Spec Topics-Religious Studies - RS 3330 – 001
The History of Christianity
100% Online
Virtual Office Hours: (see “Instructor Availability” and “Instructor Response Time” below)
Instructor: Beau Pihlaja, MDiv, ThM, PhD (Candidate)
Phone Number: 
Email: Use Blackboard email (bspihlaja@utep.edu in emergencies)

Course Description

Christianity effectively began as a small sect of Second Temple Judaism. The result of the extraordinary events surrounding the life and death of Jesus Christ, it grew to become one of the most powerful religions in the world. It has shaped the last two thousand years in profound ways, from the most personal levels to the grandest halls of political power. It has endured persecution, schism, and ultimately its rise to power. This course will give an overview of the history of Christian belief and practice from the faith’s birth beneath the Roman Empire through the modern period. The course will examine the life of Jesus Christ and early Christian communities, tracing the history through the various eras of the faith’s development, expansion, internal conflicts, confrontations with secularism and other world religions, and growing diversity.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students should be able to:
1. Trace the major events in Christian history,
2. Name the major expressions within that history (Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodox, Protestantism, etc.) and articulate the distinctive beliefs and practices of each,
3. Name the major figures within that history along with their most significant contributions to the faith,
4. Articulate the major issues that faced Christians in various expressions throughout each period in its history, and
5. Articulate, in a preliminary way, how that history has shaped and is shaping our present world.
### Week 1

**Monday-Sunday (10/17-10/23)**

Welcome, Introduction to The Study of Christianity, The beginnings of Christianity

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<th>View “Instructor Welcome”</th>
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<td>[Optional] Set up Virtual Private Network (VPN)</td>
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<tr>
<td>View Prezi: “Introduction to the Study of the History of Christianity”</td>
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**Textbook Reading:** MacCulloch, Introduction, pp. 1-15, Part I: A Millennium of Beginnings (1000 BCE-100CE), (pp. 19-73), Part II: “A Crucified Messiah (4 BCE-100 CE),” (pp. 77-111).

**Quiz 1 (On Blackboard) Due Sunday 10/23 11:59pm**

**Primary Source Readings:** Luke 1-4, Matthew 5-7, Mark 14-16, Matthew 28, Acts 1-2, 9-11, 1 Corinthians 15, Galatians 2-3, Revelation 20-22

**Primary Source Discussion** *(Post individual responses by Friday 10/21 11:59pm, replies/comments due by Sunday 10/23 11:59pm)*

**Look ahead to/Be working on**

- Individual Research Paper
- [Optional] Extra Credit Assignment

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### Week 2

**Mon.-Sun. (10/24-10/30)**

Development and Defense Under Persecution, From Toleration to Power

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<td>Quiz 2 (On Blackboard) Due Sunday 10/30, 11:59pm</td>
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**Primary Source Reading:** Acts 7 (Stephen’s martyrdom), The Didache, The Gospel of Peter, Martyrdom of Perpetua, Pliny’s Letter to Trajan, Conversion of Constantine, Edict of Toleration

**Primary Source Discussion** *(Post individual responses by Friday 10/28,*}
| Week 3 | Mon.-Sun. (10/31-11/6) |
| Creeds and Councils, Defining Orthodoxy, Challenge of Islam |
| **Quiz 3 (On Blackboard) Due Sunday 11/6 11:59pm** |
| **Primary Source Reading:** Apostles Creed, Nicene Creed, Chalcedon, Excerpt from Qu’ran |
| **Primary Source Discussion** (Post individual responses by Friday 11/4, 11:59pm, replies/comments due by Sunday 11/6 11:59 pm) |
| Video response to discussion from instructor |
| Confirm Topic of Paper with instructor |

| Week 4 | Mon.-Sun. (11/7-11/13) |
| East-West Schism, Faith in the Middle Ages, Development of Late Medieval Catholicism |
Pope?” (pp. 363-395), 12 “A Church for All People? (1100-1300)” (pp. 396-423)

Quiz 4 (On Blackboard) **Due Sunday 11/13 11:59pm**

Primary Source Reading: Excerpt from Augustine’s *Confessions* (“Conversion,” Book 8, Excerpt from Benedict’s rule [Chapter 5, 6, 7, 39, 40, 48], Excerpt from Aquinas “The Nature and Extent of Sacred Doctrine (Ten Articles)”

Primary Source Discussion (Post individual responses by Friday 11/11, 11:59pm, replies/comments due by Sunday 11/13 11:59pm)

Video response to discussion from instructor

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**Look ahead to/Be working on**

Individual Research Paper

[Optional] Extra Credit Assignment

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**Week 5**

Mon.-Sun. (11/14-11/20)

The Reformation

Textbook Reading: MacCulloch, 16. “Perspectives on the True Church” (pp.551-603), 17. “A House Divided (1517-1660),” (pp.604-654)

Quiz 5 (On Blackboard) **Due Sunday 11/20 pm**

Primary Source Reading: Luther’s “95 Theses,” Calvin “Prefatory Address” to *Institutes*, Anabaptist text: “The Dordrecht Confession of Faith,” Chapters. 14, 15, 16

Primary Source Discussion (Post individual responses by Friday 11/18, 11:59pm, replies/comments due by Sunday 11/20 pm)

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**Look ahead to/Be working on**

Individual Research Paper

[Optional] Extra Credit Assignment

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**Week 6**

Mon.-Sun. (11/21-11/27)

Development of Protestantism, Christianity and Enlightenment
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<tr>
<th><strong>Textbook Reading:</strong> MacCulloch, 20. “Protestant Awakenings (1600-1800)” (pp. 716-765), 21. “Enlightenment: Ally or Enemy? (1492-1815)” (pp. 769-865)</th>
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<td><strong>Quiz 6 (On Blackboard) Due Sunday 11/27 11:59pm</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Primary Source Reading:</strong> Kant, “What is Enlightenment?,” Johnathan Edwards, “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God”</td>
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<td><strong>Primary Source Discussion</strong> (Post individual responses by Friday 11/25, 11:59pm, replies/comments due by Sunday 11/27 11:59pm)</td>
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**Look ahead to/Be working on**
- Individual writing project
- Group project

**Week 7**
- Mon.-Saturday (11/28-12/3)
- Global Growth/Ecumenical Movement/The Future of the Faith

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<th><strong>Textbook Reading:</strong> MacCulloch, 23 “To Make the World Protestant (1700-1914),” 24. “Not Peace but a Sword (1914-60),” 25 “Culture Wars (1960-Present),” (pp. 866-1016)</th>
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<td><strong>Quiz 7 (On Blackboard) Saturday 12/3, 11:59pm</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Primary Source Reading:</strong> Barmen Declaration, <em>Gaudium et Spes</em> (“Preface” and “Introductory Statement: The Situation of Men in the Modern World”), The Lima Report (WCC Statement, paragraphs on Baptism: 15, 16; Eucharist: 28, 32; and Ministry: 52)</td>
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<td><strong>Primary Source Discussion</strong> (Post individual responses by Wednesday 11/30 11:59pm, replies/comments due by Saturday 12/3, 11:59pm)</td>
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<td><strong>Paper Final Draft Due Last Day of Class (12/3)</strong></td>
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**Look ahead to**

*Time off! You’re done!*
Teaching Method
The teaching method for this course, given its online nature, will involve a combination of guided readings and group discussions, and individual direction/instruction via email or chat. The online nature of the course will also require students to take responsibility to do the assigned individual and group work and seek help in a timely manner for things they do not understand or when issues arise.

Course Materials
Main Textbook

Available in paperback on Amazon for $17.76 as of October 5, 2016. Will also be available in UTEP’s bookstore. It is also available in Kindle format but reviewers have complained about issues with the images in the electronic version.

Primary Source Readings
Supplemental readings will be made available in class via open access resources.

Technology Requirements
As this is a 100% online course it is imperative that you make sure your computer’s software and browsers are capable of handling the technical demands of working extensively online. Incompatible software or outdated hardware will not be an excuse for unfinished or failure to submit work.

Make sure you are using compatible and up to date versions of:

- Adobe Acrobat/Flash Player
- Java
- QuickTime
- Windows Media Player

Course Requirements Descriptions

Weekly Reading/Content Quiz (735pts)

Each week you will need to view the introductory lecture, complete the assigned reading portion from MacCulloch, and take the quiz associated with that section. Quizzes are open book.

Quiz 1: 100pts
Quiz 2: 125pts
Quiz 3: 70pts
Quiz 4: 110pts
Quiz 5: 105pts
Quiz 6: 115pts
Quiz 7: 110pts

Weekly Primary Source Reading(s)/Group Discussion (350pts)

Each week you will be assigned primary source readings from a specific period in the history of Christianity. You will be assigned discussion prompts that you will need to respond to and post to the discussion board. You will then need to respond to your assigned colleague’s posts, discussing these readings and questions with one another. Brief follow up/feedback lecture videos from instructor will be available after the end of this discussion period.

  - Discussion 1: 50pts
  - Discussion 2: 50pts
  - Discussion 3: 50pts
  - Discussion 4: 50pts
  - Discussion 5: 50pts
  - Discussion 6: 50pts
  - Discussion 7: 50pts

Individual Research Paper (275pts)

As part of this course you will need to complete a research paper about an event or person of your choosing from the history of Christianity. You will need to confirm your topic with the instructor prior to the midway point of the semester, to ensure the topic is relevant and doable. Further instructions will be given in class.

  - Paper Topic Proposal: 50pts
  - Research Paper Plagiarism Check: Pass/Fail
  - Individual Paper Final Draft: 225pts

Extra Credit Assignment (70pts added to final grade)

For extra credit you may attend the worship service of an expression of Christianity you would not otherwise have attended. If you do not identify as Christian, any type of worship service is an option for you. If you identify as Christian, you need to attend an expression that is not in the tradition you normally worship (e.g., Roman Catholic → Eastern Orthodox, etc.). Further instructions will be offered in class.
Grading
A=1360-1224
B=1223-1088
C=1087-952
D=951-816
F= 815.5-0

Suggested Procedure for Completing Work
I would recommend you complete each session in Blackboard in the following manner:

- Read any posted announcements
- Check your email and reply as necessary
- Review the course calendar to double check daily/weekly requirements
- View weekly introduction presentation
- Complete your next weekly textbook reading; if ready, complete quiz
- Complete your next primary source reading, if ready, post individual responses to discussion prompt, respond to colleagues as appropriate on weekly discussion board
- Spend a little time each week working on your Individual Research Paper, thinking about the topic/person you would like to study more about as well as write about. Do some research using the library resources, as the due date nears, begin drafting and revising the paper
- Look ahead to upcoming requirements and plan ahead . . .

At any point: feel free to email me with questions.

Expected workload
In a normal face-to-face course the workload expectation would be 3 hours a week for every one hour in class (i.e., 9 hours a week for a 3 credit hour class for a total of 12 hours weekly workload). Since our course is 100% online what would normally be “class time” is applied to the mini-lectures, readings, quizzes, group discussions, and writing the research paper. Under normal circumstances, one could expect to spend between 10-12 hours a week reading, responding to colleagues in discussions and working on assignments.

Because this is an accelerated, SEVEN WEEK course this process is compressed even further. It is expected that you will adjust your focus and amount of time spent on the course to match the requirements. The good news? It will be over in seven weeks 😊!

This is of course an average guideline and the amount of time required for work on any given week may differ significantly from student to student.

Policies and Procedures
Contacting Instructor
Emails will only be accepted through Blackboard. In the event of a system outage or other emergency I can be reached at bspihlaja@utep.edu or by phone at (915) 996-2310/(915) 747-8444.

- Include a subject line with some indication of what the email is about
- Always remember to include your “signature,” your first and last name.

I will do my best to respond to emails during posted online office hours or throughout the day as possible until 5pm on weekdays.

As a matter of policy I can only guarantee response to emails, calls, requests for virtual meetings within 24-48hrs. But in practice I am quite available and usually will be able to respond quickly (same day) to questions, requests for clarification, etc. especially by email. If you'd like to chat on Moodle using the instant message or Collaborate tool, let me know several times that would work for you. Please include your local time zone with your availability (e.g., EST, MST, CST, PST) so we are sure to be online at the same time. Expect questions posed on the weekend to be answered no earlier than Monday of the next week. So plan ahead. Though don’t hesitate to send the text of email on Saturday/Sunday. If I am available, I WILL answer it ASAP.

I will not accept assignments through email without prior arrangements.

Attendance
As this is a 100% online course: Failure to complete any assignment on time will constitute an “absence.” If a requirement area has more than one reading or requirement, completion of one part of the assignment will count as participation for that area and you will not be counted absent (though you will be penalized for not completing the assignment).

If you are absent from class (as defined above) more than 4 times before the drop deadline for the semester [see: UTEP Academic Calendar] the instructor will have the right to withdraw you from the course and you will receive a “W.” You are, however, still responsible for withdrawing yourself from the course. Failure to do so may result in you receiving an “F” for the course.

If you are absent from class (as defined above) more than 4 times after the semester’s drop deadline, the instructor has the right to fail (“F”) you for the course.

PLEASE NOTE: As this is an online course, participation is all the more crucial. You will still be responsible for completing assignments (individual and group discussions) on time. There is not less work with an online class only more work you must do on your own. Please be aware of this and plan accordingly.
Late Work
Turn in all work online by the time specified in the schedule. Late work will not be accepted.

Missed Assignments
There is no make-up work for any assignment or quiz with the potential exception of legitimate, verifiable* medical emergencies, verified within a reasonable amount of time after the fact.

*I will expect proof of doctor’s notes, etc. and clear indication as to why the emergency prevented you from completing the assigned work on time. As there is no class meeting and all assignment deadlines are known well in advance, doctor’s visits and the like can be scheduled to accommodate the course deadlines. They will not be necessarily accepted as an excused absence.

**For my working students and students with families:** First of all, as a working student with a family, I have the utmost sympathy and respect for you! Juggling a job, family, and schoolwork is a reality for many of us and you should be commended and proud of yourself for taking on the challenge. It will be worth the struggle. But if you’ve chosen to pursue your degree while at work and/or while raising a family, you need to be honest with yourself and others about what you can do and how well you can do it. This course is an accelerated, university, 3-credit course. It is not designed to be completed only working on it over the weekends or all in one desperate swoop in the last week. While I will be deeply sympathetic to your situation and may be willing and able to work with you on an individual assignment’s deadline here and there, work and family responsibilities (expected or otherwise) will not be sufficient grounds for extensions on assignments. I generally do not allow for an “I” in this course except in extreme cases. You should not expect this to be an option.

***A word about a death or serious illness in the family during the course:** While clearly we cannot “plan” when serious tragedies or illnesses hit us and our families, how you respond to them in relation to this class will be up to you. If you or your family is struck by tragedy (e.g., a serious illness or a death of a close friend or loved one), I am going to strongly recommend that you drop the course and re-take it at a later date. Some things are simply more important than school.

If, for whatever reason, you decide to continue in the course, you will still be responsible for the entirety of the remaining course requirements. Tragedy or unexpected illnesses cannot themselves be grounds for extensions on work or a change in grade at the end of
the course. I generally do not allow for an “I” in this course except in extreme cases. You should not expect this to be an option.

Extra Credit
There is an opportunity to receive extra credit in this course (see Course Requirement Descriptions above). No other extra credit work will be assigned.

Format
All written assignments must be typed on white paper, double spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman Font, with one inch margins, and conform to the APA style for citations, bibliography, and paper formatting (with minimal changes which will be discussed in class). All written assignments must be uploaded via blackboard. Further instruction will be provided in class.

Policy for final exams [From the online Schedule of Classes]
Exemption from final examination may not be given. Final examinations are scheduled to be two hours, forty-five minutes in length and take place during the final examination period. It is the policy of the university not to administer a second final examination in the course. It is also university policy that students shall not have more than two final examinations in a single day. In the unlikely event that the examination schedule results in a student having three final examinations on a single day, the faculty member upon the request of the student shall reschedule the second of that student’s three examinations.

Copyright Statement
Some of the materials in this course are copyrighted. Violation of US copyright law can result in civil damages up to $100,000 for each work copied. Copying of textbooks is not “fair use” under the Copyright Act. The “fair use doctrine” only permits non-commercial copying of part (in general, not more than 10%) of a copyrighted work. Your cooperation is expected.

1.3 Student Conduct: [From the Handbook of Operating Procedures: Student Affairs]
Students are expected to respect other students in the class, the peer leader, and the instructor. Class discussions are to be conducted with respect for one another. Each student is also responsible for notice of and compliance with the provisions of the Regents Rules and Regulations, which are available for inspection electronically at http://www.utsystem.edu/bor/rules/homepage.htm.

Online Conduct
Communicating online can make us feel “safe” and comfortable. Sometimes it makes us feel too safe which, ironically, makes our behavior feel “unsafe” for others. Pay special attention to how you and your colleagues conduct yourselves in this class on the discussion boards, in emails to one another, in emails to your instructor.

Some things to think about:

**Language:** Given the absence of face-to-face clues, written text can easily be misinterpreted. Avoid the use of strong or offensive language and the excessive use of exclamation points. If you feel particularly strongly about a point, it may be best to write it first as a draft and then to review it, before posting it, in order to remove any strong language.

**Be Forgiving:** If someone states something that you find offensive, mention this directly to the instructor. Remember that the person contributing to the discussion is also new to this form of communication. What you find offensive may quite possibly have been unintended and can best be cleared up by the instructor.

**This is Permanent:** Think carefully about the content of your message before contributing it. Once sent to the group, there is no taking it back. Also, although the grammar and spelling of a message typically are not graded, they do reflect on you, and your audience might not be able to decode misspelled words or poorly constructed sentences. It is a good practice to compose and check your comments in a word-processor before posting them.

**Test For Clarity:** Messages may often appear perfectly clear to you as you compose them, but turn out to be perfectly obtuse to your reader. One way to test for clarity is to read your message aloud to see if it flows smoothly. If you can read it to another person before posting it, even better.

**Remember Your Place:** A Web-based classroom is still a classroom, and comments that would be inappropriate in a regular classroom are likely to be inappropriate in a Web-based course as well. Treat your instructor and your fellow students with respect.

**Follow the Parameters/ Stick To The Point:** Follow the posting requirements and parameters set up by your professor. Contributions to a discussion should have a clear subject header, and you need to stick to the subject. Don't waste others' time by going off on irrelevant tangents.

**Read First, Write Later:** Don't add your comments to a discussion before reading the comments of other students unless the assignment specifically asks you to. Doing so is tantamount to ignoring your fellow students and is rude. Comments related to the content of previous messages should be posted under them to keep related topics organized, and you should specify the person and the particular point you are following up on.

*(Guidelines provided courtesy of Instructional Support Services)*

You should also remember:

- Consider your audience. Remember that members of the class and the instructor will be reading any postings.
- Respect and courtesy must be provided to classmates and to instructor at all times. No harassment, flaming, or inappropriate postings will be tolerated.
- Do not use inappropriate language, all capital letters, or language short cuts. Online entries should be written in Standard English with edited spelling, grammar, and punctuation.
- When reacting to someone else's message, address the ideas, not the person. Post only what anyone would comfortably state in a face-to-face situation.
- Be sure to read everyone's responses before posting. Avoid repetition of what someone else has already said. Add something new to the discussion!
- No credit will be received for yes/no answers. Posts should justify positions and provide specific examples. Students must demonstrate that they have read the assignment and their classmates' comments carefully and thoughtfully.
- Be sure to post in a timely fashion to receive credit for attendance and for the discussion. Pay close attention to the posted deadlines.

(Courtesy of Instructional Support Services Digital Academy)

A word about discussing religion in class and online

We are often told that we should never discuss religion and politics in polite company. I don’t know about you, but I consistently break both rules. And in this class it’s a requirement! But—as with all online class discussion—the guidelines above apply to this topic as well, perhaps especially so. I do want to note that some of us in this class may have personal religious beliefs, perhaps even strong ones. Some of us may have anti-religious beliefs and feelings, perhaps even strong ones. Regardless, students will be expected to conduct themselves with care toward one another. All responses must be relevant to the topic of the discussions. Abusive, disrespectful, and aggressive comments will be grounds for reprimand, referral to the Office of Student Affairs, and possible dismissal from the course.

1.3.1 Scholastic Dishonesty: [From the Handbook of Operating Procedures: Student Affairs]

It is the official policy of the University that all suspected cases or acts of alleged scholastic dishonesty must be referred to the Dean of Students for investigation and appropriate disposition. It is contrary to University policy for a faculty member to assign a disciplinary grade such as an "F" or zero to an assignment, test, examination, or other course work as a sanction for admitted or suspected scholastic dishonesty in lieu of normally charging the student through the Dean of Students. Similarly, students are prohibited from proposing and/or entering into an arrangement with a faculty member to receive a grade of "F" or any reduced grade in lieu of being charged with scholastic dishonesty. Any student who commits an act of scholastic dishonesty is subject to discipline. Scholastic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts.
1.3.12 Plagiarism: [From the Handbook of Operating Procedures: Student Affairs]
"Plagiarism" means the appropriation, buying, receiving as a gift, or obtaining by any means another's work and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of it in one's own academic work offered for credit, or using work in a paper or assignment for which the student had received credit in another course without direct permission of all involved instructors.

Policy Regarding Students Entitled To Accommodation:
If you have or suspect you need an accommodation you should contact Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) at 747-5148 or at cass@utep.edu or go to Room 106 Union East Building. Accommodations must be made available to instructor by the first day of class. Assignments whose due date has passed prior to instructor having been informed of CASS designated accommodations cannot be made up.

Foster Homeless Adopted Resources (FHAR)
If you have aged out of foster care in Texas, were adopted, or find yourself homeless or with unstable/inadequate housing, there may be resources available to you. See me or a FHAR advisor at the Academic Advising Center. If you know someone in these circumstances, please also refer them to me or a FHAR advisor.

Syllabus Change Policy:
This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advance notice.