

#411 The Early Church
Western Reformed Seminary (www.wrs.edu)
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COURSE INFORMATION

Fall 2007

Course goals

This two credit course is designed to survey the history of the church from the time of the apostles up to the time of Gregory the Great, ca. A.D. 600. The student will be able to outline the main developments of the period and the growth of the church. The course will discuss the Apostolic Fathers, the Apologists, and the leading heretics and theologians of the period. The student will be able to trace the main events and ideas of the conciliar movement and the early creeds of the church. The course will also discuss various important developments within the church, including believers under persecution, heresies that forged orthodox doctrinal statements, church government, early worship, the monastic movement, the missionary impetus, and the beginnings of the papacy.

Reading assignments

Earle E. Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church*, pp. 13-162

Henry Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*, Part I (pp. 1-87)

One of the following original sources:

- 1) *The Apostolic Fathers*, edited by J.B. Lightfoot -OR-
- 2) *The Confessions of St. Augustine* -OR-
- 3) *Ecclesiastical History* by Eusebius

Book Reviews

1. Choose a book either that surveys the entire period of the early church (Boer's *Short History of the Early Church* is recommended) or one that develops an idea, trend, person, or event of the era. The book should be at least 200 pages and the review should be at least three typed pages (double spaced). This assignment is exclusive of primary source reading.
2. Write a three page synopsis of [one of] the book[s] from your original source reading. Highlight the importance of the early work besides giving its substance.

Exams

Mid-term

Final Exam in last class session

Grading

Exams	50%
Reviews	15%
Oral Exam	5%

Readings	25%
Class Participation	5%