



On-Campus Course Syllabus

THS 201

Church History

Spring 2023

Class Information

Day and Time: TR: 4:45pm – 7:15pm

Room Number: E208

Contact Information

Instructor Name: Tyler Sherron

Instructor Email: tsherron@criswell.edu

Instructor Phone: 317-691-8140

Instructor Office Hours: N/A

Course Description and Prerequisites

An examination of the history of the Christian church from the first century to the present with emphasis on the roots of American Christianity.

Course Objectives

- The student will know the general history of the Christian church from the first through the twentieth century.
- The student will understand the meaning of the American church experience as it pertains to the spread of Christianity around the globe.
- The student will apply Scripture and theology to assess theological perspectives as expressed by historical figures and within historical contexts.
- The student will better locate, understand, and contextualize his or her own church tradition and beliefs by gaining an acquaintance with the development of the Church throughout history.
- The student will evaluate his or her passions, giftings, and historical circumstances by assessing the same of a historical figure of their choosing.

Required Textbooks

Shelly, Bruce. *Church History in Plain Language*. 5th Edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2020. ISBN 978-0-310-11596-0

Noll, Mark A. *The New Shape of World Christianity: How American Experience Reflects Global Faith*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2009. ISBN 978-0-8308-2847-0

Course Requirements and Assignments

- 1. Reading (20%)** Each student will read the assigned material to gain a general knowledge of Church history from the time of Christ to modern day. Students will report their reading ***each week in Canvas on Thursdays before 4:00pm.***
- 2. Critical Questions (10%)** To augment the reading, the student will come to class each week prepared with two well-crafted, critical questions that address the material. Students should avoid posing questions of simple observation or fact (i.e., “When did the major East-West split occur?” or “What is transubstantiation?”). Students should also avoid questions that are too general or that do not set defined parameters (i.e., “Why were the early reformers dissatisfied with the Roman Catholic Church?”). Crafting a good critical question requires time and thought. Students are encouraged to be creative here, so long as the questions remain concrete and forced. By “forced,” I mean presenting a thesis that must be either accepted or rejected. An example is as follows: “The Reformation saw the advent of the Scriptures being translated into the common vernacular, allowing ordinary people to read and interpret it for themselves. Yet doing so invited controversy, schism, and heterodoxy as each had the newfound ability to own their interpretation and disagree with others. Is it better to let the Scriptures go free (i.e., unassisted by interpretive aids or clerical oversight), or should we safeguard them?” The goal is to generate further discussion and inquiry. Along with the reading report, students will submit their two critical questions ***each week in Canvas on Thursdays before 4:00pm.***
- 3. Circumstance Paper (20%)** The student will select one figure from within the parameters of the course to conduct an analysis (5-7 pages) of the said figure’s passions, talents, and circumstances, answering the question why the figure is significant in historical memory. In doing so, the student will determine the figure’s chief passion, the primary talents that assisted the figure in the pursuit of it, and the main historical circumstances that gave the figure the stage to execute it. To assist this analysis, the student will be required to use at least one standard biography. Following the analysis, the student will be required to provide a postscript (2-3 paragraphs) addressing their own chief passion, primary talents, and main circumstances. A hardcopy of the circumstance paper will be ***due in class on Thursday, May 4.***
- 4. Midterm Examination (25%)** The midterm examination will consist of three sections: identifications, fill-in-the-blank, and short essays. With identifications, the student will be asked to identify (in 2-3 sentences) a historical figure, event, or idea in such a way that the identification cannot be attributed to anyone or anything else. Try to be as specific and concrete as you can here. The fill-in-the-blanks will come loosely from the Shelley text. And then there will be 2 short essays (1 page double-spaced each) that will address a major topic from the reading and lectures. This will be a closed-note exam ***due in Canvas on Friday, March 10, by 11:59pm.***
- 5. Final Examination (25%)** The final examination will not be cumulative but will instead address the material from the second half of the course. The structure will be the exact same as the midterm examination (identifications, fill-in-the-blank, and short essays). Like the midterm, the final will be a closed-note, take-home exam ***due in Canvas on Thursday, May 11, by 11:59pm.***

Weightings:

Reading:	20%
Critical Questions:	10%
Circumstance Paper:	20%
Midterm:	25%
Final:	25%

Class Attendance

Students are responsible for enrolling in courses for which they anticipate being able to attend every class session on the day and time appearing on course schedules, and then making every effort to do so. When unavoidable situations result in absence or tardiness, students are responsible for acquiring any information missed. Instructors are not obliged to allow students to make up missed work. Per their independent discretion, individual instructors may determine how attendance affects students' ability to meet course learning objectives and whether attendance affects course grades.

Campus Closure

To ensure the health and safety of students and employees, college administrators may decide it is necessary on rare occasions to close the campus. Once this decision is announced, instructors will contact students to provide further details regarding the campus closure's impact on those courses. Students are responsible to watch for communication from their instructors and respond appropriately. (Unless otherwise specified by the instructor in this syllabus, this communication will be sent to the student's Criswell College e-mail account.)

In order to make progress toward the courses' objectives, instructors have the freedom during most campus closures to require students to participate in activities as alternatives to meeting on campus. An instructor may, for example, hold class remotely (through Zoom) at the scheduled time, provide a recording of a class or presentation for students to watch independently, or assign other activities that students are to accomplish before returning to campus. Students are responsible for accomplishing these alternative activities as well as any course requirements listed in this syllabus during the period of the campus closure. If, during the period of the campus closure, personal circumstances prohibit a student from accomplishing these alternative activities or course requirements and assignment listed in the syllabus during the campus closure, the student is responsible for communicating with the instructor as soon as possible. Instructors will not penalize students who do not have the means to accomplish the alternative activities during the period of the campus's closure and will work with students whose circumstances during the campus closure prohibited their timely completion of course requirements and assignments in the syllabus.

Grading Scale

A	93-100	4.0 grade points per semester hour
A-	90-92	3.7 grade points per semester hour
B+	87-89	3.3 grade points per semester hour

B	83-86	3.0 grade points per semester hour
B-	80-82	2.7 grade points per semester hour
C+	77-79	2.3 grade points per semester hour
C	73-76	2.0 grade points per semester hour
C-	70-72	1.7 grade points per semester hour
D+	67-69	1.3 grade points per semester hour
D	63-66	1.0 grade point per semester hour
D-	60-62	0.7 grade points per semester hour
F	0-59	0.0 grade points per semester hour

Incomplete Grades

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An “I” may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar’s Office. The “I” must be removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the close of the term or semester in which the grade was awarded, or the “I” will become an “F.”

Academic Honesty

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting. Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,
- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and
- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

Institutional Assessment

Material submitted by students in this course may be used for assessment of the college’s academic programs. Since programmatic and institutional assessment is done without reference to specific students, the results of these assessments have no effect on a student’s course grade or academic standing at the college. Before submitting a student’s work for this type of assessment, the course instructor redacts the work to remove anything that identifies the student.

Institutional Email Policy

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students’ institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to

respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

Disabilities

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

Intellectual Property Rights

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the instructor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

Resources and Supports

Canvas and SONIS: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool and SONIS for student data. Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day. Students needing help with SONIS should contact the Campus Software Manager at studenttechsupport@criswell.edu.

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting the office at 214.818.1332 or studentservices@criswell.edu. The Student Services Office also works with local counseling centers to ensure that every student has access to helpful mental health resources. More information is located on the college website at [Criswell College Mental Health Resources](#), and students may contact the Director of Student Services if they have any questions.

Wallace Library: Students can access academic resources and obtain research assistance by contacting or visiting the Wallace Library, which is located on campus. For more information, email the Wallace Library at library@criswell.edu. Offsite login information is available in Canvas in the “Criswell Student Training Course” under “Library Information.”

Tutoring Center: Students are encouraged to consult with tutors to improve and enhance their skills and confidence in any subject matter taught at the college. Tutors have been recommended by the faculty to ensure that the tutor(s) are qualified to serve the student body. Every tutor brings experience and expertise in an effort

to provide the proper resources for the subject matter at hand. To consult with a tutor, students can visit the Tutoring Center located on the second floor in room E203, or schedule an appointment by emailing tutoringcenter@criswell.edu or by calling 214.818.1373.

Course Outline/Calendar

Date	Lecture Topic	Readings	Assignments
Week 1: The Early Church			
Thur, 1/19	Lecture 1: Introduction to the Course		
	Lecture 2: The Early Church and the Apologists	Shelley, chs. 1-4	
Week 2: The Early Church, cont'd			
Thur, 1/26	Lecture 3: The Apologists, cont'd	Shelley, chs. 5-8	<i>Reading and Critical Questions Due</i>
	Lecture 4: The Theologians	Shelley, ch. 10	
Week 3: The Early Church, cont'd			
Thur, 2/2	Lecture 5: The Theologians, cont'd	Shelley, chs. 11-12	<i>Reading and Critical Questions Due</i>
	Lecture 6: Augustine	Shelley, ch. 14	
Week 4: The Medieval Church			
Thur, 2/9	Lecture 7: Monasticism and Missions	Shelley, chs. 13, 17	<i>Reading and Critical Questions Due</i>
	Lecture 8: The Growth of the Papacy	Shelley, chs. 15, 18	
Week 5: The Medieval Church, cont'd			
Thur, 2/16	Lecture 9: The Great Schism	Shelley, ch. 16	<i>Reading and Critical Questions Due</i>
	Lecture 10: Scholasticism and Self-Denial	Shelley, chs. 21-22	
Week 6: The Reformation			
Thur, 2/23	Lecture 11: Church Decline and the Beginnings of Reform	Shelley, chs. 23-24	<i>Reading and Critical Questions Due</i>
	Lecture 12: Martin Luther and German Reform	Shelley, ch. 25	
Week 7: The Reformation, cont'd			
Thur, 3/2	Lecture 13: John Calvin and Swiss Reform	Shelley, ch. 27	<i>Reading and Critical Questions Due</i>
	Lecture 14: The Radical Reformation	Shelley, ch. 26	
Week 8: The Reformation, cont'd			
Thur, 3/9	Lecture 15: The English Reformation	Shelley, ch. 28	<i>Midterm Exam Due (Friday, 3/10, by 11:59pm)</i>
	Lecture 16: Christianity and the New World	Shelley, chs. 30-32	
Spring Break			
Thur, 3/16	Spring Break	No Reading	
Week 9: The Early Modern Church			
Thur, 3/23	Lecture 17: Enlightenment	Shelley, ch. 33	<i>Reading and Critical Questions Due</i>
	Lecture 18: Pietism	Shelley, ch. 34	
Week 10: The Early Modern Church, cont'd			
Thur, 3/30	Lecture 19: Methodism	Shelley, ch. 35; Noll, chs. 1-2	<i>Reading and Critical Questions Due</i>
	Lecture 20: The First Great Awakening	Shelley, ch. 36	
Week 11: The Modern Church			
Thur, 4/6	Lecture 21: Christianity in the Age of Progress	Shelley, chs. 37-38; Noll, ch. 3	<i>Reading and Critical Questions Due</i>
	Lecture 22: The 19C Modern Missions Movement	Shelley, ch. 39	
Week 12: The Modern Church, cont'd			
Thur, 4/13	Lecture 23: The Benevolent Empire and Slavery	Shelley, ch. 40; Noll, ch. 4	<i>Reading and Critical Questions Due</i>
	Lecture 24: Protestant Liberalism	Shelley, ch. 41	
Week 13: The Modern Church, cont'd			
Thur, 4/20	Lecture 25: The Social Gospel	Shelley, ch. 42; Noll, ch. 5	<i>Reading and Critical Questions Due</i>
	Lecture 26: Evangelicalism	Shelley, ch. 44	
Week 14: The Modern Church, cont'd			
Thur, 4/27	Lecture 27: Evangelicalism, cont'd	Noll, chs. 6-8	<i>Reading and Critical Questions Due</i>
	Lecture 28: Pentacostalism	Shelley, ch. 46	
Week 15: The Future Church			
Thur, 5/4	Lecture 29: The Ecumenical Movement	Shelley, ch. 45; Noll, chs. 9-11	<i>Reading and Critical Questions Due</i>
	Lecture 30: Christianity and the Global South	Shelley, ch. 48	<i>Circumstance Paper Due</i>
Week 16: Finals Week			
Thur, 5/11	Finals Week	No Reading	<i>Final Exam Due (Thurs. 5/11, by 11:59pm)</i>