

Syllabus for  
**THE 461—History of Christianity I: Early Church**  
3.0 Credit Hours  
Spring 2010

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Acquaints the student with the basic information concerning the important people, events, and dates in the history of the Church from the Apostolic Age to the Medieval Period.

Prerequisite: None

II. COURSE GOALS:

This course will enable the student to do the following:

- A. Study Christian theology in the early church.
- B. Gain an insight to the broad range of issues, events, people, and ideas in the study of early Christianity.
- C. Develop theological ideas as a communicator.
- D. Grow in the ability to think critically and creatively.
- E. Study authoritative literature on the key topics of Christian theology and crucial events of the era.

III. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THIS COURSE

As a result of completing this coursework, the successful student will be able to do the following:

- A. Discuss key people, ideas, and events that constitute the framework of the study of the early church.
- B. Explain the formation of the biblical canon and its role in the early church by methods specified by the instructor.
- C. Discuss the function of creeds and councils in the early history of the church.
- D. Discuss the complex relationship between heresy and orthodoxy.
- E. Discuss the development of Trinitarian doctrine in the early church.
- F. Explain the formation of christological language in the early church.

IV. TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER LEARNING RESOURCES

A. Required Materials

1. Textbooks

Bettenson, Henry, ed., *The Early Christian Fathers: A selection from the writings of the Fathers from St. Clement of Rome to St. Athanasius*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1956.

González, Justo L., *A History of Christian Thought, Vol. 1: From the Beginnings*

*to the Council of Chalcedon*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1970.  
 Chadwick, Henry. *The Early Church*. Penguin History of the Church, 1.  
 Penguin USA, 1993.  
 Hannah, John D. *Charts of Ancient and Medieval Church History*. Grand Rapids:  
 Zondervan, 2001.  
 Gonzalez, Justo L. *The Story of Christianity ,Vol. 1*. San Fran.: Harper & Row,  
 1999.

2. Other  
None

B. Optional Materials

1. Textbooks  
None
2. Other  
None

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

A. University Policies and Procedures

1. Attendance at each class or laboratory is mandatory at Oral Roberts University. Excessive absences can reduce a student's grade or deny credit for the course.
2. Students taking a late exam because of an unauthorized absence will be charged a late exam fee.
3. Students and faculty at Oral Roberts University adhere to all laws addressing the ethical use of others' materials, whether it is in the form of print, video, multimedia, or computer software.
4. Final exams cannot be given before their scheduled times. Students need to check the final exam schedule before planning return flights or other events at the end of the semester.
5. Students are to be in compliance with University, school, and departmental policies regarding Whole Person Assessment requirements. Students should consult the Whole Person Assessment handbooks for requirements regarding general education and the students' majors.
  - a. The penalty for not submitting electronically or for incorrectly submitting a Whole Person Assessment artifact is a zero for that assignment.
  - b. By submitting an assignment, the student gives permission for the assignment to be assessed electronically.

B. Department Policies and Procedures

Note: Attendance policy is enforced. Excessive absences will affect your grade. See syllabus attendance policy.

1. Completion of a Course
  - a. All assignments are due on the dates established in the course calendar, which is published in the syllabus or assigned in class. **Any assignments turned in after the scheduled due date will be penalized five percent (5%) of the original value per day including weekends, breaks, and holidays.**
  - b. **No work** is accepted after the final date of regular classes.
2. Incompletes

- a. An incomplete is given only after the student establishes with the instructor and the department chair by written petition that his or her work is incomplete for good cause (i.e., lengthy illness, death in the family). **Incompletes are rarely granted.** Only those absences that are incurred within the time period of the extenuating circumstances prompting an incomplete will be excused. The student is still accountable for any other absences and will be penalized for them according to the attendance policy.
  - b. A Petition for Incomplete Grade with all supporting documentation must be submitted for approval at least one week prior to the end of normal classes. The submitting of a petition does not automatically ensure the granting of an incomplete. The petition must be approved by the appropriate academic committee of the Undergraduate Theology Department.
- 3. Examinations and Other Assignments
  - a. Early examinations **are not** allowed.
  - b. Late examinations are administered only when extenuating circumstances are present (such as a death in the family the week before exams, sudden and major illness the week of exams that is documented by a physician). In fairness to all students, some persons should not have more time to prepare for an examination than others. **The granting of a late examination request is rare.**
  - c. A Petition for Late Examination without penalty must be signed by the professor and the chair. Proper documentation must accompany the petition and must be submitted to the Undergraduate Theology Department. The student must schedule the makeup exam with the professor of the course. The exam must be taken no later than five (5) calendar days after the approval of the petition. **Grade penalties may be applied as indicated by the Academic Affairs Committee.**
  - d. **All** exams will be given as scheduled. It is the student's responsibility when purchasing airline tickets, for example, to take this schedule into consideration. **Not being present for the final examination automatically results in failure of the course.**
  - e. These requirements apply to all quizzes, tests, and examinations administered by the Undergraduate Theology Department.
- 4. Attendance
  - a. The Official Attendance Policy for the Undergraduate Theology Department is as follows for a three-semester hour class:
    - (1) If the class meets three times a week, the missing of 6 class sessions will result in a grade reduction of one letter grade. Missing 12 class sessions will automatically result in a grade of "F."
    - (2) If a class meets twice a week, the missing of 4 class sessions will result in a grade reduction of one letter grade. Missing 8 sessions will automatically result in a grade of "F."
    - (3) If the class meets once a week, then missing 2 class sessions will result in a grade reduction of one letter grade. Missing 4 class sessions will automatically result in a grade of "F."
  - b. **The absences allowed prior to grade reduction are designed to allow for emergencies and illnesses, and are not designed for indiscriminate use.** Many students incorrectly assume that they may use

these allowable absences as unexcused "cuts" from class. Administrative excuses are granted only when a student is on official University business and has received approval in advance from the University administration.

- c. Students are expected to be prompt for classes. **Two tardies will equal one absence.**

#### C. Course Procedures

1. Requirements
  - a. Reading Outlines and Oral Exams 25%
  - b. Midterm Examination 25%
  - c. Paper/Class presentation 25%
  - d. Final Examination 25%
2. Description of requirements
  - a. *Reading outlines/summaries* .Reading outlines or summaries are due every Friday. These should be several pages in length (12 pt. Roman, single space) and should demonstrate that the student has read and interacted with the assigned readings. The professor, on occasion, will ask the students questions on the readings
  - b. Mid-term and final examinations. These examinations are designed to reveal the students' general knowledge of historical facts and their abilities to synthesize and evaluate ecclesial and theological issues on higher levels of learning.
  - c. Paper. The term paper should be on an event, person or issue that occurred during the first five centuries of the history of the Church. Primary and secondary sources with monographs and articles should be consulted with appropriate documentation. Minimum length is 6 pages Roman, 12pt. double spaced with bibliography of quality work for a passable grade. A mere anthology of quotes does not constitute an acceptable paper. Students will provide a printed copy of the paper to the professor and also will submit an electronic copy of the paper to Turn it in.Com.
3. Grade Scale: 90+ = A; 80+ =B; 70+ = C; 60+ = D; 59- =F (see handout, "Grading Criteria for Theological Courses")
4. Whole Person Assessment requirements: none.

## VI. COURSE CALENDAR

WEEK	TOPIC
1	Introduction and Roman Context
2	Theology of the Apostolic Fathers
3	The Greek Apologists
4	Early Heresies: Challenge and Response
5	Irenaeus
6	Tertullian
7	School of Alexandria: Clement and Origen
8	Theology in the Third Century: West and East
9	Arian Controversy and Nicaea
10	Arianism after Nicaea
11	Athanasius
12	Cappodocian Theology
13	Trinitarian Doctrine and Christology
14	Christological Controversies
15	Nestorian Controversy and Ephesus
16	Council of Chalcedon and Beyond

**Course Inventory for ORU's Student Learning Outcomes**  
**THE 461 – History of Christianity I: Early Church**  
**Fall 2009**

This course contributes to the ORU student learning outcomes as indicated below:

**Significant Contribution** – Addresses the outcome directly and includes targeted assessment.

**Moderate Contribution** – Addresses the outcome directly or indirectly and includes some assessment.

**Minimal Contribution** – Addresses the outcome indirectly and includes little or no assessment.

**No Contribution** – Does not address the outcome.

The Student Learning Glossary at <http://ir.oru.edu/doc/glossary.pdf> defines each outcome and each of the proficiencies/capacities.

OUTCOMES & Proficiencies/Capacities		Significant Contribution	Moderate Contribution	Minimal Contribution	No Contribution
<b>1</b>	<b>Outcome #1 – Spiritually Alive</b> Proficiencies/Capacities				
1A	Biblical knowledge	x			
1B	Sensitivity to the Holy Spirit	x			
1C	Evangelistic capability		x		
1D	Ethical behavior		x		
<b>2</b>	<b>Outcome #2 – Intellectually Alert</b> Proficiencies/Capacities				
2A	Critical thinking	x			
2B	Information literacy	x			
2C	Global & historical perspectives			x	
2D	Aesthetic appreciation			x	
2E	Intellectual creativity	x			
<b>3</b>	<b>Outcome #3 – Physically Disciplined</b> Proficiencies/Capacities				
3A	Healthy lifestyle				x
3B	Physically disciplined lifestyle				x
<b>4</b>	<b>Outcome #4 – Socially Adept</b> Proficiencies/Capacities				
4A	Communication skills	x			
4B	Interpersonal skills			x	
4C	Appreciation of cultural & linguistic differences			x	
4D	Responsible citizenship			x	
4E	Leadership capacity			x	