

## SAMPLE SYLLABUS: CURRENT USERS

*Introduction to the History of Christianity: Second Edition*

Tim Dowley

INSTRUCTOR	Tom Miles 
INSTITUTION	Nazarene Theological Seminary
COURSE TITLE	CHS515 — Critical Developments in the History of Christianity
SEMESTER	Fall 2014

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

The primary purpose of this course is to provide students with basic familiarity with the historical development of the central doctrines, practices, and institutions of the Christian Church. It is assumed that students in this course have little or no previous exposure to systematic study of the history of Christianity. This course specifically addresses the goals and objectives of each of the NTS degree programs, which call for students to develop an understanding of the history and heritage of the Christian faith and familiarity with the context in which ministry takes place today.

### OBJECTIVES

1. Students will gain a knowledge of the basic facts necessary for understanding the broad outline of the history of Christianity from New Testament times to the present, especially the development of major doctrines and creeds. *This will be accomplished through assigned reading in the textbooks and assessed by the weekly data quizzes and the final exam.*
2. Students will develop ability to accurately tell the story of the Church in broad outline, and to identify and describe the significance of major persons, ideas, movements and events in that story. *This will be accomplished through course lectures and assigned reading in the textbooks, and will be assessed by the comprehensive essay exam, the weekly data quizzes, and the final exam.*

3. Students will gain insight into the dynamic, ongoing interaction between Church and world, Christianity and culture, which characterizes the life of the Church in history. *This will be accomplished through course lectures, assigned reading in the textbooks, assigned movies, and will be assessed by the comprehensive essay exam, weekly online discussion forum posts, and assigned movie reviews.*
4. Students will develop ability to describe how the Church has implemented its mission in the world throughout the centuries. *This will be accomplished through course lectures, assigned reading in the textbooks, and assigned movies, and will be assessed by the comprehensive essay exam, weekly online discussion forum posts, and assigned movie reviews.*
5. Students will acquire a growing ability to use the story of Christianity as a resource for understanding the context of contemporary Christian life and ministry. *This will be accomplished through course lectures and assigned reading in the textbooks, and will be assessed by the comprehensive essay exam and weekly online discussion forum posts.*
6. Students will acquire resources to enter into critical and fruitful conversation with the past in order to appropriate the historical heritage of the Church as a resource for responsible and faithful ministry in the present and future. *This will be accomplished through course lectures, assigned reading in the textbooks, and assigned movies, and will be assessed*

### REQUIRED TEXTS

1. *Introduction to the History of Christianity*, 2nd ed., edited by Tim Dowley (Fortress Press, 2013).
2. *Turning Points: Decisive Moments in the History of Christianity*, Mark A. Noll, 3rd edition (Baker Books, 2012).
3. *Why Study the Past?: The Quest for the Historical Church*, Rowan Williams (Eerdmans, 2005).
4. Copies of two videos (rent, borrow, or buy) – *Luther* (Joseph Fiennes, Alfred Molina, et. al. – 2003); *The Mission* (Robert DeNiro, Jeremy Irons, et. al. – 1986).

### COURSE CALENDAR

2014	Week	Topic	Assignments Due
Sept 8	1	Introduction	
Sept 15	2	The Historical Study of Christianity	Williams essay
Sept 22	3	The Transition from Apostolic to Post-Apostolic Times	Data quiz
Sept 29	4	The Church Expands into New Regions and Cultures	Data quiz
Oct 6	5	The “Outlaw Cult” becomes “Establishment Church”	Data quiz
Oct 13	6	The Church in the “Middle Ages” (I)	Data quiz

Oct 20	7	<i>READING AND RESEARCH WEEK</i>	
Oct 27	8	The Church in the “Middle Ages” (II)	Data quiz / Research essay #1
Nov 3	9	The Reform of the Church: Renewal and Division	Data quiz
Nov 10	10	European Christianity in the Post-Reformation Era	Data quiz / <i>Luther</i> essay
Nov 17	11	Christianity in a Revolutionary and Modern World (I)	Data quiz
Nov 24	12	Christianity in a Revolutionary and Modern World (II)	Data quiz / <i>Mission</i> essay
Dec 1	13	Christianity in a Modern and Post-Modern World	Data quiz / Course Evaluation
Dec 8	14	Review, Summary, and Final Evaluation	Research essay #2 / Final exam

## **COURSE OUTLINE**

- I. The Historical Study of Christianity – why we do it, how we do it, and how it fits into the larger endeavor of theological reflection in the Church
- II. The “Jesus Movement” Makes the Transition from Apostolic to Post-Apostolic Times – the context, challenges, and leaders of this era
- III. The Church Expands into New Regions and Cultures – the challenges to carefully define its faith and practices
- IV. The “Outlaw Cult” Becomes the “Establishment Church” – the opportunities and pitfalls of success
- V. The Church in the Middle Ages (I) – the growing importance of monasticism; the deepening division between Eastern and Western Christianity; the importance of ongoing doctrinal debate and the development of new forms of scholarship
- VI. The Church in the Middle Ages (II) – the institutional “hardening” of the Church; the rise of Scholasticism; popular piety; early impulses toward reform of the Church
- VII. The Reform of the Church: Renewal and Division – the development of reform movements in various parts of the European Church, the persons and issues involved and the major results.
- VIII. European Christianity in the Post-Reformation Era: Conflict, Expansion, Adaptation – religious warfare; the role of Christianity in the exploration and settlement of “New Worlds;” new forms of Christian life and practice
- IX. The Age of Reason and Revival – the development of the Enlightenment and Pietism
- X. Christianity in a “Revolutionary” and “Modern” World – the Spirit of revolution in Europe and North America; Christianity in North America; the rise of “secularism” and its consequences for Christianity
- XI. Christianity in a “Modern” and “Post-Modern” World (I) – the “modern missionary movement;” modern “protest” and reform movements within Christianity (e.g., Pentecostal and Charismatic forms)

XII. Christianity in a “Modern” and “Post-Modern” World (II) – intellectual and ideological challenges to Christianity; the impinging “faith worlds” of today; the “shifting” geographical and cultural world of contemporary Christianity; course wrap up