

## **Houston Graduate School of Theology**

CH 510 The Christian Story I

Fall 2018, Thursday 10am-12:30pm

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Office Hours: by appointment only, preferably before or after class

*Houston Graduate School of Theology equips women and men to be ministers and messengers of God's mission of reconciliation through academic excellence, personal transformation, and leadership development*

### **I. Course Description**

A survey of the history of Christianity from first-century beginnings through the thirteenth century, with attention given to salient antecedents, contexts, individuals, movements, and ideas. The course of study includes consideration of general, social, and intellectual historiographies. Three hours.

### **II. Course Learning Outcomes**

Upon completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- A. Summarize and periodize the history of Christianity from the early church to the high Middle Ages (assessed by reading responses and final exam; MDiv-5; MTS-2)
- B. Identify outstanding individuals, significant movements, and important groups (assessed by reading responses and final exam; MDiv-2; MDiv-5; MTS-2)
- C. Identify and articulate significant social, economic, cultural and ideological factors in doctrinal development (assessed by reading quizzes and final exam; MDiv-1; MDiv-5; MTS-1; MTS-2)
- D. Identify and engage primary source material pertinent to historical developments (assessed by directed essay; MDiv-5; MTS-3; MTS-8; MTS-10)
- E. Apply findings from church history to present ministry contexts (assessed by class discussions; MDiv-8; MTS-11)

### **III. Texts and Course Schedule**

#### ***Required Textbooks:***

Clendenin, Daniel B. *Eastern Orthodox Christianity: A Western Perspective 2nd edition*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003.

Coakley, John W., Andrea Sterk. *Readings in World Christian History, Vol. 1: Earliest Christianity to 1453*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2004.

Irvin, Dale T., Scott W. Sunquist. *History of the World Christian Movement. Vol. 1: Earliest Christianity to 1453*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2001.

Olson, Roger E. *Counterfeit Christianity: The Persistence of Errors in the Church*. Nashville: Abingdon, 2015.

## CH 510 The Christian Story, I Class and Reading Schedule

- 23 Aug 2018  
 I: Introduction, Syllabus, Creeds, *World Christianity*  
 II: Judaism in Palestine, Jerusalem Church, Mission to Gentiles, Unity  
 Irvin/Sunquist chapters 1-3; Acts 1-28 (skim)  
 Olson ch 1 (105 pages)  
**\*\*\*Enroll in CH510 on TurnItIn.com: Class ID –15620923, Password: History**
- 30 Aug 2018  
 I: Canonization, Spread and Growing Diversity of Christian Movement  
 II: Early Conflicts with State, Persecution  
 Irvin/Sunquist, ch 4-9; Coakley/Sterk ch 1-11  
 Olson ch 2 (119 pages)
- 6 Sept 2018  
 I: Ecclesiology in Cyprian and Tertullian  
 II: Early Heterodoxy and the Apologists  
 Irvin/Sunquist, ch 10-13; Coakley/Sterk ch 12-17  
 Olson ch 3-4 (114 pages)
- 13 Sept 2018  
 I: Christian Empire  
 II: Augustine and Donatism  
 Irvin/Sunquist, ch 14-15; Coakley/Sterk ch 18 (29 pages)
- 20 Sept 2018  
 I: Who and What was Jesus? Arianism and Nicaea  
 II: Arian Missions and Julian the Apostate  
 Irvin/Sunquist, ch 16; Coakley/Sterk ch 19-22  
 Olson ch 5, pp. 72-78, 82-88  
 Olson ch. 6 (46 pages)
- 27 Sept 2018  
 I: Trinity, but How? Chalcedon and Christological Diversity  
 II: Emergence of non-Chalcedonian churches, and erasure from Western History  
 Irvin/Sunquist, ch 17-19; Coakley/Sterk ch 23-28, 34-35  
 Olson ch. 5, pp. 78-82 (74 pages)
- 4 Oct 2018  
**Directed Primary Source Essay Due**  
 I: Augustine, Pelagius, and Western Theological Tradition  
 II: Justinian, Theodora, and the Role of Women in Church and Society  
 Irvin/Sunquist, ch 20-21; Coakley/Sterk ch 37-43  
 Olson ch 7 (86 pages)
- 11 Oct 2018  
**Midterm Exam**  
 I: Asceticism, Monasticism, Evangelism: Dev. of Medieval Society  
 II: Challenge of Islam, Christian Theology in Islamic lands  
 Irvin/Sunquist, ch 22-23; Coakley/Sterk ch 29-33, 44-45 (85 pages)
- 18 Oct 2018  
 I: Expansion across Asia  
 II: Making of Christendom in the West: Charlemagne  
 Irvin/Sunquist, ch 24-26; Coakley/Sterk ch 46-53 (94 pages)
- 25 Oct 2018  
 I: Western Monasticism

- II: Intro to Eastern Orthodoxy  
Irvin/Sunquist, ch 27-28; Coakley/Sterk ch 55-56  
Clendinen ch 1-2 (66 pages)
- 1 Nov 2018 I: Expansion to the North – Russian Christianity  
II: Iconoclastic Controversy  
Irvin/Sunquist, ch 29; Coakley/Sterk ch 57-58  
Clendinen ch 4 (60 pages)
- 8 Nov 2018 **Primary Source Analysis Essay Due**  
I: Authority – The Investiture Controversy  
II: Christendom on Crusade  
Irvin/Sunquist, ch 30-31; Coakley/Sterk ch 59-63 (42 pages)
- 15 Nov 2018 I: Scholasticism and Intellectual Renewal  
II: Mysticism and Spiritual Renewal  
Irvin/Sunquist, 32-33; Coakley/Sterk ch 64-68 (65 pages)
- 22 Nov 2018 THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO class!)
- 29 Nov 2018 **Personal Reflection Essay Due**  
I: Francis of Assisi and the Mendicant Orders  
II: Eastern Christian Development, Mission Implications  
Irvin/Sunquist, 34-36; Coakley/Sterk ch 69-71 (58)
- 6 Dec 2018 **FINAL EXAM**  
If you are graduating this term, you **MUST** schedule a time to take this exam by 11/29.

*The professor reserves the right to adjust classroom topics as the course develops.*

#### IV. Course Requirements

- A. **Reading and Class Participation (10%):** Students are expected to have read ALL assigned readings prior to the class meeting in which they are to be discussed, as well as to participate in class discussions. You will demonstrate that you have completed the readings by sending ONE question about each assigned reading to the professor by email before the start of class.
- B. **Directed Primary Source Essay (20%):** A theological analysis of excerpts from Pelagius and Augustine. Details listed below in syllabus. The essay should be about 1250 words or 5 pages. **Submit to instructor via TurnItIn.com by start of class Oct. 4.** This essay will be the foundation of our discussion, so late papers cannot be accepted.
- C. **Primary Source Analysis Essay (20%):** This semester you will encounter several primary sources; for one of them you will turn in a written analysis in which you take a critical look at the source and explore its full historical context. In a sense, these assignments simply ask you to read a primary source and write about it. You will find, though, that sitting down to “write about it” leaves you wondering where to begin and what exactly you should write *about*.

By way of guidelines for writing a source analysis, please address at least three of the following questions in your analysis. You are welcome (and encouraged) to ask your own

questions of each primary source and see what answers you can uncover, so long as you also address several of the following questions. Note that you **MUST** use direct quotes from your primary source to illustrate each of your points.

- a. **What historical and theological questions can we use this source to answer? What do we learn about those questions? (Please note: you must address these questions for each source).**
- b. Who is the author(s) of the source? If unknown, what can you generalize about who produced it and how they intended it to be received?
- c. Who is the intended audience of the source?
- d. Can we determine the context in which the source was produced?
- e. How would you characterize the source's purpose? Was it intended to be a call to some kind of action? A way of defining or promoting a doctrine? A prescription for ethical behavior? A message to be dispersed throughout a religious community? Other possibilities?
- f. What possible biases should historians be aware of when they study this source?

Your essays must be about 1250 words, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, with normal margins. **Submit to instructor via TurnItIn.com by start of class Nov. 8.**

- D. **Personal Reflection Essay (10%):** Students will describe one – and only one – significant new or changed perception gained in the course, explaining what they understood previously and why, what they understand now and why, which texts and lectures led to the change, and what implications this change might have for ministry. This essay should be about 1250 words or 5 pages. **Submit to instructor via TurnItIn.com by start of class Nov. 29.**
- E. **Midterm Examination (20%):** Students will complete a 1-hour examination consisting entirely of essay questions, to be written in class on computers. Questions will be drawn from the first half of the semester of reading and discussion. Students will be able to select questions from a much longer list of questions; so that they will most likely be tested on the subjects they enjoyed the most. If a student is not able to secure a computer for the day of the exam, speak to the professor beforehand to make alternate arrangements.
- F. **Final Examination (20%):** Students will complete a 1-hour examination consisting entirely of essay questions, to be written in class on computers. Questions will be drawn from the second half of the semester of reading and discussion. Students will be able to select questions from a much longer list of questions; so that they will most likely be tested on the subjects they enjoyed the most. If a student is not able to secure a computer for the day of the exam, speak to the professor beforehand to make alternate arrangements. Students who are graduating in December **MUST** schedule a time to take the exam the week before the end of class.
- G. **Student Workload Expectations**  
 Class time – 45 hours  
 Textbook Reading: Irvin/Sunquist: 475 @ 20/hr = 24 hours  
 Primary source reading: Coakley/Sterk: 392 @ 15/hr = 26 hours  
 Roger Olson reading: 120 @ 20/hr = 6 hours  
 Clendenin reading: 60 @ 20/hr = 3 hours  
 Augustine directed essay: 5pp @ 2 hrs/pg = 10 hours  
 Primary source analysis essay: 5pp @ 2hrs/pg = 10 hours

Personal Reflection essay: 5pp @ 1 hr/pg = 5 hours

Midterm Exam: 5 hours

Final Exam: 5 hours

**TOTAL = 139 hours**

**V. Course Grading Scale**

A	100-94	B	83-86	C	73-76
A-	90-93	B-	80-82	C-	70-72
B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D	60-69

Assessment (% of grade for each assignment):

Directed Essay: 20%

Primary Source Analysis: 20%

Personal Reflection Essay: 10%

Reading and Participation: 10%

Midterm Exam: 20%

Final Exam: 20%

Explanation of Grades:

Students should not expect the highest grade for merely meeting the requirements of any assignment. All submitted work will be evaluated according to the following criteria: content, critical thinking skills, organization, communication, documentation, grammar, spelling, style, and form.

An “A” paper is exceptional in all of the above criteria. The writing style engages the reader. Organization is characterized by coherence and logic. The text is marked by originality of ideas and outstanding critical reflection. Documentation is plentiful and accurate. The student not only thoroughly answers each question or addresses each topic; he or she provides a convincing presentation that explores all of the implications related to the question or topic.

A “B” paper is technically competent in all of the above criteria. The writing style is clear and reasonable, and the writing is generally effective without rising to sustained excellence. Each question or topic is covered completely and the student engages in above average critical reflection and commentary.

A “C” paper represents competent but underdeveloped work. C papers are adequately but obviously organized, and the argument tends toward oversimplification without being implausible. The student fails to answer all of the questions or has failed to cover the topic completely. Errors are sprinkled throughout. In some C papers, excellent ideas are marred by poor presentation. In other C papers, the organization, structure, and grammar are not flawed, but the ideas and how they are developed need work.

A “D” paper demonstrates some effort on the author’s part but is too marred by technical problems or flaws in thinking and development of ideas to be considered competent work.

An “F” paper has received a failing grade, usually reserved for work that demonstrates minimal effort on the author’s part (adapted from Barbara Gross Davis, *Tools for Teaching*).

## VI. Classroom-related Academic Policies

- A. Regular attendance and regular submission of assignments on due dates in the syllabus is expected. The following guidelines have been approved for inclusion in all HGST syllabi and reflect standards for all courses:

Fall/Spring semester 15-session course - 3-absence maximum

Summer term 8-session course - 1-absence maximum (equals 4 hours).

6-session hybrid - 1-absence maximum

4-session hybrid - 0-absence maximum

If a student reaches the designated number of absences, the student will no longer be allowed to stay in the class. The student does have the opportunity to appeal to the Academic Dean and should assume responsibility for scheduling that meeting as soon as possible.

- B. Assignments are due via Turnitin at the beginning of the class for which they are scheduled. During the semester, late assignments will be penalized one letter grade per week late.
- C. Turnitin.com
1. All written assignments are subject to required submission to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) to check for originality and style. The assignments that are required for submission will be described in the syllabus.
  2. Students will create an account at [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com). After doing so, the student will join the course page with the code and password supplied by the instructor. A list of assignments and due dates will be available on the course page.
  3. Students will submit assignments by the due date and time and will be required to submit the assignments via email to the instructor as well.
- D. Electronic Equipment Usage in Classrooms
- It is expected that students will use technology (cell phones, laptop computers, iPads, etc.) during classes only for the purposes of class work. Therefore, students should turn off cell phones and refrain from texting and using laptop computers during classes except for the purposes of taking notes or doing research specifically authorized by the course instructor. Students who have emergency needs not covered by this policy must ask for an exception from the course instructor.
- E. Extensions and Incompletes (Master's Students) – At the discretion of the Instructor for first extension requests, a student may request and apply for an extension on all required assignments that are not completed before the end of the semester or term, subject to a half-letter grade or more reduction on the final grade (e.g., A to A-; B to B-). If an extension is granted, the instructor will record a grade of "I" (Incomplete). Deadlines for first extensions are as follows: Fall Semester – January 30; Spring Semester – June 15; Summer Term – September 15. Assignments not submitted by the deadline will not count toward the final grade, and the student may receive a failing grade (F) for the course.

An additional extension may be granted by the Academic Dean with the agreement of the instructor of record only after a student has submitted the second extension request form prior to the first extension deadline. Deadlines for second extensions are as follows: Fall Semester – February 28; Spring Semester – July 15; Summer Term – October 30. Assignments not submitted by the deadline will not count toward the final grade, and the student may receive a failing grade (F) for the course.

F. Plagiarism is presenting the work of another person as one's own without giving proper credit for the use of the information. Students must not quote or paraphrase books, articles, essays, or Internet sites without giving proper credit to the author(s). Students should guard against plagiarism by crediting the original author through use of proper citations. Internet plagiarism is a particularly easy and tempting form of intellectual theft. Cutting and pasting sentences and paragraphs from the Internet without citations is plagiarism. Failure to cite Internet sources is plagiarism. Any student found guilty of plagiarism is subject to a range of consequences as outlined below:

1. If a faculty member suspects plagiarism, the instructor will investigate. If suspicions are confirmed, the faculty member will present the evidence to the Academic Dean as a record of the offense. If the Academic Dean concurs with the allegations, the following procedures should be implemented as applicable:
  - The faculty member may discuss the offense with the student following consultation with the Academic Dean, but the student will meet with the Academic Dean.
  - For a first offense, the faculty member, in consultation with the Academic Dean, may give opportunity for a rewrite of the assignment or may assign a grade of zero for the plagiarized assignment.
  - For a particularly egregious case of plagiarism on a major assignment, the consequences could result in automatic failure of the course.
2. The student may appeal the above-mentioned decisions of the faculty member in writing to the Academic Dean. The second confirmed offense will result in expulsion from school. The student will be notified by a letter from the Academic Dean. His or her only opportunity for appeal will be to the President in writing. The President's decision will be final.

#### G. Library Usage

A student's ability to get the most out of library resources will enhance the possibility of earning a high grade in this class. Therefore, students should consider using, in addition to the HGST library, other academic resources in Houston. For information on Library Services, please download the Library Handbook from the HGST website.

## CH510: GUIDELINES for DIRECTED ESSAY #1

This essay is a theological analysis of excerpts from Pelagius and Augustine. It should be about 1250 words or 5 pages. You should not consult or cite ANY Internet sources for this essay. There is no need for research beyond the assigned readings. The purpose of this essay is for you to read these primary sources carefully, think through them, understand them, and then answer all three assigned questions in your own words, supported by direct quotes drawn ONLY from the assigned readings. **Submit to instructor via Turnitin.com by start of class Oct. 4.** This essay will be the foundation of our discussion that day, so late papers cannot be accepted.

On the basis of the readings listed below, answer these questions:

**(1) How does Pelagius characterize salvation and the Christian life?  
What roles are played by Christ, grace, nature, or free will?**

**(2) How does Augustine characterize salvation and the Christian life?  
What roles are played by Christ, grace, nature, or free will?**

**(3) How might Augustine counter the assertions of Pelagius?  
How might Pelagius counter the assertions of Augustine?**

### **PRIMARY READINGS FOR DIRECTED ESSAY:**

- Pelagius, “Letter to Demetrias,” in Coakley/Sterk #41, pp. 206-210.
- Augustine, “On Nature and Grace,” in Coakley/Sterk #42, pp. 210-213.
- (from Book 10, ch. XXIX, section 40 through Book 10, ch. XXXVII, section 62, especially section 45) (any version is fine, but a public domain version is at <http://faculty.georgetown.edu/jod/augustine/conf.pdf>, and the relevant sections run here from p. 142-151)

**SECONDARY READINGS**, to be consulted only after you analyze the primaries.

- Olson, *Counterfeit Christianity*, ch. 7, pp. 106-120
- Irvin/Sunquist, pp. 231-234.

**SOME PRELIMINARY CONSIDERATIONS:** In writing any essay, it is crucial that you understand the question before you try to formulate an answer. If you are still unclear about what is required after reading this prospectus, please ask your instructor for further clarification.

There are many questions, which could be addressed in the writing of this essay. In general, I would like you to consider the crucial theological differences between Augustine and Pelagius. These include, most obviously, the question as to how we are saved — that is, who initiates salvation, what is entailed, what do we contribute, what might hinder us along the way, and (somewhat more abstractly) what does salvation as a process or as a state “look” like? But there is another, related dimension to this consideration of soteriology, namely, Who is Christ, and what does Christ do?

As you read these documents, bear in mind that the *Confessions* were published well before Pelagius arrived on the scene of Roman and North African Christianity. Consequently, Pelagius had Augustine at a disadvantage, in that he had Augustine’s work at his disposal and was free to exploit the unguarded statements in the *Confessions*. In fact, Augustine’s first awareness of Pelagius may have been as a “critical reviewer” of Augustine’s controversial and “best-selling” autobiography. For, sometime in the early years of the fifth century, Pelagius is known to have taken great offense at words found in the tenth book of the *Confessions*: “Strengthen me that I may have this power. Grant what you command, and command what you will” (*Confessions* 10.31). In context, this is a tender passage, truly a

confession, for Augustine did not write this work with polemic intent. Indeed, it is unlikely that Augustine could have anticipated Pelagius's position or arguments in order to defend himself in advance. Augustine probably knew something of Pelagius's ascetic reputation from their common friends or from when he passed through North Africa after the sack of Rome. But Augustine's defense mechanism did not fully kick in until some of the Christians in Carthage began echoing the theology of Pelagius around the year 411. And then the lid blew off.

Despite the degree of chronological mismatch between Pelagius's letter to Demetrias in 413 and Augustine's autobiography (written 397-401), it is likely that some anticipations of Augustine's mature anti-Pelagian position can be found in the *Confessions*. By the same token, part of Pelagius's letter may well be intended as a rebuke to what he saw as the "whiny" theology of Augustine and his ilk, and Pelagius may well have seen the cause he pleaded to Demetrias as no less than a struggle for her soul.