

Syllabus for
GTHE 675-The Early Church Fathers
3.0 Credit Hours
Fall 2000

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will examine the lives and thought of the Greek and Latin Fathers of the Christian Church. Attention will be given to the development and substance of Christian doctrine during the Patristic Period. Primary sources will be utilized in our investigation. Lectures, reading, and discussion will constitute the main substance of the course.

Course Prerequisites: The successful completion of Church History I and II offers helpful preliminary preparation for this course, but is not required for enrollment in the Early Church Fathers.

II. COURSE GOALS

Our chief concern is the twofold need of the Christian community, clergy and laity to (1) Understand our calling to minister in the context of historic Christianity, and (2) to participate responsibly in the task of developing capable Christian leadership in the contemporary church.

III. COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the end of the course the student should be able to do the following:

- A. Understand the stages of the church's doctrinal formation during the Patristic Period.
- B. Recognize the doctrinal contributions made by prominent church fathers.
- C. Review the church's past from a christological and biblical norm.
- D. Possess historical perspective on the theological and practical problems of the present.
- E. Hold insight of future possibilities and dangers.

IV. TEXTBOOKS

Burghardt, Walter, J. Augustine, Against the Academics. Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1999.

Pelikan, Jaroslav. The Christian Tradition. Vol. I. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1971

Richardson, Cyril C. Early Christian Fathers. Indianapolis: Macmillan, 1970.

V. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

- A. University Policies and Procedures
 - 1. Attendance at each class or laboratory is mandatory at Oral Roberts University.
 - 2. Double cuts will be assessed for absences immediately preceding or following holidays.
 - 3. Excessive absences can reduce a student's grade or deny credit for the course.

4. Students taking a late exam because of an unauthorized absence will be charged a late exam fee.
5. 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.

B. School of Theology Policies and procedures

1. **Completion of a course**

Assignments are due on the dates established in the course calendar, which is published in the syllabus. **Any assignments turned in after the scheduled due date are penalized five percent (5%) of the original value per day including weekends, breaks, and holidays.** All work turned in two weeks after the assignment deadline will be received but will be granted a grade of zero for that assignment. **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 academic committee by written petition that student's 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 are 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 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 academic committee of the School of Theology and Missions. Students are expected to continue all course work until an incomplete is granted.

3. **Examinations**

- a. Early examinations **are not** allowed. Late examinations without grade penalty are administered only when extenuating circumstances are present (such as a death in the family the week before exams or a sudden and major illness the week of exams that is documented by a physician).
- b. A Petition for Late Examination must be submitted to the academic dean's office. A **\$10 fee**, plus proper documentation, must accompany the petition. The academic committee reviews each petition and grade penalties are assessed. (Late exam fee is not a grade penalty).
- c. Students taking late exams should expect alternate versions of the original exams.
- d. **Not being present for the final examination automatically results in failure of the course.**

4. **Attendance**

The Official Attendance Policy for the School of Theology and Missions is as follows:

- a. If the class meets three times a week, the missing of **6** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **one letter** grade. Missing **8** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **two letter** grades. Missing **12** class sessions will automatically results in a **grade of F**. If a class meets twice a week, the missing of **4** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **one letter** grade. Missing **6** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **two**

letter grades. Missing **8** class sessions automatically results in a **grade of F**. If the class meets once a week, then the missing of **3** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **one letter** grade. Missing **4** class sessions results in a grade reduction of **two letter** grades. Missing **5** class sessions automatically results in a **grade of F**.

- b. **The absences allowed prior to a grade reduction are designed to allow for emergencies and illnesses and are not designed for indiscriminate use.**
- c. Administrative excuses are granted only when a student is on official University business and has received approval in advance from the University administration.
- d. Students are expected to be prompt for classes.
- e. Students are expected to remain for the entire class session. Leaving early without permission constitutes an absence.

C. Course Policies and Procedures

1. Evaluation Procedures

Final grade assessment is derived from the following components:

- a. Two exams: a midterm and a final composed of a combination of objective and essay questions (each exam counts as 1/3 of the final course grade).
- b. An applied research paper counts as 1/3 of the final course grade. The specific format and topic will be supplied in class.

2. Other Information

Students are directed to the current University Catalog, the current Student Handbook, and the syllabus for policies and procedures relating to class attendance, audit privilege, incompletes, withdrawals, credit by examination, pass/fail option, special arrangements and academic.

VI. COURSE CALENDAR

| Week | Topics |
|----------|----------------------------|
| One | The New Testament Church |
| Two | the Apostolic Fathers |
| Three | The Age of the Martyrs |
| Four | Early Heresies |
| Five | The Montanist Controversy |
| Six | The Apologists |
| Seven | The Anti-Gnostic Fathers |
| Eight | Origen |
| Nine | Christological Controversy |
| Ten | Augustine |
| Eleven | The Pelagian Controversy |
| Twelve | The Constantine Period |
| Thirteen | Monasticism |
| Fourteen | The Papacy |
| Fifteen | The Medieval Church |

VII. ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

ORAL ROBERTS UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY AND MISSIONS

GTHE 675

Course #

The Early Church Fathers

Title of Course

Dr. Breckenridge, J.

Instructor

MISSION

The lifestyle at ORU is rooted in the word “Wholeness.” ORU seeks to educate the whole person, with balanced emphasis placed on the development of the mind, spirit, and body.

GENERAL OUTCOMES

- | | |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Spiritual Development | 6. Valuing in Decision-making |
| 2. Physical Development | 7. Social Interaction |
| 3. Communication | 8. Global Perspectives |
| 4. Analysis | 9. Effective Citizenship |
| 5. Problem Solving | 10. Aesthetic Responsiveness |

MAJOR OUTCOMES

Spiritual formation/leadership:

Demonstrates Spirit-filled, biblically-theologically competent and historically informed church leadership.

Critical thinking/analysis/problem solving:

Understands and applies biblical/theological principles in the practice of ministry.

Communication/social interaction/global perspective:

Demonstrates the ability to communicate the Gospel in diverse social/cultural texts.

Value/ethics/decision-making:

Integrates Judeo-Christian values and ethics in personal life and ministry.

COURSE OUTCOMES

Upon completion of this course the student should be able to:

- Demonstrate ability to critically evaluate the theological trends and methodology of the early church fathers.
- Enhance communication between the charismatic religious community and traditional Christian denominations
- State a religious credo reflective of classical Christian orthodoxy

ASSESSMENT OF COURSE OUTCOMES

Stimuli:

Readings

Examinations

Research Assignments

Criteria:

Written Assignments 30%

Examinations 60%

Class participation 10%