Professor’s Contact Information:
Email: dfairbairn@gordonconwell.edu
Phone: (704) 940-5842

Schedule of Class Meetings: Sept. 20-21, Oct. 18-19, Nov. 15-16
(6:30-9:30 PM each Friday; 8:30 AM – 4:30 PM each Saturday)

Office Hours: I will be in the office and available for drop-in meetings on Monday afternoons. I will be in the office all day on Wednesdays, but most Wednesdays will be filled with meetings. I will be available on Friday afternoons prior to weekend classes, and I can also be available by appointment at other times convenient to students. Please email me to make an appointment.

Catalog Course Description: A general survey of the Christian Church from its founding at Pentecost to the Protestant Reformation of the Sixteenth Century. Designed to fulfill one of the two Church History requirements for the Master of Divinity degree program.

Relation to Curriculum: This course is required in all master’s-level programs except MACC.

Course Purpose: This course is designed to give students a working knowledge of the major themes, issues, and personalities of Church history prior to the Reformation, to help them to appreciate and make use of the rich resources of the pre-Reformation Church in their personal spiritual lives and ministries, and to enhance their understanding of the background to the Protestant Reformation.

Course Objectives: In keeping with Gordon-Conwell’s mission statement, the professor intends that upon completing this course, students will:

1. Gain exposure to the way Christians from the pre-Reformation period understood and used the Bible, so as to inform and enrich the students’ own interpretation of Scripture (articles 1, 2 of the mission statement).

2. Appreciate the depth of spirituality and concern for ministry characteristic of the best of pre-Reformation Christianity, as an aid to the students’ own development of spiritual maturity and ministry skill (articles 3, 4).

3. Understand the role the historian’s theological/cultural perspective plays in the retelling and interpretation of historical events, so as to promote the students’ development of a specifically Christian and evangelical view of history and of contemporary society (article 5).

4. Broaden their awareness of what God has done around the world in the history of his Church prior to the Reformation, so as to enhance the students’ own vision for God’s continued work throughout the world (article 6).
Course Requirements: Achievement of the course objectives will be measured through a variety of assignments. The successful completion of these assignments will require each student to spend at least 135 hours devoted to coursework, both in class and outside of class. The following chart indicates how these hours are distributed across the various course assignments. More specific descriptions of the assignments are given later in this syllabus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Assignment</th>
<th>Expected Time Commitment</th>
<th>Student’s Actual Time</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reading the required textbooks</td>
<td>60 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lectures and class discussions</td>
<td>30 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in discussion forums</td>
<td>10 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application journal</td>
<td>10 hours</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td>25 hours</td>
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You must keep a record of the approximate time you spend on each assignment and by Dec. 18 must upload to the Sakai site a chart like the one above, indicating the amount of time you have actually spent on each assignment in the right-hand column.

Required Textbooks and Materials:


Course Assignments:

1. Reading (12 points): You must complete 2000 pages of reading, of which ~1750 pages will come from the six textbooks, and the remainder will come from the reading for your research paper. The course schedule at the end of the syllabus shows which readings you must complete prior to each class weekend. This assignment will help prepare you to achieve all four course objectives.

As you read, you must keep track of the books and pages you have read. By Monday, December 16, you must upload a reading report (including textbooks and reading for the research paper) to the Sakai site indicating which books and pages you have read, and the total number of pages.
2. Participation in discussion forums (18 points): After each class meeting, you must review the professor’s Power Point presentations (and study the ones not actually covered in class), review the readings for that class, and post to the discussion forum your perception of the most important ideas, people, and events, as well as what we can learn from them. This interaction will provide the basis for your application journal (see description below), and you may want to use the categories suggested for that assignment here as well. You may also use the forum to ask questions about the material. You should respond to other students’ posts as appropriate. This assignment will help demonstrate that you have achieved objectives 2-4 above.

The three discussion forums will be worth six points each. You will receive two points for each quality post or response to another student’s post, up to the six points available for that discussion forum. (Of course, you are free to post more than three times, if you wish.) A quality post is one that does not merely repeat or summarize information, but raises substantive issues or helps to address substantive questions raised by other students.

3. Application journal (30 points): Throughout the course, you must keep a journal in which you note and comment on significant people, places, events, teaching, etc. from Christian history. This journal should NOT be a summary of the textbook or lecture content, but instead, it should grow out of your interaction with other students in the discussion forums and your own reflection on the material. The purpose of this journal is to begin building for yourself a ready guide to material that will be useful in your own spiritual life and your ministry, and thus it will demonstrate that you have achieved objectives 3-4 above. Therefore, the format and specific content of the journal are up to you, but it is suggested that you organize the application journal into categories similar to the following:

- Interesting, helpful, or problematic interpretations of Scripture or uses of Scripture
- Appropriate or inappropriate doctrinal developments
- Helpful or dangerous approaches to Christian spiritual life
- Useful or problematic approaches to Christian ministry
- Other lessons we can learn from Christian history

It is expected that you will draw much of the material for this application journal from the primary-source reading (the Apostolic Fathers, Gregory the Great, Thomas à Kempis), but you may also find the professor’s lectures, the professor’s Power Point presentations, González, and Jenkins to be good sources of material.

Since the format and specific content are up to you, there is no set number of pages expected in the journal. But since you will be adding information to the journal throughout the semester, it will probably become fairly lengthy (perhaps 20 pages or maybe much longer). Thus, a very short journal may indicate to me that you have not been working on it throughout the semester and thus have not fulfilled the assignment adequately.

You should work on the application journal throughout the semester (especially after you participate in each of the three discussion forums), and you must upload it to the Sakai site by Friday, Nov. 28.
4. **Research Paper (40 points):** You must write one 10-12 page research paper on a topic of your choice. This research paper may touch on any or all of the course objectives (depending on the topic), and its primary purpose is to enable you to explore one aspect of Christian history in detail. You must upload the paper to the Sakai site by **Friday, December 13.**

**Selection of topic:** You are free to select, research and present whatever topic you wish to explore, provided that the topic deals with **some aspect of Christian history within the period between A.D. 100 and 1500.** You do not need the professor's approval for your choice of topic, but you are more than welcome to confer with me as you choose and narrow the topic. The paper should be primarily historical in nature, but it should conclude with important lessons that we can learn from your chosen topic for Christian life and ministry today.

**The task of research:** You should consult the document “Writing Theological Papers” available on the Sakai site in order to understand the professor’s expectations regarding research papers. If you need additional help on your paper, you may want to consult personnel at the Charlotte writing center. Remember, however, that an important part of writing a research paper is the sometimes difficult task of locating and selecting the sources you want to use. This will probably involve several hours of hard work in an archive or library. Do not expect others to do this work for you; this is part of your assignment.

**Completed papers** should be typed and in correct form (as indicated below), footnoted where appropriate, with a bibliography of all sources used for the study. If you have not had much experience in writing research papers, you should consult Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

**Grading the papers:** Your research paper will be evaluated on the basis of four primary criteria:

1) The choice of an appropriately narrow topic and the posing of an appropriate question for the paper to answer (10 points)
2) The depth of the research in both primary and secondary materials (10 points)
3) The quality of the analysis/argument you present, including the way you draw lessons for our own time from your chosen topic (10 points)
4) The organization and clarity of your writing (5 points)
5) The mechanical correctness and elegance of your writing (5 points)

5. **Chart indicating actual time spent on all assignments.** You must upload this chart (printed earlier in this syllabus) to the Sakai site by Dec. 16.

**Grading:** The point values listed above mean that the total number of points available for the course is 100. Final letter grades will be applied with cutoffs as follows: A 95, A- 90, B+ 87, B 83, B- 80, C+ 77, C 73, C- 70, D+ 67, D 63, D- 60, F below 60. A grade of A+ will be given
very rarely, when the student’s work is truly exceptional. (At Gordon-Conwell, a grade of A+ and a grade of A are both counted the same way in calculating the student’s GPA. Thus, a GPA above 4.0 is not possible.)

**Late work:** All late work will be penalized the equivalent of one letter grade per week beyond the due date, unless arrangements are made ahead of time. Extenuating circumstances will be considered as appropriate. Work turned in later than Wednesday, December 18 will normally require that an extension be approved by the Seminary. If you anticipate a problem, contact me as soon as possible.

**Attendance Policy:** Class attendance and participation are a central part of this course. If you must miss a class period, you should notify me in advance to justify your absence. If you have more than one unexcused absence from class, you will receive a penalty of three points per additional unexcused absence on your final grade.

**Document Formatting and Citation Style Requirements:** All written assignments should be submitted in either MS-Word or PDF format. (If you use a different word processor than MS-Word, please convert the file to PDF before submitting it.) Assignments should be double spaced with 1” margins on all sides of each page, and should be printed in Times New Roman 12 point type or another font of similar size and appearance. Citations should preferably follow Turabian style, although APA style is also acceptable. Assignments must be submitted electronically by posting on the Sakai site. Hard-copies will not be accepted.

**Syllabus Addendum:** For other Seminary policies, refer to the attached Syllabus Addendum.

**Course Schedule and Assignment Due Dates:**

The topics listed below are ones on which the professor’s Power Point presentations will be available through Sakai. We will cover only selected ones of these in each class meeting and will also spend time in discussion.

**Sep. 1-19:** Read Wilken, pp. 1-87; Lössl (all); *The Apostolic Fathers* (all)

**Sep. 20-21: First Class Meeting**

- **Introduction**
  - Why Church History?
  - **Discussion of Perspectives on Church History**
  - Background to Church History: The Greco-Roman World

- **Part I: The Church in the Pagan Roman Empire**
  - Christian Expansion
  - Church and World prior to Constantine
  - **Discussion of the Apostolic Fathers**
  - Early Heresies and Christian Identity
  - Gnosticism and Christian Fault Lines
The Canon and the Episcopacy
The Novatian Schism and the Nature of the Church
Worship in the Early Church
Constantine and the Rise of the Christian Empire

Sep. 23-29: Review material from first class meeting and work on your application journal.

By Sep. 30: Post to the first discussion forum. Interact with other students’ posts by Oct. 4.

Sep. 30-Oct. 17: Read Wilken, pp. 88-371; Logan, pp. 1-104 The Book of the Pastoral Rule (all)

**Oct. 18-19: Second Class Meeting**

Part II: The Imperial Catholic Church
Expansion of the Church
The Donatist Schism and the Nature of the Church
The Trinity and the Possibility of Salvation
Christ and the Achievement of Salvation
Human Nature and the Means of Salvation
Worship and Piety in the Imperial Church
The Rise of Monasticism

Part III: The Byzantine and Roman Churches
The Beginnings of Medieval Roman Catholicism
**Discussion of Gregory’s The Book of the Pastoral Rule**
Popular Piety and the Means of Grace
Expansion, but Geographical Isolation
Theological Isolation of East and West
Rivalry between East and West
The “Great Schism”

Oct. 21-27: Review material from second class meeting and work on your reading journal.

By Oct. 28: Post to the second discussion forum. Interact with other students’ posts by Nov. 1.

Oct. 28-Nov. 14: Read Logan, pp. 105-353 The Imitation of Christ (all).

**Third Class Meeting: Nov. 15-16**

Part IV: The Church Outside the Roman Empire
**Discussion of Jenkins’s The Lost History of Christianity**

Part V: The Roman Church after the Schism
The Crusading Spirit
The Pinnacle of the Papacy
The Revolution in Atonement Doctrine
Scholasticism: Revolution in Methodology
Monasticism, Mysticism, and Spirituality
Philosophy, the Church, and the Sacraments
The Fall of the Papacy
The Push for Reform: Mystics and “Heretics”
**Discussion of Thomas à Kempis’ *The Imitation of Christ***

Nov. 18-24: Review material from third class meeting and work on your application journal.

By Nov. 25: Post to the third discussion forum. Interact with other students’ posts by Nov. 29.

Application journal is due by Friday, Nov. 29.

Research paper is due by Friday, Dec. 13.

Reading Report is due by Monday, Dec. 16.

Time Chart is due by Wednesday, Dec. 18.

All late work is due by Wednesday, Dec. 18.

**Syllabus Addendum**

**Academic Standards**
Cheating and plagiarism are considered serious breaches of personal and academic integrity. Cheating involves, but is not necessarily limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination or the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructors. Plagiarism involves the use of another person’s distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one’s own instead of giving proper credit to the source. Plagiarism can also involve over dependence on other source material for the scope and substance of one’s writing. Such breaches in academic standards often result in a failing grade as well as other corrective measures. For more information, please consult the Student Handbook.
ADA Policy
The seminary complies with the provisions of the Americans with Disabilities Act. A student with a qualifying and authenticated disability who is in need of accommodations, should petition the seminary in accordance with the stated guidelines in the Student Handbook.

Cancellation of Class
In the event the seminary has to cancel a class meeting (impending storm, professor illness, etc.), the Registration Office will send out an email (via the GCTS email account) notification to all students registered in the respective course. If the cancelation occurs the day of the scheduled meeting, the Registration Office will also attempt to contact students via their primary phone contact on record. The professor will contact the students (via GCTS account) regarding make-up. If a weekend class is cancelled, the class will be made up during the scheduled Make-Up weekend (see the academic calendar for the designated dates). For more info, consult your Student Handbook.

Extension Policy
Arrangements for submission of late work at a date on or before the “last day to submit written work,” as noted on the seminary’s Academic Calendar, are made between the student and professor. Formal petition to the Registration Office is not required at this time. This includes arrangements for the rescheduling of final exams.

However, course work (reading and written) to be submitted after the publicized calendar due date, must be approved by the Registration Office. An extension form, available online, must be submitted to the Registration Office prior to the “last day to submit written work.” Requests received after this date will either be denied or incur additional penalty. For a full discussion of this policy, please consult the Student Handbook.

Grades
Faculty have six weeks from the course work due date to submit a final grade. Grades are posted on-line within twenty-four hours of receipt from the professor. Students are expected to check their CAMS student portal in order to access posted grades (unless instructed otherwise). Those individuals who need an official grade report issued to a third party should put their request in writing to the Registration Office.

Returned Work
Submitted hard-copy course work will be returned to the students if they provide a self addressed and postage- paid envelope with their final work. Work submitted without the appropriate envelope will be destroyed after the grade has been assessed and issued.