Northern Seminary
CH 407-OL History of American Religion – Online
September 23 – December 7, 2013
Professor: Rev. Dr. Antonia Lucic Gonzalez
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Students are expected to log in to Moodle before the first day of classes. To access the online forum, go to www.seminary.edu and click on Moodle (under Current Students). All registered students will be enrolled in Moodle by the instructor the week before the term begins. If having problems accessing Moodle, contact the ithelpdesk@seminary.edu.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
This course covers the historical, theological, spiritual, cultural and institutional developments which have characterized religious experience in the United States from the Colonial period to the present.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:
1. Students will learn to think critically about the key theological ideas, major movements and influential personalities that shaped the Church in America. They will acquire the ability to analyze theological arguments, and coherently articulate the meaning of the Christian faith in the context of its historical development in North America. They will understand how global historical and theological developments influenced the plethora of Christian expressions in America. By closely examining the religious and cultural experiences of different racial and ethnic groups in America through the past centuries, students will gain greater understanding and appreciation of the way the triune God works on creating and sustaining the Kingdom among them.

2. Students will gain awareness of key original source documents in each century that will be covered. They will develop knowledge and understanding of church history as a discipline which uses methods of historical research, inquiry, and critical evaluation. Their skills of researching, critically examining and interacting with original historical sources will increase.

3. By encountering this significant body of historical and theological data, students will acquire a broader perspective on their own faith. They will be able to evaluate their own beliefs and practices in the light of the presented historical background and theological developments. In this process of assessing and evaluating one’s beliefs, the online discussions and thoughtful, sensitive yet critical interaction with fellow students will be crucial.

4. Students will have an opportunity to grow in character and gain wisdom for ministry by bringing their faith into conversation with that of the Christians in the centuries past. As they assess the theologies/practices they encounter in the course, they will be challenged to develop and defend their own expressions of Christian doctrine and spirituality. Special attention will be given to relevant hermeneutical issues as we focus on biblical interpretation of important themes through history. Learning about the past will enable students to evaluate contemporary trends in doctrinal and ethical issues (such as racial and social issues,
“culture wars”, gender themes) and, should their ministry require it, will be equipped to address current doctrinal, ethical and cultural disputes in an informed, well argued manner.

**SIGNIFICANCE FOR LIFE AND MINISTRY:** The last two course objectives address the significance of the course for life and ministry. The course seeks to lead students to a deeper understanding of their own ecclesiastical traditions and beliefs, as well as to an informed appreciation for the diversity of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church to which they belong. While our learning and discussions will be primarily historical and theological in nature, a lot of effort and intentionality will be put into integration of academic material and practical application, for both their ministry and their personal spiritual life.

**REQUIRED READING, VIEWING AND LISTENING**

**Textbooks:**


**ATLA Full Text Articles:**


**Online Reading:**

King Jr., Martin L. *Letter from Birmingham Jail.*

**Video Resources:**

*The Puritans and the Founding of the New England Colonies.*
Roundtable Discussion on Puritanism.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yuhy3RfD3ws

Rise of Slave Trade; Black History in Colonial America.

Interview with Mark Noll and George Marsden, America’s Christian Roots.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p8FlpoEikHw

Christopher Hitchins, Science to Religious Dogma.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-gQ829OTtj4

Christopher Hitchins, Is God Great Debate?
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sHiGsL4bzmM

Christopher Hitchins, Science versus Religion.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hv6U2BtdFGc

Interview with Mark Noll, On the Scandal of the Evangelical Mind.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eQviXavl1BA

Randall Balmer, On the evangelical subculture, 5 minutes
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NuTHeU2TyVY

Billy Graham, Easter in Birmingham.
http://www.billygraham.org/videoarchive.asp (under Sermons)

Billy Graham sermons:
What’s Wrong With the World, (1958),
God and the Color of Man’s Skin (1965),
http://www.billygraham.org/videoarchive.asp (under Sermons)

Audio Resources:

http://www.sermonaudio.com/sermoninfo.asp?SID=770213541

White Horse Inn, On Charles Finney.
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CPXNRE532wY

http://www.npr.org/2013/04/16/177468615/letter-from-birmingham-jail-50-years-later

National Public Radio, Interview with James Cone on Black Theology of Liberation.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS:

Master Level:

1. **Readings**: Students are expected to prepare for each session by reading, listening, and viewing the assigned materials on time as indicated in the course schedule.

2. **Online Discussion**: Students are required to participate regularly in the online forums. The course expectation is at least three substantive posts per student per week. The posts constitute 30% of the grade and are judged by quality, not quantity of words. A substantial post is a paragraph or two amounting to somewhere between 300 and 400 words, and not exceeding 1000 words. Students cannot be absent from more than two discussion sessions and expect to pass. Absence from one and/or two discussion sessions will be subject to a penalty in grade. Students will also be penalized for posting late, after a discussion session has ended.

3. **Exams**: Students will take two exams consisting of multiple choice, true-false, fill in the blank, and short answer questions. You must read and review the readings in advance, since the exams are time-restricted. You may not use course materials.

4. **Paper**: Students will write one 8-10 page paper on a topic of their choosing. Paper should be double-spaced with one-inch margins, using 12-point Times font. Students must follow the style guidelines found in Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (8th ed.; University of Chicago Press, 2013). Please contact the professor early in the course if you have questions about what is expected. For very specific guidance on writing papers, see *Paper Instructions*, and *Sample Paper*.

Diploma/Certificate Level:

1. **Readings**: Students are expected to prepare for each session by reading, listening, and viewing the assigned materials on time as indicated in the course schedule.

2. **Online Discussion**: Students are required to participate regularly in the online forums. The course expectation is at least two substantive posts per student per week. The posts constitute 30% of the grade and are judged by quality, not quantity of words. A substantial post is a paragraph or two amounting to somewhere between 300 and 400 words, and not exceeding 1000 words. Students cannot be absent from more than two discussion sessions and expect to pass. Absence from one and/or two discussion sessions will be subject to a penalty in grade. Students will be penalized for posting late, after a discussion session has ended.

3. **Exams**: Students will take two exams consisting of multiple choice, true-false, fill in the blank, and short answer questions. They are a close book exams and course materials may not be used during taking.

**Late Assignments Policy**: All assignments must be completed on time. Assignments completed late will be accepted only on permission of the instructor and are subject to a penalty in grade. No assignments can be completed after the last day of the quarter without prior permission from
the professor for an Incomplete. Such permission will not be granted unless the student can show good reason why he or she was prevented, beyond his or her control, from (unforeseeably) completing the assignment on time.

**Attendance Policy:** Students cannot be absent from more than two discussion sessions and expect to pass. Absence from one and/or two discussion sessions will be subject to a penalty in grade.

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**
The course will follow a set schedule during the week, progressing from Session A to Session B. The discussion forums will be live beginning at 5:00pm on Sundays and Wednesdays until 10:00pm two days later. Then you must take the quiz between 6:00am Friday and 9:00pm Saturday, on the weeks exams are given.

Session A: Sun 5:00pm – Tue 10:00pm
Session B: Wed 5:00pm – Fri 10:00pm

**Week 1**
A. **Historical Background**
   Video: *The Puritans and the Founding of the New England Colonies*, 8 minutes
   = 53 pages

B. **Historical Background:**
   Finke and Stark, *The Churching of America*, 1-24 (24pp)
   Video: *Roundtable Discussion on Puritanism*, 10 minutes
   Video: *Rise of Slave Trade; Black History in Colonial America*, 11 minutes
   **Primary Documents:**
   Gaustad and Noll, *A Documentary History of Religion in America*, vol. I:
   - *Anne Hutchinson*, 96-98 (2p)
   - *African and Indian Diversity*, 149-159 (10pp)
   = 63 pages

**Week 2**
A. **Historical Background**
   = 50 pages

B. **Historical Background:**
   Finke and Stark, *The Churching of America*, 56-116 (60 pp)
   = 60 pages

**Week 3**
A. **Historical Background:**

Video: Interview with Mark Noll and George Marsden, *America’s Christian Roots*, 27 minutes

**Primary Documents:**
Gaustad and Noll, *A Documentary History of Religion in America*, vol. I:
- *Passion and Intellect*, 160-190 (30pp)
Audio: Jonathan Edwards, Sermon: *Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God*, 40 minutes
= 47 pages

B. **Historical Background:**
Audio: *White Horse Inn, On Charles Finney*, 8 minutes

**Primary Documents:**
Gaustad and Noll, *A Documentary History of Religion in America*, vol. I:
- *Voluntary Societies and Society’s Reform*, 304-318 (13pp)
- *Revivalism*, 319-325 (6pp)
= 54 pages

**Week 4**
A. **Historical Background:**
Finke and Stark, *The Churching of America*, 156-196 (40pp)
= 66 pages

B. **Historical Background:**
= 56 pages

**Week 5**
A. **Historical Background:**
Nordbeck, “The American churches and slavery: a case study in unity and disunity,” 75-84 (9pp)

**Primary Documents:**
Gaustad and Noll, *A Documentary History of Religion in America*, vol. I:
- *Black Religion and Slavery*, 471-488 (17pp)
= 56 pages

B. **Primary Documents:**
Gaustad and Noll, *A Documentary History of Religion in America*, vol. I:
- *Schism over Slavery*, 489-500 (11 pp)
- *Debate over Slavery*, 517-543 (26pp)
- *The Civil War as a Religious Event*, 544-563 (19pp)
= 56 pages
Week 6
A. Historical Background:

Primary Documents:
Gaustad and Noll, *A Documentary History of Religion in America*, vol. I:
- *Women’s Rights and Indian Rights*, 501-513 (12pp)
- *After the War*, 578-596 (18pp)
Gaustad and Noll, *A Documentary History of Religion in America*, vol. II:
*Women’s Work?*, 35-46 (11pp)

= 53 pages

B. Historical Background:

Primary Documents:
Gaustad and Noll, *A Documentary History of Religion in America*, vol. II:
- *Science and Religion*, 322-352 (30pp)

= 55 pages

Week 7
A. Historical Background:

Primary Documents:
Gaustad and Noll, *A Documentary History of Religion in America*, vol II:
- *Studying and Reading the Bible*, 353-372 (19pp)
- *Modernism/Fundamentalism*, 401-406 (5pp)

= 58 pages

B. Historical Background:
Christopher Hitchins:
- Video 1: *Science to Religious Dogma*, 9 minutes,
- OR
- Video 2: *Is God Great Debate?*, 11 minutes,
- OR
- Video 3: *Science versus Religion*, 17 minutes

= 51 pages

Week 8
A. Historical Background:

Primary Documents:
Gaustad and Noll, *A Documentary History of Religion in America*, vol. II:
- *Love and Justice: Redeeming the City, Redeeming the Factory, and Redeeming the Land*, 93-124 (29pp)
- *Neo-Orthodoxy*, 419-422 (3pp)
Week 9
A. Historical Background
Audio: National Public Radio, ‘Letter from Birmingham Jail’ 50 Years Later, 8 minutes
Audio: National Public Radio, *Interview with James Cone on Black Theology of Liberation*, 10 minutes
Primary Documents:
Gaustad and Noll, *A Documentary History of Religion in America*, vol. II:
- *Civil Rights and the Churches*, 490-498 (8pp)
M. L. King Jr., *Letter from Birmingham Jail*, (8pp)
= 45 pages

B. Historical Background:
Finke and Stark, *The Churching of America*, 197-234 (37pp)
Primary Documents:
Gaustad and Noll, *A Documentary History of Religion in America*, vol. II:
- *The Ecumenical Age*, 509-523 (14)
= 51 pages

Week 10
A. Historical Background:
Video: Interview with Mark Noll, *On the Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*, 45 minutes
Video: Randall Balmer, *On the evangelical subculture*, 5 minutes
Video: Billy Graham, *Easter in Birmingham*, 4 minutes
Primary Documents:
Gaustad and Noll, *A Documentary History of Religion in America*, vol. II:
- Billy Graham, 559-563 (4pp)
Billy Graham sermons:
Video 1: *What’s Wrong with the World*, (1958), 38 minutes, OR
Video 2: *God and the Color of Man’s Skin*, (1965), 36 minutes, OR
Video 3: *Born Again*, (1979), 30 minutes
= 17 pages

B. Historical Background:
Finke and Stark, *The Churching of America*, 235-284 (49pp)
= 49 pages
COURSE EVALUATION

Master students:
30% Class Participation (Quality of Online Posts)
35% Paper
35% Exams

Diploma students:
40% Class Participation (Quality of Online Posts)
30% Exam 1
30% Exam 2

GRADING SCALE
A = 100-94   A- = 93-90
B+ = 89-87   B = 86-83
B- = 82-80   C+ = 79-77
C = 76-73    C- = 72-70
D+ = 69-67   D = 66-63
D- = 62-60   F = 59 and below

POLICIES FOR ALL MASTERS CLASSES

NOTE: All communications from the seminary will go to your seminary email account. Contact ihelpdesk@seminary.edu if you need help forwarding your seminary email address to your personal email address.

As a seminary community we hold integrity/hospitality as core values. Individuals are able to do their best work and thinking when their peers are fully present and engaged. We expect each person to both participate in class and carefully listen to others with the belief that everyone’s contribution is equally important. Therefore, the following policies have been established in order to provide clarity in regard to attendance expectations and relationships in the classroom.

Class Attendance Policy
It is expected that students will attend and participate in all class sessions. Failure to attend at least 80% of class sessions is grounds for automatic failure. A professor may set other attendance expectations. Students are always expected to communicate with a professor in advance if they will be absent. Attendance expectations are higher for online and intensive courses (see syllabus for specific requirements).

Late Work Policy
If a student cannot complete the work for a course by the due date listed on the syllabus, they must submit a “Request for a Grade of Incomplete” form to the Registrar by 4:30 of the last day of the term. The form must be signed by the instructor and Dean of Students. The professor may set stipulations and grade reductions. In the absence of a formal request form, the student will receive a grade based upon work completed by the last day of the term.
**Turabian Format**
All papers, including footnotes and bibliography, must be submitted in the correct format according to Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th ed., 2013.

**Plagiarism**
Plagiarism is the act of passing off as one’s own the words or ideas of someone else without providing proper acknowledgement or documentation. See the “Academic Honesty Policy” in the Seminary Catalog for more information on plagiarism and how to avoid it.

**Electronic Format**
Unless otherwise specified by the professor, all work submitted electronically must be in a Word document format (.doc, .docx).

**Course Evaluation in Moodle**
Students must complete an online course evaluation using the seminary Moodle system at [http://moodle.seminary.edu](http://moodle.seminary.edu) in order to receive a final grade for the course. The evaluation will be open for one week starting the last day of the term. If you need assistance connecting to Moodle or accessing the evaluation, please send an email to ithelpdesk@seminary.edu.