



NORTH PARK
THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

HSTY 5210: Christian History 1:
The Early Church to the Early Reformation
North Park Theological Seminary
Spring 2026, 3 credit hours, hybrid format
Synchronous Sessions:
DRAFT SYLLABUS

INSTRUCTOR

Jessica Lee

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Office Hours by appointment via email

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers a survey of Christian history and theology from the apostolic times through the early Reformation. Course material pays balanced attention to Christianity's intellectual and social history, with sustained consideration of the church's evolving relationship to political and social structures and the question of unity in diversity.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Expand Historical Knowledge: Accumulate both factual knowledge and interpretive skills.

Develop General Historical Understanding: Apply relevant practices in locating and discerning historical questions according to context and method. Understand and identify the difference between a question that points to a fact and a question that instigates further analytical research and comprehension.

Practice Cross-Cultural Fluency: Exercise flexibility of interpretive frameworks in encountering new material, incorporating sensitivity to contextual factors in multiple scales.

Integration: Digest the above objectives into application in the student's context.

This course contributes toward the following MDiv learning outcomes:

- (1) Interpret the Christian historical and theological tradition for appropriation in the life and mission of the church;
- (2) engage diversity and exhibit growth towards inter-cultural competence for ministry reflective of God's global redemptive work.

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REQUIRED TEXTS

The secondary source texts will be:

Irvin, Dale T. and Scott W. Sunquist. *History of the World Christian Movement Volume I: Earliest Christianity to 1453*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2001.

and

Papandrea, James L. *Reading the Church Fathers: A History of the Early Church and the Development of Doctrine*. Manchester, New Hampshire: Sophia Institute Press, 2022.

The primary source text will be:

Coakley, John W. and Andrea Sterk, edit. *Readings in World Christian History Volume I: Earliest Christianity to 1453*. Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2004.

ASSESSMENTS AND GRADING SCALE

<u>Assignment</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Discussion Board Posts	10
Essay 1	20
Essay 2	20
Essay 3	20
Final Essay	30
Total	100

Reading Assignment: Each week, students will be assigned readings from each required text.

Discussion Board Posts: Each week, students will post a reflection post on Canvas in a discussion board based on a weekly prompt. The initial post must be 300 words min. followed by two responses to classmate's posts, each at 150 words min.

Essay 1, 2, 3: Every four weeks, students will submit a 2,000 word essay based on the reading material, lecture and discussion, of the unit. Each essay will constitute four parts:

Part One- General: Identify the big picture of the relevant time period. Practice articulating overarching trends and flows in historical context.

Part Two - Detail: Provide supportive evidence through engagement with the primary source documents.

Part Three - Analysis: Identify and articulate any methodological considerations relevant to parts one and two.

Part Four - Reflection: Explore how the topic(s) addressed in Parts one/two/three relate to the student's contemporary condition.

All essay assignments should be submitted as a Word document, Times New Roman font size 12, double spaced with the filename of your last name, first initial, and the assignment. For example, John Doe's Essay 1 will be named DoeJEssay1.

Essays are due on the day of class at 11:59pm.



Final Essay: The final essay will be a 5,000 word cumulative reflection/analysis of the semester's material. This essay will incorporate what the student has already written in their discussion posts and in their essays to provide a final comprehensive written work in the same 4-part pattern of Essays 1,2,3.

The aim of these assignments is to help build a progressive step-by-step pattern of developing the students' understanding and engagement with the material.

ADDITIONAL COURSE GUIDELINES

In hyflex classrooms, our learning community combines in-person students and students joining the classroom by Zoom. Toward cultivating a respectful, accessible environment for mutual learning, we commit to the following:

- All students are expected to come prepared for active, informed participation.
- Students attending virtually: Think of your physical space as an extension of the classroom. Ensure that you are in a private, stable location that is free of visual and audio distractions. It's important that we all respect the integrity of classroom discussion. (For this same reason, please do not record class sessions or take screenshots without permission.) Please keep your camera and microphone on through the class session. Consider purchasing a microphone/headset to improve the quality of your sound. (Attendance in class assumes that you are present in this way.)
- Students attending in person: Remember that the class and classroom extend to colleagues attending virtually; it's important to remain visible as well. Please engage the full learning community. Registering for the campus section entails a commitment to joining the class in person. If you are too sick to come in person, or if you have an unavoidable scheduling conflict, please use one of your excused absences for the semester rather than joining by Zoom.

Attendance: Only two class sessions can be missed without penalty to your final grade; five absences will result in failure.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park University is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating will receive a failing grade on the assignment and are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion. Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another's work as one's own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another's answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one's answers or work.
4. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.
5. Use of ChatGPT or other AI composition software to impersonate individual assignments.

For additional information, see the Seminary Academic Catalog.

ACCOMMODATIONS



Your experience in this class is important to me. North Park is committed to creating inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established your accommodations, please share your accommodation letter with me so we can discuss how your accommodations will be implemented in this course. If you have not yet established services and have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations, please email the Disability Access Specialist or contact by phone (773-244-5737). Student Engagement facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations.

TITLE IX & EQUITY

In accordance with Title IX, North Park employees who become aware of any incident of discrimination, harassment or retaliation based on sex, gender, including pregnancy or related medical conditions, and other protected classes are required by law to notify North Park University's Title IX & Equity Team by submitting a report [here](#). The Title IX Coordinator will respond and manage concerns about students. The Senior Director of Human Resources and Deputy Title IX Coordinator will respond and manage concerns about employees. More information can be obtained here: [NPU's Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#).

INCOMPLETE GRADES

If, due to extenuating circumstances (specifically, pregnancy, illness, personal and family issues, military assignment, etc.), a student anticipates they will be unable to complete course work within the allotted time, that student may request a grade of incomplete from the course instructor before the last week of class clearly stating the reason(s) for this request.

Overscheduling and/or lack of self-discipline are not considered extenuating circumstances. If the request is timely and meets the criteria, student and instructor will submit the incomplete grade form and the grade for that class will be listed as "I" until the last day of the following semester. If coursework is not submitted by the last day of the following semester the listing of "I" will automatically be changed to "F." For the full policy, see the Seminary Academic Catalog.

COURSE SCHEDULE