

**HI-523 A Global History of Christianity:
Defining Moments and People That Shaped a Faith**

Fall semester, 2024

Thursdays, 5:00-6.50 (plus asynchronous requirements)

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Course Description:

This course will explore some of the most significant moments and persons in the history of Christianity. These moments produced shared understandings that have endured for centuries, while others fractured Christianity into divergent and often opposing forms. To investigate both the unity and diversity of Christianity, we will examine the diverse cultural settings where Christians planted themselves, and how Christians interacted with other religious traditions. We will also pay particular attention to the forms of Christianity that have been used to legitimate dominance and oppression, even as other forms have been used to resist and thrive under oppression.

Course Learning Outcomes:

Through this course, students will be able to:

- Explain what is known of the very earliest foundations of Christianity, including the formation of its canonical scriptures.
- Describe the early social and political communities Christians created within and outside the Roman Empire, and the diverse ways these Christians described the Person of Jesus in their own languages.
- Examine the importance of monasticism, including the role of female religious, for the development and spread of Christianity from its early days up to the present.
- Explain importance of the Reformations in early modern Europe, and the role of Western missions amid colonial and economic expansion.
- Describe the global significance of the Second Vatican Council, the rise of liberation theologies, Pentecostalism, and other indigenous Postcolonial Christian movements.
- Understand how Christians have engaged in dynamic ways with other religious traditions throughout the centuries.

This course meets the following **Program Outcomes** for the **Master of Arts in Interreligious Studies**:

4. At the level needed to take part in substantive study, demonstrate knowledge of the theological and legal traditions within Judaism, *Christianity*, and Islam.
 1. Identify and explain the major tenets and religious worldviews of Christianity.
 2. Describe the major branches of Christianity.
5. Express your ideas and perspectives clearly in oral and written communication.

1. Write sustained, coherent arguments or explanations in clear academic English, with well-formed sentences and paragraphs.

For the **Interreligious and Islamic Studies Specialization**, this course meets the requirements as an elective.

For the **Ministerial Studies Specialization**, this course meets the requirements for the *Foundations of the Christian faith* requirement, which provides students the opportunity to examine the foundations and development of Christian faith, its major, doctrines, traditions, the important historical moments of the Christian tradition, and the ability to articulate the differences with other religious traditions.

For the **Doctor of Ministry**, this course fulfills the following outcome: Demonstrate knowledge of the larger social and cultural dynamics affecting religious life and organizations in the 21st century and their implications for ministry settings.

Teaching and Learning Strategies:

This course will be hybrid synchronous. The instructor will be located at HIU with students present in the classroom, and distance students joining remotely. Each week, in addition to the required weekly reading and preparation, and the scheduled synchronous class time (5-7 pm ET), there will be additional asynchronous requirements, including online discussions, reviews of response papers, and/or instructional videos.

Hartford Values for Collaborative Teaching and Learning – the syllabus and course should model:

- Showing mutual appreciation and respect for others—modeling the privilege to learn from and partner with each other.
- Engaging in cross-disciplinary content and teaching
- Paying attention to the whole personhood of another – history, race, religion, knowledge, gender, and rank
- Demonstrating how to disagree respectfully and well
- Embodying mutuality – Learning to construct ideas and skills and experiences together

Required Texts:

González, Justo L. *The Changing Shape of Church History*. St. Louis, MO: Chalice Press, 2002. ISBN 978-0827204904.

Norris, Frederick W. *Christianity: A short global history*. Oxford: OneWorld, 2002. ISBN 1-85168-296-1.

Various selections from the volumes of Denis R. Janz, gen. ed., *A People's History of Christianity* [Hereon as *PHC*]. Minneapolis: Fortress Press [which will be posted on Canvas].

Recommended Texts:

Irvin, Dale T., and Scott W. Sunquist. *History of the World Christian Movement. Volume I. Earliest Christianity to 1453*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2014. ISBN-13: 978-1-57075-396-1.

Irvin, Dale T., and Scott W. Sunquist. *History of the World Christian Movement. Volume II. Modern Christianity 1453 to 1800*. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2012. ISBN-13: 978-1-57075-989-5

Moffett, Samuel Hugh. *A History of Christianity in Asia*. Vol. 1 2nd ed. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2004. ISBN 1-57057-162-5.

Moffett, Samuel H. *A History of Christianity in Asia*. Vo 2. 2nd ed. Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2005. ISBN 1-57075-162-5.

Course Assignments and assessment:

| Assignment | Due Date(s) | Program Outcomes fulfilled by assignment | % of course grade |
|--|---|--|-------------------|
| 1. Take the ungraded syllabus quiz | By Thursday, September 12, 5 pm. | | NA |
| 2. Weekly class preparation (required reading and preparation material, contribution to class discussions, and post class asynchronous activities) | Participation will be assessed at the mid-point and end-point of the course | Program outcomes 4 and 5 | 15%/15% |
| 3. Mid-term Essay | Monday, Oct. 2; followed by an oral discussion during “check in” | Program Outcomes 4.1 and 2 | 25% |
| 4. Check-in with instructor | TBD; following Mid-term | Program Outcomes 4.1 and 2 | 10% |
| 5. Final Paper | Proposals and working bibliography are due Dec. 5; paper due Dec. 17 | Program Outcome 5 | 35% |

1. Students should read the syllabus carefully and take the ungraded syllabus quiz on the Canvas site. Completion of the quiz is necessary to unlock access to the Canvas modules.
2. Attend all of the synchronous sessions, and **actively participate** in class discussions, and asynchronous post-class session activities, which may include responding to a discussion prompt, writing a short reaction paper, and/or engaging with a video. Participation will be assessed at the first half of the course and again at the second half of the course. If you know you will be unable to attend a class session, please inform the professor in advance. (This assignment is 30% of the grade, to be graded at the mid-point and final week of the semester.)

- Asynchronous activities must be completed before the next class session.
 - *In the case of an absence for a class session the professor will reserve the right to ask the student for a written assignment on the required reading for that session.*
- 3. Mid-Term Essay:** Students will choose from several essay question prompts related to the material covered in the course. Students will be graded on demonstration of engagement with both the assigned reading and awareness of the concepts and terminology covered in the first weeks of class. (This assignment is 25% of the grade.)
- The exam will be posted on Thursday, October 24 at 7 pm.
 - Students will have until Monday, October 28 at 7 pm EST to submit their essays.
- 4. Check-in with instructor:** Students will schedule at least one 20-min check-in with the instructor to respond to questions, expectations, concerns, or for further discussion on the course. Part of this check-in might include an oral review of the Mid-Term. (This assignment is 10% of the grade.)
- 5. Final paper: Tell your own story of the global Christian Church.** Students will have the opportunity to explore an area of interest covered in the course in a 1,500-2,000 word paper. In addition to any required or recommended reading listed in the syllabus, there should be at least 3 other sources used for the paper. (This assignment is 35% of the grade.)
- A proposal and working bibliography is due by 5 December at the latest.
 - The paper is due by 17 December at 7 pm EST.

Course outline:

September 5: Introduction to the course: How do we tell the story of Christians?

Required reading and preparation: González, 1-79 (Please make sure you read prior to class!).

Recommended reading: *PHC*, vol. 2, Virginia Burrus and Rebecca Lyman, “Shifting the focus of history,” 1-23.

Asynchronous activity due before next class session: Ungraded quiz on the syllabus

September 12: The new Christian community and their scriptures

Required reading and preparation: Norris, 7-34

Recommended reading and preparation: Sidney Harrison Griffith, *The Bible in Arabic : The Scriptures of the “People of the Book” in the Language of Islam* (Princeton [N.J.]: Princeton University Press, 2013), 7-53.

Asynchronous activity due before next class session: Read [“Contra Celsus.”](#) Answer the prompt in the Canvas module and respond to at least one other student.

September 19: Debates about Jesus in and outside the Roman Empire

Required reading and preparation: Norris, 35-70; and watch “The First Christianity,” (59 Minute episode #1 of Diarmaid MacCullough’s *A History of Christianity Series*. (Available on *Kanopy* through the library website. Go to “Resources” then “film.”)

Recommended reading: Justo L. González and Catherine Gunsalus González, *Heretics for Armchair Theologians* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), chapters 9 and 6.

September 26: Martyrs and Monks

Required reading and preparation: *PHC*, vol 2, *Late Ancient Christianity*, Elizabeth A. Clark, “Ascetism, Class and Gender,” 27-45 and Peter Brown, “The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity.” *The Journal of Roman Studies* 61 (1971): 80–101 [DTL].

Recommended reading: Angie Heo, *The Political Lives of Saints: Christian-Muslim Mediation in Egypt* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2018).

Asynchronous activity due before next class session: Read [The Acts of Perpetua and Felicitas](#). Answer the prompt in the Canvas module and respond to at least one other student.

October 3: **Rosh Hashanah – NO SYNCHRONOUS CLASS – Pilgrimage in an Imperial Church**

Required reading and preparation: *PHC*, vol. 3, *Byzantine Christianity*, James C. Skedros, “Shrines, Festivals, and the ‘undistinguished mob’,” 81-101; and [watch “Medieval Pilgrims and Travelers”](#) (available through Kanopy).

Recommended reading: Anne McGowan and Paul F. Bradshaw, trans. *The Pilgrimage of Egeria: A New Translation of the Itinerarium Egeriae with Introduction and Commentary* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2018).

Asynchronous activity due before next class session: Answer the prompt in the Canvas module and respond to at least one other student.

October 10: **Christians in the Islamic Empires**

Required reading and preparation: Norris, 71-107

Recommended reading: Sidney Harrison Griffith, *The Church in the Shadow of the Mosque: Christians and Muslims in the World of Islam* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2008), 6-22 (chap 1), 45-76 (chap 3).

Asynchronous activity due before next class session: Read John of Damascus’ “On the Heresies” and the anonymous “On the Triune Nature of God” [on Canvas] Answer the prompt in the Canvas module and respond to at least one other student.

October 17: **Latin Christianity in Europe, Muslims and Jews**

Required reading and preparation: Norris, 108-136; and *PHC*, vol. 4, *Medieval Christianity*, Teofilo F. Ruiz, “Jews, Muslims, and Christians,” 265-299.

Recommended reading: Chris Lowney, *A Vanished World : Muslims, Christians, and Jews in Medieval Spain* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006).

Asynchronous activity due before next class session: [watch](#) Simon Schama, “Among the Believers,” Episode 2 of *The Story of the Jews*. [Available on Amazon Prime](#). (If you do not have Amazon Prime, speak with Dr. Grafton.) Answer the prompt in the Canvas module and respond to at least one other student.

October 24: **Women Religious**

Required reading and preparation: *PHC*, vol. 7, *Twentieth-Century Global Christianity*, Mercy Amba Oduyoye, “African Women Theologians,” 83-106; and Margaret Bendroth, “Gender and Twentieth-Century Christianity,” 307-326.

Recommended reading: Laura Swan, *The Forgotten Desert Mothers: Sayings, Lives, and Stories of Early Christian Women* (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2001).

Asynchronous activity: Mid Term Essay. The questions will be posted on 7 pm. Students will have until **Monday, October 28 at 7 pm EST** to submit their exam. Students will be graded on demonstration of engagement with both the assigned reading and awareness of the concepts and terminology covered in the first weeks of class. Students will also have. (This assignment is 25% of the grade.)

October 31: **Reformations**

Required reading and preparation: Norris 137-174; and “Protestantism: the Individual Before God,” (59 Minute episode #4 of Diarmaid MacCullough’s *A History of Christianity Series*. (Available on *Kanopy* through the library website.)

Recommended reading: Alister E. McGrath, *Reformation Thought: An Introduction*. 5th edition (Chichester, West Sussex: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2021).

Asynchronous activity due before next class session: Read *PHC*, vol 5, *Reformation Christianity*, Peter Matheson, “The Language of the Common Folk,” 259-283. Answer the prompt in the Canvas module and respond to at least one other student.

November 7: **Enlightenment, Modernity, and Science** – (Guest presenter: Dr. Nelson Rivera)

Required reading and preparation: Norris, 175-205

Recommended reading: J. C. Polkinghorne, *Quantum Physics and Theology: An Unexpected Kinship* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

Asynchronous activity due before next class session: Watch [“The Church and the Scientific Revolution.”](#) Answer the prompt in the Canvas module and respond to at least one other student.

November 14: **Imperialism, Colonialism, and the Church**

Required reading and preparation: Norris, 206-237; and *PHC* vol 7, *Twentieth-Century Global Christianity*, Luis N. Rivera-Pagan, “Pentecostal Transformation in Latin America,” 190-210; and watch the documentary “Protestantism: The Evangelical Explosion,” (59 Minute episode #5 of Diarmaid MacCullough’s *A History of Christianity Series*. (Available on *Kanopy* through the library website.)

Recommended reading: Robert Wuthnow, *Boundless Faith: The Global Outreach of American Churches*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009.

November 21: **Vatican II and Theologies of Liberation**

Required reading and preparation: Norris, 238-276

Recommended Reading: Robert Allen Warrior, in R. S., Sugirtharajah, ed. *Voices from the Margin: Interpreting the Bible in the Third World*. 25th Anniversary edition (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2016), 277-288; Mitri Raheb, *The Biblical Text in the Context of Occupation: Towards a New Hermeneutics of Liberation*. (Bethlehem: Diyar, 2012), 11-28.

Asynchronous activity due before next class session: *PHC*, vol 6, *Modern Christianity*, Charles H. Lipp, “Slave Religion,” 291-316. Answer the prompt in the Canvas module and respond to at least one other student.

November 28: **Thanksgiving – NO CLASS**

December 5: **Christianity Immigration and Nationalism** – (Guest presenter Dr. Allison Norton)

Required reading and preparation: Norris, 277-282

Proposals for final paper are due. Please email them by 5 pm.

Recommended reading: Jehu Hanciles, *Migration and the Making of Global Christianity*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2021.)

Asynchronous activity due before next class session: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, “After Ten Years,” 37-52, from *Letters and Papers from Prison* (PDF on Canvas). Answer the prompt in the Canvas module and respond to at least one other student.

December 12: **Will the Real Christians please stand up?**

Required reading and preparation: González, 83-154

Asynchronous activity: Students should arrange with the instructor for a consultation for their final paper, if desired.

December 19: **Final paper due** by 5 pm.

Policies and Miscellany:

Attendance: Active attendance in all classes is expected. However, if you must miss a class due to illness, family conflict or other emergency, please contact the instructor right away. *In the case of an absence the professor will reserve the right to ask the student for a written assignment on the required reading for that session.*

All written assignments should follow the normal conventions as in *Turabian: A Manual for Writers 9th ed.* (or later). Please include a title page on all papers more than one page, and make sure that your name is included below your name on the cover page. Number all pages. *The instructor reserves the right to have students re-submit an assignment for reasons of poor grammar, mistakes, or poorly written work.* For those who would like writing assistance, there are a number of good guides at: [Student Writing Resources](#).

Email Policy: The instructor will use the official Hartsem student email addresses for all communications. Please check your HIU email account regularly.

Plagiarism and Academic Integrity: Academic honesty and integrity are expected of all students. Plagiarism exists when: a) the work submitted was done, in whole or in part, by anyone other than the one submitting the work, b) parts of the work, whether direct quotations, ideas, or data, are taken from another source without acknowledgement, c) the whole work is copied from another source [especially a web based source], or d) significant portions of one's own previous work used in another course. See "Plagiarism" at <https://www.hartfordinternational.edu/student-affairs/academics/academic-policies> .

AI tools for learning: Artificial Intelligence programs, including Chatbots, are here to stay. If used properly, they can help you become a better learner. AI programs can assist in your writing and clarity. Please know that HIU has a plagiarism and AI detector program within Canvas. So, all of your submitted material will be examined by this software. If you use some form of AI program in your submitted work, you must:

1. Indicate that you have used this as a source.
2. Proofread and check the AI generated material. You are solely responsible for its content. (AI software can generate fake sources, as well as provide incorrect information.)
3. I reserve the right to ask for an oral exam along with submitted written material to assist you in learning and retaining content.

Wikipedia and other non-documented websites: Please do not cite *Wikipedia* or other non-documented websites. While these sites might direct one to documented sources (in the **Bibliography**) their authorship is unknown and cannot be considered authoritative as academic sources. Students will be marked down for referencing these public sites if they are used as primary sources.

Extensions: Extensions for papers will be given for illnesses or family emergencies only in consultation with the instructor.

Late Assignments/Papers: As per the Student Handbook, late assignments or papers will be marked down 1/3 of a grade for every two days.

Grading: The following evaluation process will be utilized as a guideline: (based on a 4-point system)

- A (4-3.8 / 100-96) Demonstrates excellent mastery of the subject matter, a superior ability to articulate this, and provides helpful connections to daily life or contemporary issues. Exceeds expectations of the course.
- A- (3.7-3.5 / 95-90) Demonstrates mastery of the subject matter, ability to articulate this well, and makes connections to daily life or contemporary issues. Exceeds expectations of the course.
- B+ (3.4-3.1 / 89-86) Demonstrates a very good understanding of the subject matter, able to articulate lessons learned in the assignment well. Meets expectations of the course.
- B (3.0-2.8 / 85-83) Demonstrates an understanding of the subject matter and the ability to articulate lessons learned. Meets expectations of the course.
- B- (2.7-2.4 / 82-80) Demonstrates an understanding of the material at hand, has some difficulty articulating this, and basic connection of the material to daily life or contemporary issues/life. Meets basic expectations for the course.
- C+ (2.3-2.1 / 79-77) Demonstrates a basic comprehension of the subject matter, weak articulation and connections. Does not meet expectations for the course.
- C (2.0-1.8 / 76-73) Demonstrates a minimal comprehension of the subject matter and has difficulty making connections. Does not meet expectations of the course.
- F (1.7-0.0 / 72 >) Unable to meet the basic requirements of the course.

Students in the **Doctor of Ministry** degree program are graded as follows:

High Pass(95-100), Pass (83-94), Low Pass(70-82), and Fail (below 70).

Inclusive Language: HIU is committed to a policy of inclusion in its academic life and mission. All members of the community are expected to communicate in language that reflects the equality of genders, openness to diverse cultural and theological perspectives, and sensitivity to one another's images of God. If you insist to use a particular gender in reference to God, please consult with the instructor.

Accommodations: The Americans with Disabilities Act ensures equal access to qualified individuals and prevents discrimination on the basis of a documented disability. It is HIU's policy to provide reasonable accommodations. Students who wish to receive accommodations must contact the Student Services Coordinator. Students are eligible for support services when they are enrolled in courses *and* they have requested and been cleared to receive for the course. All students seeking accommodation must fill out the [Request for Accessibility Accommodations](#) form.

Student Handbook: For all other questions you might have regarding policies or procedures, please see HIU [Academic Policies webpage](#), or the [Student Handbook](#).