

CH 5060: American Church History

Trinity Evangelical Divinity School
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Spring Semester 2018
Tuesdays, 6:30 – 9:15 pm
Eastbrook Church Extension Site
Milwaukee

Course Description

This course covers the history of Christianity in colonial America and the United States from the sixteenth century to the present. Its purpose is to familiarize students with the major historical figures, groups, movements, and trends in American Christianity. Reading assignments and lectures will provide students with a concrete understanding of the broad scope of American church history, but a special emphasis will be placed throughout the semester on the evangelical movement. Students will be encouraged to reflect upon the significance of the historical development of evangelicalism, and on its place in the larger stream of both American and Christian history.

Learning Objectives

1. That students acquire a mastery of the general development of Christian thought and institutions from colonial America to the present, and some of the political, social, and cultural trends and events that influenced that development.
2. That students will gain understanding of the lives, ministry practices, and theological writings of a wide array of Christians in the history of America
3. To increase students' understanding of the history of American evangelicalism and the factors that have shaped its contemporary expressions.

Required Texts

Gaustad, Edwin S. and Leigh E. Schmidt. *The Religious History of America*, Rev. Ed. San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 2004. [ISBN: 0060630566]

Machen, J. Gresham. *Christianity and Liberalism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2009. [ISBN: 978-0802864994]

Sweeney, Douglas A. *The American Evangelical Story: A History of a Movement*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005. [ISBN: 080102658X]

*** *Additional required and optional readings for the course will be posted online.* ***

Course Requirements/Grading Criteria

Class Attendance:

Students are required to attend each and every session throughout the entire course period. Due to the nature of Extension classes, attendance at all sessions is especially important with weekend courses. Missing even an hour of a weekend class means a significant portion of the required contact with the instructor and learning community has been lost. For this reason, students missing any portion (hours) of an Extension course can result in a grade reduction; missing more than one weekend class session will result in a grade reduction and possibly failing the course.

In the case of extreme emergency or unforeseen circumstances (family emergencies, death, etc.) the student should contact the instructor and secure the necessary permission to miss time in a class and make up the missed class time and assignments. Vacations, ministry responsibilities and travel plans are not considered emergencies and such requests will be denied. As the schedule for the Extension courses is set ahead of time, students should plan ahead to be sure they will be able to make it to all class sessions before they register. If the emergency necessitates a longer absence the student should contact the Dean of Students to request an extension of time, or in rare instances a withdrawal from the class without penalty.

Exams (50%): There will be two exams over the course of the semester. Each will cover all material since the previous exam. The final exam may also include questions involving broad themes or ideas from over the course of the semester. More details on exams will be provided as each exam approaches.

Response Papers (30%): Reading, interpreting, and responding to primary sources is the historian's main task. The surveys we use as textbooks for history classes are the syntheses of historians' interaction with primary sources of various kinds.

In order to gain greater understanding of the historian's task and of the great minds and issues that have shaped America's religious history, you will write three short (2-3 pg.) papers interacting with various assigned source readings.

Each paper should contain at least:

- One paragraph identifying the issue addressed in the primary source
- One paragraph stating the author's thesis (main idea) and summarizing the content or argument of the essay
- One paragraph stating your view of the relevance of this issue or the author's ideas on this issue to contemporary discussions or practices of American Christians

Regarding the contemporary relevance of an issue or idea. I am not looking primarily for your theological evaluation of the idea (e.g., "Finney misinterpreted Habakkuk 3:2."). Instead I want you to point out contemporary parallels in American Christianity to Finney's ideas or state your own thesis about the impact of his idea on how we think about the subject(s) being considered.

These papers will be graded on the adequacy of your understanding the author's ideas, the clarity of your discussion, the interpretation you make of the relevancy of the discussion, and the quality of your writing (grammar, proofreading, organization of thought, etc.). Conciseness is considered a virtue in your essays as I will not read past a third page, and two page papers are preferred!

Note: Unless instructed differently by your professor, response papers are due the same date as the reading upon which they are based is due.

Reading Report (10%): At the time of the final examination, students will be asked to report the percentage of required course readings that they have read (*not* skimmed!) during the semester. Students will receive a numerical grade, based on the percentage read. (E.g. a student who reads 75% of required material will receive 7.5 out of a potential 10 points = 'C' grade.)

Class Participation (10%): The active participation of students with the material, the professor, and classmates is essential to a productive and stimulating class. Lack of participation affects the learning environment for the entire class. *NOTE: Always bring your assigned readings/textbooks to class.

Evaluation Scale:

A	Excellent	93%-100%
A-		90%-92.9%
B+		87%-89.9%
B	Good	83%-86.9%
B-		80%-82.9%
C+		77%-79.9%
C	Satisfactory	73%-76.9%
C-		70%-72.9%
D+		67%-69.9%
D		63%-66.9%
D-	Minimum Passing	60%-62.9%
F	Failure	00-59.9%

Grading:

Exams	50%
Response Papers	30%
Reading Report	10%
Class Participation	10%
Total	100%

The grade for an assignment that meets the basic requirements for good (above average) academic work is a B. More specifically there is nothing “wrong” with an assignment that receives a grade in the “B” range. To receive a grade in the “A” range, an assignment must be superior in some aspect such as research or insight, though not necessarily greater than the suggested length.

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Academic dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated. This applies to cheating, plagiarism and intentional misrepresentation of the truth. Students should be advised that normally in cases of academic dishonesty or plagiarism the penalty shall be a “0” for the assignment and an “F” for the course. For the full policy, please see the *TEDS/TGS Student Guide*.

Course Schedule

All readings are to be *completed* by the date listed.

*** Readings may be added or removed from the syllabus as deemed necessary by the instructor. Be attentive to announcements regarding readings and other syllabus changes in class, online, or via email.

1/16 – Course Introduction

Course Requirements. Class introductions.

Why Study Church History? What is Evangelicalism?

Christianity’s Beginnings in the New World

Gaustad, 3-29 (ch.1); Sweeney, 9-26; Complete any Moodle items online

1/23 – The Colonial Churches, Puritanism

Anglicanism. Puritanism and its Sources

Gaustad 30-61; Sweeney 27-36; Complete any Moodle items online

1/30 – Jonathan Edwards and the Great Awakening

Edwards as Revivalist, Pastor, Theologian. Proponents and Opponents. Whitefield
Sweeney 36-61; Complete any Moodle items online (Edwards source readings)

2/6 – Let Freedom Ring: Enlightened Ideals and Changing Theological Fashions

The Revolutionary Era – Birth of a Nation. Religion of the Founders: A Christian Nation?
A Changing Landscape and a Changing Church
Gaustad, 61-138; Complete any Moodle items online

2/13 – A Reawakened Nation

The Second Great Awakening. Charles Finney
Gaustad, 139-161; Sweeney, 61-78; Complete any Moodle items online (Finney source readings)

2/20 – Mid-Nineteenth Century Developments

Princeton and Presbyterianism. Charles Hodge
Evangelical Missions, Other Movements
*Gaustad, 162-183 (ch.8); Sweeney, 79-106 (ch.4);
Complete any Moodle items online (Princeton source readings)*

2/27 – The Civil War and its Aftermath

Troubling Undercurrents. Freedom and Democracy for (almost) All
Slavery and Abolitionism, Church Schisms, Abraham Lincoln
Gaustad, 184-205; Sweeney, 107-131 (ch.5); Complete any Moodle items online
Midterm Exam

3/6 – NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK

3/13 – New Dynamics in the Land and the Shaking of Protestantism

Immigration, Industrialization, Catholic Growth and Expanding Religious Diversity
D. L. Moody. Evangelical Social Action. The Rise of the Social Gospel.
Gaustad, 209-254 (ch.10-11); Complete any Moodle items online

3/20 – Holy Rollers and Higher Criticism

Rise of Biblical Criticism. Debates over Darwin. Holiness and Pentecostal Movements.
Gaustad, 255-276 (ch.12); Sweeney, 133-154 (ch.6); Complete any Moodle items online

3/27 – Turn of the Century Turbulence

Fundamentalist/Modernist Controversy, The Great Reversal, Liberalism
*Gaustad, 277-298 (ch.13); Machen, Christianity or Liberalism, 1-116 (ch.1-5)
Complete any Moodle items online*

4/3 – NO CLASS – EASTER BREAK

4/10 – Fundamentalist Withdrawal, Liberal Dominance, Neoorthodoxy

Separatism. Reinhold Niebuhr and the Neoorthodox Challenge to Liberal Optimism
Gaustad, 299-321 (ch.14); Complete any Moodle items online

4/17 – Mid-Century Challenges and Changes. The Birth of the ‘New Evangelicalism’

Billy Graham. Vatican II. A Catholic President. Separatist Fundamentalism and the New Evangelicals
*Gaustad, 329-348, 374-397 (ch.15,17); Sweeney, 155-180 (ch.7)
Complete any Moodle items online*

4/24 – Contemporary Developments

Supreme Court Cases on Religion. Shifting Alliances and Politicalization,
The Religious Left, The Rise of the Religious Right

Gaustad, 349-373, 398-427 (ch.16, 18); Complete any Moodle items online

5/1 – Closing Comments and Catch-Up Day

Sweeney, 181-185; Complete any Moodle items online

Final Exam