

## SYLLABUS FOR HIS-231: CHURCH HISTORY

Vennard College Spring Semester 2008

3 Credit Hours

Instructors: E. Jerome Van Kuiken & Duane Mathias  
Prof. Van Kuiken's Office Hours: When not in class  
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**Course Description:** A survey of the development of Christianity from the apostolic era to the present. Emphasis is given to those incidents, institutions, individuals and ideologies which have shaped Christian beliefs and practices.

**Course Rationale:** Today's Christians are the spiritual children of a church that has existed across two millennia and many cultures. It is the duty of children to respect, listen to and learn from their elders. This is the duty we owe the past generations of Christians who explained, defended, lived out, suffered for, and passed on the Christian faith we possess today. By listening to our spiritual ancestors, we learn from their successes and failures and gain perspective on the present situation of both the church and the world.

**Course Texts:** *Zondervan Handbook to the History of Christianity* by Jonathan Hill; *All the Saints Adore Thee* by Bruce Shelley

**Course Objectives:** The successful student should:

- A. Display critical understanding of the broad sweep of church history.
- B. Know key facts about church history.
- C. Discover the devotional value of past Christian writing.

**Course Expectations and Requirements:** (Total grade = 500 points)

*Attendance.* Regular and punctual class attendance is required of you, the student. If you are marked tardy for class 3 times, you will be counted absent. If you leave class early, you may be counted tardy. Missing more than 20% of a class session constitutes an absence. You may be counted absent and asked to leave class due to seriously disruptive or disrespectful behavior.

Even though attendance is expected at all class sessions, it is understood that there are times when you are unable to attend class. The minimum attendance requirement in any class is 80% of the total number of class sessions. 7 or more absences for any reason automatically mean failure of the course. You are to keep track of your own absences. No food is allowed in class unless you bring enough to share with everyone.

*Writing Assignments.* The following are my expectations for all written work for this course: All assignments are to be typed. You may email me your assignments in either MS Word or WordPerfect. You are responsible to ensure that I have received your assignment (I suggest requesting a read receipt). You are also responsible for keeping a copy (whether electronic or

hard) of the assignment yourself. Electronic submissions are subject to the same policies on late work as hard copies (see below).

Please note that you may photocopy printed materials in the library; however, due to restrictions in copyright law, libraries are not allowed to photocopy over 30% of a published work without the publisher's special permission.

*Chapter Reflections on Hill* – 170 points (10 pts./chapter). You are to type a reflection of at least a page in length for each chapter of Hill that you read. These reflections will be graded using the following criteria:

1. Comprehension – 5 pts./chapter. Summarize what you believe to be the key ideas in each chapter. Avoid simply giving quotes; put the material into your own words.
2. Application – 5 pts./chapter. Reflect on the chapter material using questions like the following to stimulate your thinking: “What was God doing during the era covered by this chapter?” “How does the era in the chapter affect the church or the world today?” “Are there any similarities between then and now? What can I learn from the successes and failures of the past?”

*Spiritual Journal* – 60 points (1 pt./journal entry). Shelley's book is a devotional collection of writings from Christians of the past. There are 60 readings in Shelley: 52 devotional readings plus a preface and 7 introductory readings. Write down your responses to each reading in the form of a journal entry. Use Shelley as a means of guiding your mind and heart toward God. Feel free to write about your feelings, about the images that come to your mind as you read, or about how your reading applies to your daily life. I suggest writing your responses in the form of prayers to God. The style of your writing may be informal or formal, narrative or analytical, in prose or poetry – whatever works best for you. Each entry, though, will be graded on whether it focuses on Shelley's content. Do not merely summarize Shelley or give long quotes from him; use your entry to reflect on his comments and to use them as springboards for your own worshipful written meditations on God. I will grade your newest journal entries 4 times over the course of the semester.

*Tests* – 270 pts. There will be 4 tests over course content.

**Grading Policies:** I encourage you to discuss your assignments with each other out of class, but the work you are graded on must be your own. Claiming someone else's work (including another student's) as your own is plagiarism, and plagiarism will not be tolerated. See the *Community Handbook* for a further description of plagiarism and its penalties.

Generally work missed due to health-related absences, family emergencies, or absences incurred in college representation may be made up. For planned absences, you should always submit work ahead of schedule, unless other arrangements are approved by me.

According to the *Community Handbook*, students with overdue library materials or unpaid fines will not be allowed to take midterm or final exams.

<b>Grading Scale:</b>	B+	92%	C+	83%	D+	74%	
A	94-100%	B	85-91%	C	76-82%	D	67-73%
A-	93%	B-	84%	C-	75%	D-	66%

### Course Calendar (Tentative):

<u>Attendance</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Assignment</u> (A chapter reflection is due w/ each chapter of Hill!)
	<u>Jan</u> 10	Nothing due
	14	Start reading Shelley.
	16	Read Hill Ch. 1.
	21	Keep reading Shelley.
	23	Read Hill Ch. 2.
	28	Keep reading Shelley.
	30	Read Hill Ch. 3.
	<u>Feb</u> 4	Keep reading Shelley.
	6	<b>Test 1</b> ; spiritual journal due.
	11	Read Hill Ch. 4.
	13	Read Hill Ch. 5.
	18	Read Hill Ch. 6.
	20	Read Hill Ch. 7.
	25	Read Hill Ch. 8.
	27	<b>Test 2</b> ; spiritual journal due.
	<u>Mar</u> 10	Read Hill Ch. 9.
	12	Keep reading Shelley.
	17	Keep reading Shelley.
	19	Read Hill Ch. 10.
	24	Read Hill Ch. 11.
	26	Keep reading Shelley.
	31	Read Hill Ch. 12.
	<u>Apr</u> 7	Keep reading Shelley.
	9	<b>Test 3</b> ; spiritual journal due.
	14	Read Hill Ch. 13.
	16	Read Hill Ch. 14.
	21	Read Hill Ch. 15.
	23	Read Hill Ch. 16.
	28	Read Hill Ch. 17.
		Finals Week: <b>Test 4</b> ; spiritual journal due.

### REFERENCE LIST

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