

## Saint Leo University

### REL450 History of Christianity

#### Course Description:

This course is an inquiry into the theological, spiritual, and institutional history of Christianity from the time of Christ to the present.

#### Prerequisite:

PHI 101 plus

Any 200 level REL course

#### Textbooks:

Stewart, Cynthia. *The Catholic Church: A Brief Popular History*. Winona, MN: St. Mary's Press, 2008. Print. ISBN-13: 9780884899679 ISBN-10: 0884899675

#### Learning Outcomes:

1. Students should be able to research, analyze, and report historical events and themes clearly, accurately, and comprehensively through written reports and oral presentations.
2. Students should be able to identify accurately major historical developments within the history of Christianity by means of quizzes, examinations, and reports.
3. Students should be able to understand basic themes of Christian theological developments as they relate to historical developments.
4. Students should be able to understand historical events through the lens of various historical figures.

#### Core Value:

**Excellence:** Saint Leo University is an educational enterprise. All of us, individually and collectively, work hard to ensure that our students develop the character, learn the skills, and assimilate the knowledge essential to become morally responsible leaders. The success of our University depends upon a conscientious commitment to our mission, vision, and goals.

While all of the University's core values will be fundamental to this course, it focuses on EXCELLENCE: excellence in conducting historical research, insightful analysis, and clear, accurate communication of research in both oral and written form.

#### Evaluation:

Your grade in this course will be determined by a number of factors. Grading will be evaluated in the following manner:

Graded Assessment	Points Each	Points Total	Percent
Quizzes (7)	20	140	25%
Discussion Questions (8)	20	160	25%
Personal Reflection (8)	10	80	10%
Research Paper		100	40%
Total		480	100%

**Quizzes:** Modules 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 will have a timed essay quiz covering the required reading in the textbook and other assigned readings. The purpose of these essay questions is to assess how well you have done the reading assignments and understand the material. Your answers must reflect knowledge of the assigned reading and the ability to express it in your own words. Once you begin the quiz, you will have an hour to answer five essay questions.

**Discussion Questions:** Discussion posts should reflect careful and critical reflection on the discussion question as it relates to the content of the module and module reading assignments. It is not sufficient to restate the question or make comments that do not address the question directly.

**Reflection:** A personal reflection on the relevance of each module's content to contemporary Christianity should be submitted to the Assignment box no later than Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT of each module. The purpose of this exercise is to learn how to discover in historical events and ideas a contemporary relevance for the modern Church. You are being asked to reflect in no less than 150 words on how the historical material of each module can provide some insight, lesson, or perspective for Christianity today. While you will not receive a specific grade for each entry, the assignment is pass-fail; therefore, you must meet the following minimum requirements to receive credit.

- 1) 150 word minimum
- 2) Clear and logical expression
- 3) Related to the historical material

The completion of the journal assignments for all eight modules will count for 10% of the final grade.

**Research Paper:** Historical study requires a great deal of objectivity. Be careful to thoroughly research your chosen topic, and use ample sources. If you choose to conduct research in the New Testament, remember that your topic should be of an historical nature and approached from that perspective. Please consult with your instructor on the theme of your paper. The research paper is a place to show excellence in conducting historical research, insightful analysis, and clear, accurate communication of ideas. Papers that *only* meet the minimum requirements described above will fall short of the standard of excellence and be graded accordingly.

The research paper requires MLA formatting, 1500 words, double-spaced pages at 12-point font (including a separate cover page and works cited page), and five (5) sources from any of the following: book, print journal, online peer reviewed journal, and/or website with an .edu address. *Wikipedia will not be accepted as a resource for this course. Wikipedia does not qualify as an acceptable resource; the nature of a wiki allows experts and nonexperts alike to contribute to the content.* See the Research Paper Guidelines document for complete guidelines, rubric, and checklist for this assignment.

The topic of your paper must be submitted to the instructor via the Assignment box for approval by the end of Module 2. The research paper must be submitted to the Assignment box by the end of Module 7. (The Assignment box is linked to Turnitin.)

**Grading Scale:**

A	94-100
A-	90-93
B+	87-89
B	84-86
B-	80-83
C+	77-79
C	74-76
C-	70-73
D+	67-69
D	60-66
F	0-59

### **Selected Bibliography**

Bausch, William J. *Pilgrim Church: A Popular History of Catholic Christianity*. Mystic, CT: Twenty-third Publications, 1981. Print.

Chadwick, Owen. *The Reformation: The Penguin History of the Church*, Volume 3. London: Penguin, 1978. Print.

Chadwick, Henry. *The Early Church: The Pelican History of the Church*, Volume 1. New York: Penguin Books, 1967. Print.

Gonzalez, Justo. *A History of Christian Thought: Volume 1: From the Beginnings to the Council of Chalcedon*. 2 ed. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988. Print.

Gonzalez, Justo. *A History of Christian Thought: Volume 2: From Augustine to the Eve of the Reformation*. 2 ed. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987. Print.

Gonzalez, Justo. *History of Christian Thought: Volume 3: From the Protestant Reformation to the Twentieth Century*. 2 ed. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987. Print.

Gonzalez, Justo. *The Story of Christianity*. 2 vols. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1984. Print.

Imperato, Robert. *Early and Medieval Christian Spirituality*. Lanham, MD: Univ. Press of America, 2002. Print.

Placher, William C. *A History of Christian Theology: An Introduction*. Louisville: The Westminster Press, 1983. Print.

Placher, William C., ed. *Readings in the History of Christian Theology*, Vol. 1. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1988. Print.

Southern, Richard. *Western Society and the Church in the Middle Ages*, the *Pelican History of the Church* series. New York: Penguin Books, 1990. Print.

Weaver, Mary Jo. *Introduction to Christianity*. 2 ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth, 1991. Print.

## Class Content/Topics/Schedule

### Module 1

At the conclusion of this module, students will be able to:

- Explain the difference between the general study of history and the study of Church history as a special discipline.
- Identify the sources used in the study of the history of Christianity.
- Describe the benefit to the modern Church of a critical understanding of its own history.

Assignment	Due no later than
Read the assigned materials	
Write Reflection	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Initial reply to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Research paper topic	Module 2

### Module 2

At the conclusion of this module, students will be able to:

- Describe the general Greco-Roman context and the specific Jewish religious context of Jesus and the earliest Christians.
- Identify the leading figures in the primitive apostolic community and their roles in founding and expanding the Church.
- Explain the changed circumstances for the Church in the Roman Empire during the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> centuries.
- Identify the periods of Roman persecution of the nascent Church and describe the effect of these experiences on its internal spiritual and institutional life.

Assignment	Due no later than
Read the assigned materials	
Write Reflection	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Initial reply to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Reading quiz	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Research paper topic	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

### Module 3

At the conclusion of this module, students will be able to:

- Outline the Christianity's transition from an illegal and persecuted sect to a privileged and patronized imperial religion.
- Describe the major theological controversy over the nature of Christ and its relationship to the new political situation.
- Explain the genesis of and significance of the first universal council of the Church.
- Identify the most important Latin Church Father of the period: Augustine of Hippo.
- Identify the theological interests of Augustine that have had a major impact on Western Christianity up to the present day.

Assignment	Due no later than
Read the assigned materials	
Write Reflection entry	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Initial reply to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Reading quiz	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

### Module 4

At the conclusion of this module, you should be able to:

- Explain how the growth of the Kingdom of the Franks created the political situation of early Latin Christianity.
- Outline the growth of Western monasticism beginning with St. Benedict of Nursia and its role in the cultural development of pre-European civilization.
- Describe the transformation of the Roman Empire in the East around a distinctively eastern form of ancient Christianity.
- Identify the causes of division and separation between the Latin and Greek Christianity.

Assignment	Due no later than
Read the assigned materials	
Write Reflection	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Initial reply to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Reading quiz	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

## Module 5

At the conclusion of this module, students will be able to:

- Explain the developments of Church state relations at this time.
- Describe the various movements of reform.
- Describe the growth of urban populations in the period of the High Middle Ages.
- Identify Sts. Francis and Clare of Assisi and describe their impact on medieval Christianity.
- Identify Pope Innocent III and explain how he embodied the high point of Papal political power.

Assignment	Due no later than
Read the assigned materials	
Write Reflection	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Initial reply to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Reading quiz	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

## Module 6

At the conclusion of this module, students will be able to:

- Explain the introduction of Greek philosophical writings into Western Church scholarship.
- Identify St. Thomas Aquinas and his intellectual impact on the Western Church of the Middle Ages and subsequently.
- Outline the crisis of late medieval Christianity.
- Describe the reasons for the Protestant movement.
- Compare and contrast the reforming agendas of the Protestants and the Catholics at this time.

Assignment	Due no later than
Read the assigned materials	
Write Reflection	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Initial reply to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Reading quiz	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Research paper	Module 7

## Module 7

At the conclusion of this module, students will be able to:

- Explain how the Church's outlook on the world changed as a result of exploration and discovery outside European civilization.
- Identify the Jesuits as a major force for accommodation to and expansion within the new worlds.
- Describe the early struggles between the new science and old ways of thinking.
- Describe how the effects of Enlightenment and political instability contributed to the Church's response to the modern world at the first Vatican Council.

Assignment	Due no later than
Read the assigned materials	
Write Reflection	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Initial reply to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Reading quiz	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Submit Research paper	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT

## Module 8

At the conclusion of this module, students will be able to:

- Describe the tragic history of the 20<sup>th</sup> c. influencing the decision to call an ecumenical council of the Church.
- Identify Pope John XXIII and his role in shaping the Church for a new millennium.
- Explain the changes brought about in the Church by the Second Vatican Council.
- Describe the interpretation of Vatican II and the development of the post-conciliar Catholicism by Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI.

Assignment	Due no later than
Read the assigned materials	
Write Reflection	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Initial reply to discussion question	Thursday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Post Responses to at least two classmates	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT
Complete Reading quiz	Sunday 11:59 PM EST/EDT