

Historiography Hamilton Campus

CH812 Gordon-Conwell Seminary

Fall Semester 2010

Dr. Garth M. Rosell, Instructor

Mondays, 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Course Description: This course is designed to introduce the student to Church History as a field of study. Special attention will be given to the writing of history (historiography proper), to the methodology and practice of historical research and to an understanding of the various schools of historical interpretation. Since many students who take historiography plan to pursue doctoral studies after completing their work at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, special attention will also be given to the practical issues of selecting a graduate program, getting accepted into that program, publishing what you have written, joining a professional society, finding a place in the guild and getting a job.

Textbooks:

George M. Marsden, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*
(New York: Oxford University Press, 1997);

David Bebbington, *Patterns in History: A Christian Perspective
on Historical Thought* (Vancouver: Regent, 2000);

Course Requirements: Students who are taking the course for credit will be asked to participate actively in the class sessions, complete the assigned reading, write a five page paper describing your own view of history; write a 20-25 page research paper analyzing the life and work of a major historian and make several oral presentations in class. There will be no examinations.

Research paper: Each student will be asked to select one major historian and write a 15-20 page paper analyzing his/her approach to historical research and writing. Students are asked to declare their choice by the time of the class meeting on September 27th (a sign-up sheet will be circulated during that class session). The final papers, typed and in correct form, are due on or before the final class session on December 6th. Consult Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 6th edition (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1996) if you have questions about form and/or style.

Class presentations: Each student will be assigned several 10-15 minute oral presentations on selected books, articles, themes and/or issues. In

addition to their oral presentations, students are asked to prepare a two to three page summary of their presentation for distribution to the rest of the class. Sufficient copies for this purpose should be brought class on the day of the presentation. Students are encouraged to be engaging, interesting and creative in their presentations. In preparing their presentations, they are also strongly urged to consider how their specific presentation can contribute to the overall understanding of other students in the class and to the larger purposes which the course is seeking to achieve. In short, the presenters are encouraged to become the "instructor" of the class during the time they have the floor.

Format for the presentations and handouts: Although both the oral presentations and the written summaries will vary depending upon the kind of material that is being reviewed, they should normally include a brief biographical sketch of the author(s); a summary of the major points that the article or book is seeking to make; and a critical analysis of the following questions (known affectionately as "The Big Ten."):

- (1) What **assumptions** do they bring?
- (2) What **evidence** do they use?
- (3) What **writers** do they quote?
- (4) What **focus** have they selected?
- (5) What **purpose** do they have?
- (6) What **biases** do they betray?
- (7) What **virtues and vices** do they identify?
- (8) What **writing method** have they used?
- (9) What **research methodology** do they apply?
- (10) What **historical school** do they represent?

Other ways of approaching the presentations might be the following:

- (1) Test all **assertions** against the **evidence** of:
 - Scripture
 - Tradition
 - Reason
 - Experience
- (2) Look for **patterns of change and continuity** in:
 - Political Life
 - Economic Structures
 - Religious/Theological Systems
 - Social Organization
 - Intellectual Interests

Artistic/aesthetic Expression

However you choose to approach the assignments let me encourage you throughout the preparation and presentation to diligently and prayerfully **seek for truth** since this exercise is properly seen as an **act of worship** of the One Who is TRUTH.

Furthermore, let me encourage you to do everything in a **spirit of love and humility** remembering that "the larger the island of wisdom, the greater the shoreline of ignorance"

Reading: Each student is expected to read a total of 2500 pages (including the textbooks) by the end of the course. An annotated bibliography of materials read must be submitted by the time of the final class meeting on Monday, December 6th. While the annotations need not be lengthy, they should make it apparent that you have read the material critically and carefully.

Grading: Your final grade for the course will be computed on the following basis:

Research paper:	30%
Class presentations:	30%
Philosophy of History	20%
*Annotated reading list:	20%

*100%=A; 95-99%=A-; 90-94%=B+; 85-89%=B; 80-84%=B-; 75-79%=C+; 70-74%=C; 65-69%=C-; 60-64%=D+; 55-59%=D; 50-54%=D-; Below 50%=F. No credit is given for skimming.

Class Schedule:

Monday, September 13: Introduction to Historiography

During this first class session, a basic orientation to the course will be provided and presentation assignments will be made.

Monday, September 20: Schools of Historical Interpretation

Required reading: David Bebbington, *Patterns in History* (Vancouver: Regent, 2000).

Student Presentations: (1) Cyclical history; (2) "Christian" history; (3) the idea of **progress**; (4) **historicism**; and (5) **Marxist** history.

Monday, September 27: The Classical Greek and Roman Historians

Student Presentations on the Greek Historians: (1) **Herodotus** (ca 480 to 425 BCE); (2) **Thucydides** (ca 460 to 401 BCE); (3) **Xenophon** (ca 431 to 352 BCE); and (4) **Polybius** (ca 200 to 118 BCE).

Student Presentations on the Roman Historians: (1) **Livy** (59 BCE to 17 CE); (2) **Tacitus** (ca 56 to 120 CE).

Monday, October 4: Early Jewish and Christian Historians

Student Presentations on the Jewish and Christian Historians:
 (1) **Josephus** (ca 37 to 100 CE); (2) **Saint Luke** (first century CE);
 (3) **Eusebius** (ca 260 to 339 CE); (4) **Augustine of Hippo** (354 to 430 CE); (5) **Venerable Bede** (ca 672-735 CE).

October 11-15, 2010: READING WEEK (No class)

Monday, October 18: No Class

Monday, October 25: Patristic, Medieval, Reformation, Modern and Postmodern Historiography

Student Presentations: (1) **Patristic:** Glenn F. Chesnut, "A Century of Patristic Studies," in Henry W. Bowden, ed., *The Legacy of Philip Schaff* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1988); (2) **Medieval:** Bernard McGinn, "The Gold of Catholicity: Reflections on a Century of American Study of Medieval Church History," in Bowden, *A Century of Church History*; (3) **Reformation:** A. G. Dickens and John Tonkin, *The Reformation in Historical Thought* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1985); (4) **Modern:** Ernest Breisach, *Historiography: Ancient, Medieval and Modern*, 2nd edition (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1994), pp. 268-422; and (5) **Postmodern:** Gertrude Himmelfarb, *On Looking Into the Abyss* (New York: Vintage, 1995).

Student Presentations: (1) Anthony Grafton, *The Footnote: A Curious History* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999); (2) David Ewing Duncan, *Calendar: Humanity's Epic Struggle to Determine a True and Accurate Year* (New York: Avon Books, 1998).

Monday, November 1: The Historian at Work: Research and Writing

Student Presentations: (1) **Quantitative Research:** Floyd J. Fowler, *Survey Research Methods*, 3rd edition (New York: Sage Publications, 2001); (2) **Qualitative Research:** Joseph A. Maxwell,

Qualitative Research Design, 2nd edition (New York: Sage Publications, 2004); (3) **Oral History**: Donald A. Ritchie, *Doing Oral History*, 2nd edition (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003) .

November 8-12, 2010: READING WEEK (No class)

Monday, November 15: The Historian at Work: Teaching as a Vocation

Common Reading: George M. Marsden, *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

Student Review of Marsden

Student Presentations: (1) **Parker Palmer**, *The Courage to Teach* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1998); (2) **Raymond Williams**, "The Vocation of Teaching: Beyond the Conspiracy of Mediocrity," in Malcolm L. Warford, ed., *Practical Wisdom: On Theological Teaching and Learning* (New York: Peter Lang, 2005); (3) **Hans J. Hillerbrand**, "Church History as Vocation and Moral Discipline," in *Church History: Studies in Christianity and Culture*, vol. 70, no. 1 (March 2001), pp. 1-18.

Monday, November 22: The Historian at Work: Observing Some of the Masters

Student Presentations: (1) **Kenneth Scott Latourette**; (2) **Roland Bainton**; (3) **Jaroslav Pelikan**; (4) **Philip Schaff**; (5) **George Marsden**; (6) **Leopold von Ranke**; (7) **Dana Robert**; (8) **F. F. Bruce**; (9) **Herbert Butterfield**; (10) **Adolf von Harnack**; (11) **Mark A. Noll**; (12) **Martin E. Marty**; (13) **Heiko Oberman**; and (14) **Justo Gonzalez**.

Instructions: These presentations must be no longer than ten minutes and they must include (1) a brief biographical sketch of the person you are studying; (2) an annotated bibliography of their major works; and (3) an analysis of their approach to history using "the big ten" as your outline. Be sure to bring a written summary of your presentation for distribution to the class.

Monday, November 29: Tackling Some Historiographical Problems

(1) History and Providence: Student presentations on (1) **John Calvin**, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, book 1, chapters 16, 17 and 18 in John T. McNeill, ed., *The Library of Christian Classics*, vol. XX: Calvin:

Institutes of the Christian Religion (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960); (2) **James Arminius**, "A Declaration of the Sentiments of Arminius on Predestination, Divine Providence and the Freedom of the Will," in James Nichols and William Nichols, eds., *The Works of James Arminius*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, 1991), vol. 1, pp. 580-732; (3) **Ulrich Zwingli**, "On Providence," in Samuel Macauley Jackson and William J. Hinke, eds., *On Providence and Other Essays* (Durham, NC: The Labyrinth Press, 1983); and (4) **Thomas Watson**, *All Things for Good* (Edinburgh: The Banner of Truth Trust, 2001).

(2) History and Miracles: Student presentation on (1) **Colin Brown**, "History and the Believer," in Colin Brown, ed., *History, Criticism and Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1976).

(3) History and the Christian Scholar: Student presentations on (1) **Mark Noll**, *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995); (2) **C. T. McIntire**, "The Ongoing Task of Christian Historiography," in George Marsden and Frank Roberts, eds., *A Christian View of History?* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1975); (3) **Reinhold Niebuhr**, *Faith and History* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1949); and (4) **Carl F. H. Henry**, "Revelation in History," in *Christianity Today* (October 9, November 20 and December 4, 1964).

Monday, December 6: Critical Reflections on your Chosen Scholar

Instructions: During this class we will have the delightful experience of hearing your reflections on the particular scholar you have chosen to study. For these presentations, you should be sure to include a brief biographical sketch of the individual, a digital picture if one is available, an annotated bibliography of their major publications and some critical reflections on how they understand the task of research and writing. You can use "the big ten" as your guide if you wish -- but you should not feel bound to any particular format. Be sure to bring along enough copies of your written 1-2 page summary to distribute to the whole class.

Students will also be asked to present a brief version of their own view of history drawing on the five page papers they have prepared (see the "Course Requirements" section at the beginning of the syllabus). Please bring along sufficient copies of your papers to distribute to the rest of the class.

A Final Reminder: Please don't forget that your final research papers and

annotated bibliographies (and all other written work for the course) are due by the time of the final class meeting on December 6th.