

# 411 Early Church History  
Western Reformed Seminary  
Tito de S. Lyro, M.Div.  
Fall 2019  
Meeting on Mondays @ 1:00 pm

## EARLY CHURCH HISTORY

### Course Description

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. AD 600. Besides the study of historical developments such as the rise of persecution, monasticism, and church councils, the contributions of the Apostolic Fathers, the Apologists, and the leading heretics and theologians of the period will be studied. This class will meet for 13 weeks. Each class period will last an hour and 55 minutes with a ten-minute break. Class will meet on Mondays, 1:00 p.m. to 3:05 p.m.

### Course Objectives

This course will seek to familiarize students with main developments of the early church, including major periods of persecution, the monastic movement, the conciliar movement (including main controversies that lead to conciliar movement), the missionary impetus, the beginnings of the papacy, key Christian and heretical writings as well as the leading theologians and their teachings.

### Course Outcomes

Students will gain confidence that the early church continued in the teachings of the apostolic church, as opposed to the modern notion that early heretics had a legitimate claim to Jesus. In addition, students will see that today's churches that follow the apostles' doctrine are in the same stream flowing out of the early church.

### Class Notes

The class notes are the professor's revision of notes previously prepared by Dr. John Battle, Professor Christopher Lensch, and Dr. David Calhoun.

### Exams

There will be two exams during the term. Both exams will be taken in class during the scheduled class period.

- Exam 1 – October 21
- Exam 2 – December 9

### Reading Assignments

- Earle E. Cairns, *Christianity Through the Centuries: A History of the Christian Church*.
  - Introduction through chapter 10 due October 28
  - Chapters 11 through 15 due December 9
- Henry Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*, Part I – due November 25

### Written Assignments

- A four-page REVIEW of a non-biographical book of your choice about the period (100-600 A.D.; 150+ pages) due October 14.
- A five-page BIOGRAPHICAL PAPER on the character of your choice from the period being studied due December 2. Suggestions: Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Cyprian, Athanasius, Hilary of Poitiers, Basil the Great, Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory of Nazianzen, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine.

### Late Assignments and Missed Exams

All assignments are due at the beginning of the class on the day indicated in the "Course Outline" below. Except under extreme circumstances, grades on late assignments will drop one letter grade for each day the assignment is late. Furthermore, there will be no make-up exams without a valid medical excuse.

### Academic Standard

It is required that each assignment, be not only an original piece of work (i.e., the piece has never been submitted to or has not been the basis for an assignment in another course), but is the work of the student turning it in. Ideas that are not those of the author/student must be professionally referenced so that credit is given to the original

sources involved. If any situation arises in which there is ambiguity or uncertainty about whether the student is fulfilling the letter or spirit of this paragraph, please bring it to the instructor's attention. Failure to adhere to this paragraph will result in an "F" for the assignment.

### Class Participation and Attendance

Enrollment in this course implies that the students intend to be active contributors to the day-to-day discussions in class and that they will be in attendance regularly. Any student who must miss a class should inform the instructor before class by e-mail – [president@wrs.edu](mailto:president@wrs.edu).

### Grading

- Exams 55%
- Papers 30%
- Readings 10%
- Attendance 5%

### Course Outline

September		Topic	Exams	Assignments
16	First day of class	Intro. to class		
23				
30				

October				
7				
14				Review of non-biographical work due.
21			Exam 1 taken in class	
28				First Cairns reading due

November				
4				
11				
18				
25				Bettenson reading due

December				
2				Biographical paper due
9	Last day of class		Exam 2 taken in class	Second Cairns reading due
16	Grades available			