

HIST 329: THE EARLY CHURCH, 395-787
SYLLABUS FOR SPRING 2007
W

INSTRUCTOR:

Prof. Megan Williams

Office: Science 267B

Office hours: Wednesday 2:10-6:00 PM or by appointment

Contact: mhw@sfsu.edu (please contact me by e-mail only; messages left on my office voicemail will not be picked up or returned)

Course web site: <http://bss.sfsu.edu/mwilliams/hist330>

PREREQUISITE:

ENG 214 required; minimum third-semester sophomore standing recommended

DESCRIPTION: [NOTE: this varies from the Catalogue]

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

1. be familiar with the geography of Europe and the Mediterranean and with major events, persons, and developments in the history of those regions during the period 600-1000 CE in the areas of political, social, economic, and cultural history
2. be familiar with the various types of evidence available for the period (including literary texts in various genres, documents, archaeology, art, and architecture)
3. study, interpret and critically evaluate historical evidence in all these forms in its appropriate chronological, geographic and cultural contexts
4. read and critically evaluate modern scholarly interpretations and reconstructions of the period in light of relevant evidence
5. recognize the limitations of evidence and understand the constraints these place upon historical reconstruction, and the limitations of working with translations
6. further develop historical imagination and empathy, so as to enter into a real dialogue with the past rather than simply viewing past persons and events through the lens of present realities and values
7. become more aware of what is taken for granted in present cultures and of the limitations our own cultures place upon our imaginations and our critical faculties

BOOKS ORDERED:

The Lives of Simeon Stylites. Tr. Robert Doran; Fwd. Susan Ashbrook Harvey. Cistercian Press, 1992. ISBN: 9991474277

Early Christian Lives. Tr. Carolinne White. Penguin Classics, 1998. ISBN: 9780140435269

Sainted Women of the Dark Ages. Ed. and tr. Jo Ann McNamara, John E. Halborg, E. Gordon Whatley. Duke University Press, 1992. ISBN: 0822312166

Benedict. Rule. Vintage, 1998 (repr.) ISBN: 037570017X

Davis, Leo Donald. *The First Seven Ecumenical Councils.* Liturgical Press, 1990 (repr.) ISBN: 0814656161

Brown, Peter R.L. *The Rise of Western Christendom.* Blackwell Publishing Professional, 2002 (2nd ed.) ISBN: 0631221387

COURSE POLICIES:

WEIGHTING OF ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE FINAL GRADE:

Class participation	15%
Quiz (20 minutes)	5%
Midterm exam (50 minutes)	15%
Interpretation paper (5-7 pp.)	20%
Book review (5-7 pp.)	20%
Final exam (120 minutes)	25%

Assignment descriptions, guidelines, and other resources will be available online at <http://bss.sfsu.edu/mwilliams/hist330>.

Students who have taken HIST 325 may elect to write a 10-15 page research paper instead of the two 5-7 page papers. Graduate students enrolled in HIST 330 must write a research paper, minimum 20 pages in length. Please see me immediately if either of these applies to you.

SUBMISSION OF ASSIGNMENTS AND ASSIGNMENT OF GRADES:

All take-home assignments, including the two papers, must be submitted on iLearn. Grades for these assignments, and for participation in class discussions, and comments on the papers, will be posted on iLearn.

Class discussions will be graded on a 3-point scale, as follows:

- 3: excellent participation; equivalent to A
- 2: very good to good participation: equivalent to B-
- 1: satisfactory participation: equivalent to C-
- 0: no or very poor participation; equivalent to D-

In calculating how many points are allotted out of the 15% total participation grade, the total numerical score on the individual discussions will be converted so as to generate a total equivalent to the average grade you received on the discussions, as above. Thus, for example, a consistent grade of 2 on all the discussions will NOT translate directly into 10 out of 15 points towards the final grade, but into a higher figure.

MISSED EXAMS, LATE PAPERS, ATTENDANCE AND EXCUSES:

All assignments **must** be completed to pass the course. Students who fail to complete any one assignment **automatically fail** the course. Papers are to be submitted **in class at 12:10 exactly**. Late papers will be penalized one full grade for every 24 hours late or fraction thereof (e.g., a B paper turned in on the due date at 12:11 pm will receive a grade of C). Papers submitted more than three days (72 hours) after the deadline will receive a grade of F regardless of quality. Regular attendance is necessary to pass the exams; the readings alone will not be sufficient. Attendance will be taken at discussion sessions, with two unexcused absences permitted during the semester. Every student should be prepared to participate in every discussion section; specific guidelines for preparation for each discussion will be posted online in advance. Participation grades will be based on grades for 4 discussions and 6 iLearn activities, for a total of up to 20 points towards the final grade. Make-up tests will be given, late writing assignments excused, and further absences excused, only in the case of **emergencies** documented by (1) an original, signed letter, on letterhead or its equivalent, from a medical professional (in case of illness) or (2) an original death certificate or notarized copy (in case of attendance at a funeral). **No other excuses of any kind will be accepted.**

BEHAVIOR IN THE CLASSROOM:

In order for the classroom to serve as a learning environment, students must be courteous to each other and to the instructor, and must show respect for the course material. For example, differences of viewpoint should be expressed with courtesy and without personal hostility; at the same time, students should show respect for the course material by accepting that intellectual debate and disagreement are not personal, but an essential part of the learning process. Disruptive behavior is unacceptable at any time. This includes talking or making noise during lecture, leaving cell phones on during class, interrupting the instructor or other students, speaking at great length during discussions, and so on. Students who are disruptive will be asked to leave the room. Do not make a habit of coming to class late, leaving during class and returning, or leaving class early, as this is very disruptive to the instructor and to other students.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Integrity is essential to learning as it is to the good life. Its opposite in the academic context, dishonesty in the form of cheating or plagiarism, is unfair to your fellow students and is prohibited by the San Francisco State University Student Code of Conduct. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, copying other students' work and helping other students to cheat. All exams in this course will be closed-book; you may have only blank blue books and pens or pencils during the exam. Plagiarism means using someone else's work without proper acknowledgment (see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plagiarism> for further discussion of the concept, and more resources). Students in this course are encouraged to work together in preparing for discussions and other group activities, reviewing for exams, and improving their writing, but should not contribute substantial content to other students' papers. Penalties for cheating and plagiarism range from, at minimum, a failing grade on the specific assignment, to expulsion from the University. All cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Department Chair and College Dean. Students are responsible for knowing the SFSU regulations concerning cheating and plagiarism, to be found at <http://www.sfsu.edu/~helpdesk/docs/rules/conduct.htm>.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) ACCOMMODATION:

The University is committed to providing reasonable academic accommodation to students with disabilities. The Disability Programs and Resources Center (DPRC) provides academic support services and specialized assistance to students with disabilities. In order to receive accommodation through the ADA, you must make a formal request through the DPRC in SSB 110 (415-338-2472). If you are registered with the DPRC, please let me know so that I can be prepared to accommodate you.

WARNING:

This syllabus is **for informational purposes only**. It is not a final statement of the policies, assignments, or schedule for this course. **Only the online course materials can be considered authoritative, and these are subject to change at any time.** Students are responsible for checking the online course materials regularly (at least three times a week) for any changes. If class must be cancelled, for example because I am ill, this will be announced online, and the syllabus will be adjusted appropriately.

Week 1: Introduction and approaches

Class 1 (1/24/07)

Lecture: Introduction to the course; from Jesus movement to religion of empire (70 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Video: "The birth of a new religion" (1999, 50 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Discussion: how will we study Christianity as historians? (30 minutes)

Week 2: Constantine and imperial Christianity

Class 2 (1/31/07)

Video: "Biography: Constantine: The Christian Emperor" (1998, 50 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Lecture: Origins and transformation of Christian institutions (50 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Discussion: Eusebius and Christian empire (50 minutes)

Reading: Brown, *Christendom*, "Introduction," chapters 1 and 2; Davis, *Councils*, chapter 2; Eusebius selection TBD (download pdf)

Week 3: The long fourth century I

Class 3 (2/7/07)

Lecture: Trinitarian controversy and Greek patristic thought (50 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Video: "Trials and Triumphs in Rome: Third and fourth centuries" (1999, 50 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Discussion: Controversy: Christian power or Christian thought? (50 minutes)

Reading: Brown, *Christendom*, chapter 3; Davis, *Councils*, chapter 3; Lim, "Christian Triumph and Controversy" (download pdf); Gregory of Nazianzus, Third Theological Oration (download pdf)

Week 4: The long fourth century II

Class 4 (2/14/07)

Lecture: Augustine and company (80 minutes)

Break (20 minutes)

Discussion: Augustine: Christian empire, Christian culture? (70 minutes)

Reading: Brown, *Christendom*, chapter 4; Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* (excerpt, download pdf), *City of God* (excerpt, download pdf)

Week 5: Holy men

Class 5 (2/21/07)

Lecture: From Antony to Simeon and beyond (80 minutes)

Break (20 minutes)

Discussion: Monks: mediators or madmen? (80 minutes)

Reading: Brown, "Holy Man" (download pdf); Anthony, *Letters* (download pdf); Syriac *Life of Symeon the Stylite in Doran*, ed. *Lives of Simeon Stylites*

Week 6: Relics and pilgrimage

Class 6 (2/28/07)

[2/27: Last day to drop a class]

Quiz: material for classes 2-5 (20 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Lecture: From Jerusalem to Tours (70 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Discussion: Relics: piety or superstition? (50 minutes)

Reading: Egeria, *Itinerary* (excerpt, download pdf); Sulpicius Severus, *Life of Martin* (download pdf)

Week 7: Christological controversy

Class 7 (3/7/07)

Lecture: The emergence of church councils (50 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Lecture: Nestorius, Cyril, and the dispute over the nature(s) of Christ (50 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Discussion: Councils: theology or politics? (50 minutes)

Reading: Davis, *Councils*, chapter 4; Nestorius, Sermon 27 (download pdf), *Bazaar of Heracleides* (excerpt, download pdf); Proclus, Homily 1 (download pdf); Cyril, Letter 96 and *Explanation of the 12 Anathemas*

Week 8: The outer reaches of Christendom

Class 8 (3/14/07)

Paper 1 due today (iLearn): 5-7 pages on a primary text

Lecture: From Ireland to Persia (80 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Video: "African Ascetics and Celtic Monks" (50 minutes)

Reading: Brown, *Christendom*, chapter 5

Week 9: The council of Chalcedon

Class 9 (3/21/07)

Lecture: The Chalcedonian definition (80 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Discussion: Chalcedon: Truth discovered or disaster invited? (80 minutes)

Reading: Davis, *Councils*, chapter 5; Chalcedonian Definition (download pdf); *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon* (excerpts, download pdf)

Week 10: The aftermath of Chalcedon in the East

Class 10 (3/28/07)

Lecture: Monophysitism and responses, 451-636 (80 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Discussion: "Byzantine" Christianity: power or principle? (80 minutes)

Reading: Brown, *Christendom*, chapter 7; John of Ephesus excerpts TBD

Week 11: Midterm Examination

Takehome midterm due 4/?/07 (iLearn)

No class or reading

Spring Recess, 4/8-14/07

Week 12: The church of Rome

Class 12 (3/21/07)

[Last day to withdraw from a class]

Lecture: Emergence of the papacy (50 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Video: "Byzantium and the Holy Roman Empire" (50 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Discussion: The papacy: tradition or innovation? (50 minutes)

Reading: Brown, *Christendom*, chapter 8; Gregory the Great, Pastoral Rule excerpts TBD

Week 13: The new monasticism and the Frankish nobility

Class 13 (4/18/07)

Lecture: A Church of the Nobility (80 minutes)

Break (20 minutes)

Discussion: Christianization: profound or shallow? (80 minutes)

Reading: Brown, *Christendom*, chapters 6 and 9; Benedict, *Rule*; Venantius Fortunatus and Baudovinia, *Life of Radegund in Sainted Women of the Dark Ages*

Week 14: The impact of Islam

Class 14 (5/2/07)

Paper 2 due: 5-7 page book review

Lecture: Islam and the new world order (80 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Video: Islamic Origins (50 minutes)

Reading: Brown, *Christendom*, chapters 12 and 13

Week 15: Iconoclasm (the East, 630-787)

Class 15 (5/9/07)

Lecture: Theological, political, and art-historical aspects (80 minutes)

Break (20 minutes)

Discussion: Topic TBD (80 minutes)

Reading: Brown, *Christendom*, chapter 17; primary reading TBD

Week 16: Charlemagne and the Church

Class 15 (5/16/07)

Lecture: Western church and imperial expansion (80 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Discussion: the ethics of conversion (50 minutes)

Break (10 minutes)

Student evaluations (20 minutes)

Reading: Brown, *Christendom*, chapters 18 and 19