Ancient & Medieval Church History

Dr. Robert Norris

Course Description
This course is a study of Christianity from the Early Church to the dawn of the Reformation with readings in source materials. It places an emphasis on the uses and applications of church history to life and ministry, and helps the student to understand the development of Christian thought and the formulation of doctrine.

Course Objectives
• To gain knowledge of the main events and persons in the course of church history from the early church to the dawn of the Reformation
• Understanding of the development of Christian thought and the formulation of doctrine
• Development of the skill of applying church history to contemporary ideas and issues

Lecture Schedule
Lecture 1 The Background to the history of the Early Church
Lecture 2 The Growth of the Christian Church
Lecture 3 The Persecutions
Lecture 4 The Apologists
Lecture 5 Orthodoxy and Heresy
Lecture 6 The Donatist Challenge
Lecture 7 The Development of Canon, Creeds and Episcopacy
Lecture 8 The Church in the Fourth Century
Lecture 9 Heresies in the Early Church
Lecture 10 The Beginnings of Monasticism
Lecture 11 Athenasius
Lecture 12 The Council of Nicea
Lecture 13 The Cappadocians
Lecture 14 Significant Church Leaders - Ambrose, Jerome, and Chrysostom
Lecture 15 The Confessions of St. Augustine
Lecture 16 St. Augustine and the Pelagian Controversy
Lecture 17 The City of God: St. Augustine’s Theology of History
Lecture 18  The Council of Chalcedon
Lecture 19  An Introduction to the Early Middle Ages
Lecture 20  Christian Advance
Lecture 21  British Christianity
Lecture 22  Learning and Theology
Lecture 23  The Church of the Seven Councils: Eastern Orthodoxy
Lecture 24  An Introduction to the Late Middle Ages
Lecture 25  Monastic Growth
Lecture 26  Crusades or Missions _ St. Bernard
Lecture 27  Medieval Heresy
Lecture 28  Scholastic Theology
Lecture 29  Life and thought of Thomas Aquinas
Lecture 30  The Sacramental System
Lecture 31  Church and State
Lecture 32  Wycliffe and Hus
Lecture 33  Reform in Italy
Lecture 34  Mysticism and the “Devotio Moderna”
Lecture 35  The end of an age.

Required Reading

The Early Church  Henry Chadwick  (p.300)
2000 Years of Christ’s Power  (Vols.1 &2)  Nick Needham  ( p. 900)
Augustine of Hippo  Peter Brown  (p.430)
The Middle Ages  R.W. Southern  (p.360)
The Harvest of Medieval Theology  H. Oberman  (p.490)
Original Sources

**Creeds Councils and Controversies** Ed. W.H.C. Frend (various documents)

**A New Eusebius** Ed. W.H.C. Frend (various documents)

**Against Heresy** Tertullian

**Selections from**
- **The Incarnation** Athanasius
- **The Confessions** St. Augustine
- **The City of God** St. Augustine
- **The Love of God** St. Bernard
- **The Summa Theologica** St. Thomas

**Evaluation**

The students will meet each Thursday evening from 7.00pm – 10.00am for 13 weeks. They will be expected each week to examine original source material.

The students will be expected to write four 2000 word essays and will be expected to sit two 2 hour final examinations, one on the Early Church and one on the Medieval Church. The final grade will be determined by the essays and examinations.
Bibliography


## M. Div* Student Learning Outcomes

In order to measure the success of the M. Div. curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the M. Div. outcomes.

*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the M.Div. rubric will be used in this syllabus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Theological essay; essay exams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Biblical interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Historic basis of doctrine.</td>
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<tr>
<td>None</td>
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### Articulation (oral & written)
Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.

- **Rubric**: Strong
- **Mini-Justification**: Theological essay; essay exams

### Scripture
Significant knowledge of the use of Scripture in the history of the church, integrating theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.

- **Rubric**: Moderate
- **Mini-Justification**: Biblical interpretation

### Reformed Theology
Significant knowledge of the history of the church as it forms the background of Reformed theology and practice.

- **Rubric**: Moderate
- **Mini-Justification**: Historic basis of doctrine.

### Sanctification
Demonstrates a love for the Triune God and shows how His providence has directed the life of His church that aids the student’s love and service to the church.

- **Rubric**: Strong
- **Mini-Justification**: Strong doctrine leads to worship.

### Desire for Worldview
Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God understanding that this has always been the desire of the invisible church.

- **Rubric**: Strong
- **Mini-Justification**: Church History provides a guide to the creation of a worldview.

### Winsomely Reformed
While affirming a Reformed ethos it encourages an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians of differing traditions as emerging from the same foundations.

- **Rubric**: Minimal
- **Mini-Justification**: Reformation emphasis is on loving God and humanity.

### Preach
Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture understanding the historical contexts that have given rise to our understandings

- **Rubric**: Minimal
- **Mini-Justification**: No actual preaching but understanding its place and impact in the history of worship.

### Worship
Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and the ability to conform praxis with principle.

- **Rubric**: Minimal
- **Mini-Justification**: Basic to all worship, but no practical training in leading worship.

### Shepherd
Ability to shepherd the local congregation in the light of the past and so appreciate the uniqueness of the reformed tradition and its emphasis upon proclamation and sacraments. At the same time maintaining a vision for world outreach.

- **Rubric**: Moderate
- **Mini-Justification**: The development of Christian doctrine in the history of the church brings

### Church/World
Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.

- **Rubric**: Strong
- **Mini-Justification**: Reformation emphasis is on loving God and neighbor.