasticism
Orthodox Church in Eastern Europe/
Russia
Art in the Middle Ages

April 28

Person: Jonathan Edwards
Blaise Pascal
Rene Descartes
Friedrich Schleiermacher
Pope Pius IX
Samuel Adjai Crowther

Place or Thing: Deism
Abolition of Slavery
Unitarianism

March 24

Person: Erasmus
Jan Hus

Place or Thing: The Renaissance
Printing Press

May 5

Person: Catherine Booth
Phoebe Palmer
Lottie Moon
Cardinal Newman
William Carey

Place or Thing: Oxford Movement
Social Gospel Movement
Society for the Propagation of the
Gospel (SPG) & the Society for
Promoting Christian Knowledge
(SPCK)
Sunday School Movement

March 31

Person: Jacobus Arminius
Katerine von Bora Luther
William Tyndale

Place or Thing: Bible Translation
Canon Law vs Civil law

May 12

Person: Bishop Tutu of Africa
Albert Schweitzer

Martin Luther King, Jr.
Helder Camara
Mother Teresa
Rosemary Radford Ruether
Place or Thing: African Independent Church Mov't
Liberation Theology
World Council of Churches

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

ATLASES

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Atlas zur Kirchengeschichte : die christlichen Kirchen in Geschichte und Gegenwart ; Kommentare Ausführliches Regis..., 1987.

Littell, Franklin Hamlin
The Macmillan atlas history of Christianity / by Franklin H. Littell ; cartography by E. Hausman, 1976.

REFERENCE AND OTHER RESOURCES

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A history of the Christian church, 1959.

ANCIENT

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A source book for ancient church history : from the Apostolic age to the close of the Conciliar period, 1941.

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The apostolic age : its life, doctrine, worship and policy, 1923.

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