

**HRS 126/HIST 126 (GE Area C4)  
FALL 2009  
DR. NYSTROM  
2 SECTIONS IN ARC 1011 (Mondays 5:30-8:20)  
2 ONLINE SECTIONS**

***CONTACT INFORMATION***

Office hours: MW 11-12 and 4-5 in Mendocino 2024  
Office phone: 278-5334 Email: [nystromb@csus.edu](mailto:nystromb@csus.edu) (do not use SacCT mail)

***COURSE TITLE***

“History of Christianity to the Reformation”

***COURSE DESCRIPTION***

Christianity from Jesus to Martin Luther. Emphasis on the evolution of Christian thought and institutions and the relationship of the Church to popular culture and secular powers.

***LEARNING OBJECTIVES***

Students who complete HRS/HIST 126 will: understand the general outlines of the history of Christianity from its beginnings to the Reformation; be able to describe the influence of ancient and medieval culture on the development of Christian ideas and institutions; and be able to identify the contributions of women, heretics, and thinkers representing both Judaism and Islam to the development of Christianity.

***TEXTS***

B. and D. Nystrom, The History of Christianity: An Introduction  
W. Placher, A History of Christian Theology  
Supplementary Readings (posted on SacCT)

The Nystrom book is a general introduction to the history of Christianity. It deals with intellectual, doctrinal, political, social, and institutional developments and the relationship of Christianity to the historical and cultural settings in which it grew. The Placher book focuses more narrowly on the history of Christian thought, one of the important themes in this course. The Supplementary Readings highlight specific features of the history of Christianity. Each of the Supplementary Readings is introduced by a headnote (in bold type) written by me.

The outlines of the Nystrom and Placher books are not in perfect agreement. There may be times when you find yourself reading in Placher about a topic that has not yet come up, or has already come up, in lecture and/or in the Nystrom book. If this happens, relax and know that all is well. There are always different ways in which to approach a subject, and you will not suffer as a result.

Are the readings important? Yes. The readings response quizzes are based entirely on the Supplementary Readings, many multiple-choice questions on the midterm and final will be based on the readings, and it will be difficult to earn a score in the A-B range on the essay portions of the midterm and final exams without making effective use of the readings.

## ***WEEKLY SCHEDULE OF TOPICS***

Week 1: Introduction; Jewish, Greek, and Roman Backgrounds to Christianity  
Week 2: Labor Day  
Weeks 3-4: Jesus and the New Testament  
Weeks 5-6: Persecution, Martyrs and Martyrdom, Early Christian Writers, Monasticism  
Weeks 7-8: Theological Issues, Councils and Creeds  
Week 9: Midterm  
Weeks 10-11: The Church in the Early Middle Ages: The Western and Byzantine Worlds  
Weeks 12-13: The Church in the High Middle Ages, Reform movements, the Papal Monarchy  
Weeks 14-15: The Church in the Late Middle Ages: Mystics, the Renaissance, the Orthodox Church and the Fall of Byzantium, and a peek at the Reformation

## ***GRADES***

Your course grade will be based on your performance on the readings response quizzes, the midterm exam, and the final exam.

The two readings response quizzes (10 points each) are timed quizzes in which you will respond to one to four questions based exclusively on the Supplemental Readings. Readings response quizzes will be taken via SacCT and you will have a period of 48 hours in which to do each. I will make few, if any, comments on readings response quizzes. Grades will reflect the overall quality of your answers (i.e., I won't assign scores for each answer on quizzes with more than one question).

The midterm and final exams will consist of two parts: a multiple choice section (40 one-point questions) and an essay section (60 points).

You must come to campus to take the midterm and final exams. In addition to the regularly-scheduled exam sessions scheduled for ARC 1011, arrangements will be made for one extra exam session for the midterm and one for the final. You will be able to take the midterm at the testing center, which offers this service in the evening only. The alternative final exam session will most likely in the afternoon on Friday of finals week.

Since you will have several options for taking the readings response quizzes, midterm, and final exams, there will be no make-ups.

Course grades will be assigned as follows:

A	93-100% of the 220 points possible for the course	C-	70-72%
A-	90-92%	D+	68-69%
B+	88-89%	D	63-67%
B	83-87%	D-	60-62%
B-	80-82%	F	59% and below
C+	78-79%		
C	73-77%		

Please do not tell me at any point during the semester what grade you want or need.

## ***SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND EXAMS***

### **August 31-September 21:**

Read Nystrom, chapters 1 and 2; Placher, chapters 1-3; and the following Supplementary Readings:

Jesus' "Sermon on the Mount" (Matthew 5-7)  
Jesus' "Parable of the Good Samaritan" (Luke 10:25-37)  
The Incarnation of the "Word" (John 1-18)  
The Descent of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost (Acts 2)  
Paul on Faith and Life in the Spirit (Galatians 5)

### **September 21-October 5:**

Read Nystrom, chapter 3; and the following Supplementary Readings:

The Conversion of Constantine (Eusebius, *Life of Constantine* 27-31)  
The Persecution of Christians (Eusebius, *Church History* 8)  
Constantine Finds Constantinople (Sozomon, *Church History* 2.3)  
The Martyrdom of a Bishop (*Martyrdom of Polycarp*)  
A Christian Response to Criticism of Christianity (Origen, from *Against Celsus*)  
A Bridge-Burning Attitude toward Pagan Culture (Tertullian, *On the Prescription of Heretics* 7)  
A Bridge-Building Attitude toward Pagan Culture (Clement of Alexandria, *Miscellanies* 5)  
Early Monasticism in Egypt (Palladius, selections from *The Lausaic History*)  
A Rule for Western Monasteries (excerpts from the *Rule* of St. Benedict of Nursia)

**October 7-9: Readings Response Quiz #1 (10 points) on all Supplementary Readings assigned above. Test period: October 7 (8:00 a.m.) to October 9 (8:00 a.m.)**

**October 9-19:**

Read Nystrom, chapter 4; Placher, chapters 4-6, 8; and the following Supplementary Readings:

Advice from a Bishop (Ignatius, *Letter to the Trallians*)

Athanasius Against the Arians (Athanasius, *First Discourse Against the Arians* 2.5-6, 9-10)

How the One God is Three (Gregory of Nyssa, from *On "Not Three Gods"*)

The Nicene Creed (381)

The Definition of Chalcedon (451)

Celebration of the Eucharist (Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 23)

Augustine on Human Nature (Augustine, *Confessions* 2.4)

The Nestorian Poetry of Mar Narsai

**October 26: Midterm (100 points) on all lectures and readings assigned thus far.**

**Additional testing times to be announced.**

**October 26-November 9:**

Read Nystrom, chapter 5; Placher, chapters 7, 9; and the following Supplementary Readings:

Pope Leo I and the "Petrine Doctrine" (Pope Leo I, *Sermons* 3)

Pope Gelasius I on Spiritual and Temporal Power (Pope Gelasius I, *Letter to the Emperor Anastasius*)

John of Damascus Defends the Veneration of Icons (John of Damascus, from *On Holy Images* and *The Fount of Knowledge*)

Pseudo-Dionysius on the Via Negativa (Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Mystical Theology* 2)

Tales of the Virgin (selections from the sermons of Jacques de Vitry, Étienne de Bourbon, and Caesarius of Heisterbach)

Tales of Relics (selections from the sermons of Jacques de Vitry, Étienne de Bourbon, and Caesarius of Heisterbach)

Hesychasm and the Divine Light (Symeon the New Theologian, from *The Discourses*)

The Seven Sacraments (excerpt from the *Decree for the Armenians* issued by the Council of Florence, 1439)

**November 9-23:**

Read Nystrom, chapter 6; Placher, chapter 10; and the following Supplementary Readings:

Foundation Charter for the Abbey of Cluny

Monastic Life at Clairvaux (William of St. Thierry, *A Description of the Monastery at Clairvaux*)

Pope Gregory VII: Declaration of Papal Prerogatives (Pope Gregory VII, *Dictatus Papae*)  
Innocent III and Papal Power (Pope Innocent III, *Letters and Decrees*)  
The Speech that Launched the First Crusade (Robert the Monk, *History of Jerusalem*)  
Two Accounts of the Siege of Jerusalem (Fulcher of Chartres, from *History of the Expedition to Jerusalem*, and Raymond d'Aguliers, *History of the Franks who Attacked Jerusalem*)  
Anselm's Ontological Argument for the Existence of God (Anselm of Canterbury, *Proslogion*)  
Thomas Aquinas' Proofs for the Existence of God (Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, part 1, question 2)

**November 25-27: Readings Response Quiz #2 (10 points) on all Supplementary Readings assigned since the Midterm. Test period: November 25 (8:00 a.m.) to November 27 (8:00 a.m.)**

**November 27-December 7:**

Read Nystrom, chapters 7 and 8; Placher, chapters 11 and 12; and the following Supplementary Readings:

Two Accounts of Medieval Heresy (Caesarius of Heisterbach, *Dialogue on Miracles* 5.20-2)  
Limiting the Power of the Papacy (Marsiglio of Padua, *Defender of Peace*)  
St. Francis of Assisi, *Canticle of the Sun*  
The Testament of St. Francis (St. Francis of Assisi, *Testament*)  
Pilgrimage to Jerusalem (Canon Pietro Casola, *Pilgrimage to Jerusalem in the Year 1494*)  
A Troubadour Criticizes the Avignon Papacy (Raimon de Cornet)  
Eastern Complaints Against the Western Church (Patriarch Photius of Constantinople, *Encyclical Letter to the Archiepiscopal Sees of the East*)  
Martin Luther's Ninety-Five Theses

**December 14: Final Exam (100 points); multiple-choice questions based exclusively on readings and lectures since the midterm, essay portion on all lectures and readings for the course.**

**Additional testing time to be announced.**

***ATTENDANCE***

No matter which section you are enrolled in, you may attend lectures in ARC 1011, watch lectures online, or both. There is no attendance policy. I will not take roll.

## **GE WRITING REQUIREMENT**

General Education Area C4 requirements include 1500 words of “formal writing.” It is expected that this standard will be met on the essay portions of the midterm and final exams and on the readings response quizzes.

## **PREPARING FOR THE MIDTERM AND FINAL ESSAYS**

What are the issues and topics I really want you to understand? Which issues and topics are going to be covered on the essay portions of the midterm and final exams?

You will be prepared for the essay questions on the midterm and final exams if you can demonstrate a knowledge of what is presented about each of the following questions and issues in lectures and assigned readings and can write about them clearly and thoughtfully.

### **Prior to the Midterm**

What steps did the Christian movement take to define orthodoxy in the ancient period? Why was it necessary to define what orthodox Christianity was and wasn't?

Christians and Christianity often met with hostility from the Roman state and from pagan culture in general. Why was this the case? What forms did such hostility take? How did Christians respond to it?

Who were the major Christian thinkers during the ancient period? What issues did they address and what did they have to say about them?

You should be able to look at a printed text of the Nicene Creed and the Definition of Chalcedon and explain how each addressed significant theological issues.

Be able to describe the teachings of the following: Gnosticism, Montanism, Marcionism, Arianism, Apollinarism, Monarchianism, Monophysitism, Nestorianism. Why were the teachings of these groups considered dangerous by the emerging mainstream church? How did it respond to the dangers posed by these groups?

### **Prior to the Final**

What claims did the bishops of Rome (popes) make about their authority in late antiquity and the Middle Ages? How did they try to enforce those claims? Describes some of the major conflicts between the Western church (Roman Catholic Church) and secular rulers/states and explain the role of papal authority in each.

Reformers and reform movements were often at work in the Western church during the Middle Ages. Identify and describe the aims and activities of the major reforming groups and individuals at work between 600 and 1550.

What was Scholasticism? Describe the thought of Anselm of Canterbury, Peter Abelard, Thomas Aquinas, and William of Ockham.

Compare the Eastern (Orthodox) and Western (Roman Catholic) churches in the medieval period, noting their major similarities and differences. Why did these churches come into conflict? When and how did the final break/schism between them occur?

What were the essential features of Martin Luther's thought? In what ways did he address popular concerns in the late Middle Ages? In what ways did he depart from traditional Roman Catholic thought and practice? Why were these departures considered unwelcome or threatening by the Roman Catholic Church?

## ***ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES***

HIST/HRS 126 is a lecture/discussion course with no prerequisites. It may be used to satisfy requirements for both the History and Humanities and Religious Studies majors. It can also be used to satisfy the General Education Category C4 requirement.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. See the campus policy on academic dishonesty at [www.csus.edu/admbus/umannual/UMA00150.htm](http://www.csus.edu/admbus/umannual/UMA00150.htm).

Any plagiarized assignment will receive a grade of zero.

No electronic devices are to be used in class.

Students who leave the room during exams will not be allowed to return. If this policy creates a documentable difficulty for you, please make necessary arrangements with the Testing Center.

Make-up exams may be scheduled only for compelling and documented reasons. Weddings, elective surgery, family reunions, and the like are not compelling reasons.

A grade of "Incomplete" may be assigned at a student's request if, in the words of the University catalog, "required coursework has not been completed and evaluated during the course due to unforeseen but fully justified reasons."

Students with disabilities who require special arrangements for examinations should contact me during the first week of the semester.