

Instructor: Prof. Cormack
Office: 4 Glebe St. room 102 (at the end of the porch)
Mailbox (for now): 14 Glebe St. (possibly 4 Glebe in October)
Phone: ex. 8033 Email:cormackm@cofc.edu
Office Hours: MTW F 10:00-11 or by appointment

The best way to get in touch with me is by email, or by making an appointment with me after class. Failing that, leave a message for me in my mailbox at 14 Glebe St., the Dept. of Philosophy and Religious Studies, before 4:30 PM. You can also leave a message with the secretary there; the phone number is ex. 5687. Leaving messages on MY phone mail is NOT a good way to reach me - I check my email and mailbox far more often.

PLEASE NOTE: Papers, exams, etc. should always be delivered to me personally. Until they are in my hands, I have no evidence that you have written them. Above all, DO NOT LEAVE THEM STUCK UNDER THE DOOR! Go to 14 Glebe and leave them in my mailbox there before 4:30 PM. NB: For added security, ALWAYS make sure you have a xerox copy (or computer printout) of any work you hand in. And use a stapler, not paper clips!

This course is not a course on how to be a Christian, nor is it a course about Jesus or the Bible. Rather, it is about what people bearing the name of Christian have believed, and how they have justified and acted upon those beliefs, during nearly 2000 years. It does not assume that you are, or are not, Christian; it does assume that you are willing to approach the material both sympathetically and critically.

The basic approach is historical. By paying attention to the social and historical contexts in which Christians lived their lives we will gain a better understanding of why their beliefs and actions took the forms they did. We will also consider the documents which provide evidence for these beliefs, their function (i.e. the purposes for which they were written), how they are/were interpreted, and how their historical setting influences their content and form. We will examine both Christian practice and Christian theology. As part of this course, you will be required to attend and observe a Christian worship service (if you are yourself Christian, the service must be at a church of a different denomination than your own.)

During the semester you will:

- critically analyze documents from different times and cultures;
- observe Christian worship as a participant/observer of a church and service with which you are unfamiliar;
- write concise analytic papers on both documents and observation;
- learn to evaluate electronic and written sources on a research topic and present your results in an annotated bibliography;
- write a 10-page paper based on that bibliography;
- give brief (3-5 minute) oral presentations of your church visit and research paper

During class periods there will be a combination of lecturing and discussion of assigned texts. You are responsible for doing the readings in preparation for the class on which they are assigned. Precise assignments will be made on the class before they are due. It is your responsibility to be in class and get the assignment.

Required text:

Nystrom and Nystrom, *The History of Christianity: an Introduction*.

This text is background reading. You are responsible for it, and are encouraged to ask questions if you do not understand how it relates to the lectures or other readings, or if it appears to contradict them. Concentrate on sections where terms have been written in bold type. Make sure you understand these terms. For biblical references, check the footnotes. However, the lectures will NOT recapitulate the textbook. Memorizing the textbook is not an adequate preparation for doing well on exams. You will need to have done - and thought about - the other readings as well.

Optional Text:

A Bible. We will refer to Biblical quotes or stories, mostly early in the semester. You may use any Bible you like; if you don't own one and are planning to take more courses in Religious Studies, I recommend either the Oxford Annotated Bible or the Harper Student Bible. Both of these are scholarly Bibles with good footnotes from an academic perspective. You could also find an online version you like (just be sure you always use the same version, and print out any passages we discuss in class.) If you own a Bible you would like to use, that's fine too. One of the interesting aspects of a course in Christianity is examining the differences in translation and interpretation among different Bibles. Note that we will not be studying what the Bible actually teaches (for this, take a course on Old Testament or New Testament) but rather what different branches of Christianity interpreted it as teaching.

Readings on Electronic Reserve at the Addlestone Library.

Many primary sources which will form the basis of discussion have been put on electronic reserve (this includes links to the internet). When there is an assignment from electronic reserve (ER), print it out and bring it to class with you. Print it at home if you can: remember there is now a page limit of 300 pages per semester at the library before they start charging you 5 cents a page for printed material! To access them, go to the Library web page. Choose "Electronic reserves", choose my name (Cormack) and the course. The password for this course is CT. THESE READINGS ARE ALSO ON RESERVE IN HARD COPY. A MALFUNCTIONING COMPUTER IS THEREFORE NO EXCUSE FOR NOT DOING ASSIGNMENTS.

Fredriksen, "The Temple"

Fredriksen, "Gospel Truth and Historical Ignorance"

Pliny the Younger, "Letter Concerning Christians"

St. Perpetua: The Passion of Saints Perpetua and Felicity

Life of St. Antony

The Holy Rule of St. Benedict

On the Divine Images

Augustine: On Miracles

Ordeal of Boiling Water

Truce of God

Medieval Biblical Interpretation

Grading Scale:

A	93 points
A-	90 points
B+	87 points
B	83 points
B-	80 points
C+	77 points
C	73 points
C-	70 points
D+	67 points
D	60 points
F	below 60

Grading will be based on:

- 4 or more short essays and/or quizzes, 10 points. Mostly during the first half of the semester, there will be occasional assignments and/or quizzes of 1-2 typed pages on the readings, films, etc. Dates and topics of short essays will be announced as they occur, and **MUST BE HANDED IN AT THE TIMES STATED: THEY CANNOT BE MADE UP**. Generally speaking, the short essays address a question based on a primary source, which I will announce in class the day before the source is discussed. Since it is impossible to determine in advance precisely how fast the class will go, you need to be present to get these assignments. A simple summary of the reading is not adequate. Grading is on the scale “check” = B, “plus” = A, “minus” = D, “zero” = F. Most people will get a check; you can improve your grade by doing additional assignments. Thus, 4 checks = B, 5 checks = A, 6 checks is A plus an extra credit point, so by doing one additional assignment you can raise your grade. While the first one, due Monday the 28th, is obligatory, after that you can choose which ones you do. However, since they **CANNOT** be made up, it will be to your advantage to do the assignments, both because you will be better prepared for discussion (and exams) and because, even when you have earned the full ten points, additional assignments can earn additional extra credit at the rate of one point per extra assignment.
- 2 hour exams 20 points each, on the dates stated in the schedule.
- final exam 30 points. The final exam will be administered on the day and time stated in the College exam schedule. It will cover the portion of the course not yet covered in an hour exam, plus an essay that covers the entire course. Possible essay topics will be announced in advance of the exam.
- research essay (term paper) 15 points. The research essay will carefully examine a particular individual, denomination of Christianity, or other Christian group (a religious order such as the Franciscans, for example) other than the one to which you may belong. It will entail use of library facilities and the internet, possibly interviews (though if you want to interview people, there is now a complicated preliminary process). You may incorporate your church visit (see below) if that is appropriate. Your choice of topic **MUST** be approved by me in order for you to get credit for this paper. The grade will be cumulative: you will receive 5 points for a critical annotated bibliography (I will provide a handout on the precise requirements for the bibliography) and 10 points for the paper

you write using these sources. The bibliography will be about 2-3 pages long, the paper itself about 8-10 pages long. The specific requirements for the bibliography and the paper will be provided as the deadlines approach. Those of you who are organized enough to turn in your research paper by the due date of **Nov. 27** and get lower than a B- will have the option of receiving detailed comments and rewriting the paper to improve your grade, if you so desire. Otherwise, there is an automatic extension until the Dec. 4. You will give a brief presentation of your research during the final week of class.

- church visit 5 points. You will be required to attend and report on a service, Mass, or Liturgy at a church other than your own (if you are a Christian. If you are not a Christian, you have free choice of church.) I'll provide a handout with notes on what to pay attention to. You will hand in a 2-3 page report of your visit, and report orally to the class. A group of up to 4 may go together and report together: however, each individual must hand in a report written by him- or herself.

- extra credit. You may earn up to five extra points by doing more than the required number of short essays OR by attending guest lectures (if any) and turning in your notes. In this course, the best way to earn extra credit will be to do lots of short essays. The extra credit can serve to balance poor performance on the first exam, or work as as "insurance" against poor performance on the research essay or final. Active and intelligent class participation and good oral presentations can also help your grade, especially if it is right on the edge. There is no other way to earn extra credit.

Missed classes / exams:

I assume all class members are adults and able to manage their time in such a way as to be in class and in their seats when class starts. The consequence of missing a class, or the beginning of a class, is that you miss the material covered in that class; this includes any announcements about films, guest speakers, etc. Material discussed in class is not always found in sufficient detail in the textbook. It is up to YOU to borrow notes or find out about any announcements that may have been made. You cannot pass the course unless you take all exams and hand in the church visit assignment and research essay.

Special Needs:

If you need special accommodation through the SNAP program or for some other reason (for example if English is not your native language), please discuss the matter with me **AT LEAST A WEEK** before the quiz, paper, or exam is scheduled.

CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM STATEMENT

All students are subject to the Honor Code. See the Code of Conduct in the Student Handbook, which can be accessed at

http://www.cofc.edu/studentaffairs/general_info/studenthandbook.html#honor

Please note that the definition of cheating includes handing in work you have already used in another course, unless you have written permission from BOTH instructors.

Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated in this course. Assignments on which cheating or plagiarism are suspected will be forwarded to the Dean of Students, who will bring the issue before the Honor Board. If a verdict of cheating or plagiarism is delivered by the Honor Board, the result will be an F for the ENTIRE COURSE, not just the assignment.

****** IMPORTANT MESSAGE! ******

When you have a question, or if I talk too fast, RAISE YOUR HAND AND LET ME KNOW! Other class members will undoubtedly be glad that you did so. There is no point in being in the class if you don't understand what is going on.

EMAIL: The college regularly communicates with students via their college email account. If you use some other account, remember to FORWARD your college account to that other number, and EMPTY YOUR COLLEGE MAILBOX at regular intervals, or you may miss important messages.

SCHEDULE

The following list of readings is **PROVISIONAL**. We may go a bit faster or slower, depending on student interest in different topics. I have therefore listed topics on a weekly, rather than a daily, basis, after the first few days. **SPECIFIC DETAILS OF WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS WILL BE ANNOUNCED IN CLASS. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ATTENDING CLASS AND GETTING THIS INFORMATION. YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR DOING ASSIGNED READING AND DISCUSSING IT IN CLASS EVEN IF THERE IS NO SHORT ESSAY ASSIGNED.**

Aug. 22 Introduction to the course. READ THIS SYLLABUS!!!!

Aug 22, 24 Read Nystrom and Nystrom *The History of Christianity* (hereafter HC) chapter 1, and begin ch. 2 if you want to get a headstart on next week's readings.

OPTIONAL READING: ER: "The Temple"

Week of Monday, Aug 28: HC chap. 2

FIRST SHORT ESSAY DUE MONDAY AUG 28: 2 pages, typed.

Choose a Bible to which you will refer during the semester, and write about the following gospel (found in the New Testament, towards the end of the Bible):

"Matthew" if your last name begins with a-b

"Mark" if your last name begins with c-d

"Luke" if your last name begins with e-k

"John" if your last name begins with m-z

Your essay should address the following, from the gospel to which you have been assigned:

What Bible are you using? Give a bibliographical reference using the MLA, Chicago, or other academic style. In addition, note if your Bible is published by any particular religious or academic group.

According to the **commentary** in your Bible, when and for whom was this gospel written? (the commentary may take the form of a brief essay at the beginning of the Gospel, New Testament, or Bible itself, and/or footnotes.)

What does the GOSPEL ITSELF (text, NOT commentary!) tell us about its author?

Note: **Headings to pages or chapters are NOT part of the Gospel**, but descriptions or classifications added by scholars.

What does THE GOSPEL YOU ARE ASSIGNED TO tell us about:

- Jesus' birth and childhood?

- who Jesus is? (Hint: How does Jesus refer to HIMSELF? How do OTHERS refer to him, and how does he react?)

- the role of John the Baptist/Baptizer?

- the Kingdom of God?
- Jesus' appearances after death – how many, to whom?

Not all of this may be in all gospels. Be sure to support your statements with chapter and verse references so that the class can find the passage you are referring to.

Wed. Aug. 29: ER: Fredriksen, "Gospel Truth and Historical Ignorance" Does this reading clarify some of the issues that we discussed on Monday?

Fri. Aug 31 In your chosen bible, read the book of Revelation. Briefly outline this book. When, **according to the bible you are using**, was it written, and what is its significance?

Week of Sept 3 HC chap. 3

Monday: ER: Pliny, Letter Concerning Christians

short essays on one or both of the following saints' lives:

Wednesday: Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicity (Medieval Sourcebook.

Saints' Lives. II: Early Christian Martyrs. Perpetua) or ER link.

Friday: Life of Anthony (Medieval Sourcebook. Saints' Lives. III: Early Monks [Eastern]: Athanasius of Alexandria: Life of Anthony.) or ER link

Week of Sept. 10 **short essay on the Rule of Benedict (probably Monday)**

<http://www.kansasmonks.org> click on "Our Way of Life" and then on "The Rule of St. Benedict" or ER link

Week of Sept 17 HC chap. 4 **short essay on:** Augustine: City of God: Book 22:8-10, "On Miracles" (Medieval Sourcebook. Saints' Lives. II: Rise of the Cult of Saints in the West) or ER Link

Week of Sept. 24 HC chap 5. **EXAM SEPT 24.**

ER John of Damascus "On the Divine Images" **short essay**

Week of Oct. 1 **OCT 2 is the LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW WITH A GRADE OF W. IF YOU DECIDE TO STICK IT OUT, I'D LIKE ESSAY TOPICS WISHES BY FRIDAY. THERE WILL BE A LIBRARY SESSION TO DISCUSS RESEARCH. ON WEDNESDAY OF THIS WEEK WE WILL MEET IN THE LIBRARY, ROOM 122.**

ER: The Ordeal

ER: The Millennium

short essay

Week of Oct. 8 HC chap 6

Medieval Sourcebook. The Crusades. (selections to be announced.)

last chance for short essay!!!!

Week of Oct. 15 FALL BREAK. NOTE: IF YOU WANT TO VISIT A CHURCH OUTSIDE THE CHARLESTON AREA, THIS IS A GOOD OPPORTUNITY! HC chapter 7. ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE Wednesday, Oct. 17

Week of Oct. 22 HC chapter 8 **EXAM OCT 24.**

Week of Oct. 29 HC chaps 9, 10

Week of Nov 5 **REPORTS ON CHURCH VISITS You will hand in a brief (2-3 page) written report, and we will discuss your experiences in class.**

Week of Nov 12 HC chap. 11 American developments.

Week of Nov 20 HC chap. 12 Nov 22 . THANKSGIVING

Week of Nov. 27 HC chapter **RESEARCH PAPER DUE NOV 27 IF YOU WANT FEEDBACK on B minus or lower papers. ORAL SUMMARIES OF RESEARCH**

Dec. 3 final review

Dec. 4 Final version of Research paper due in my hand or in my mailbox by 4:30. Let me know by email that you have dropped it off. If you are rewriting, this deadline is negotiable.

Final Exam Monday Dec.10 at Noon.

Advice on studying

1) Preparation for class: Read the assigned material once BEFORE the date on which it is due, once afterwards. I recommend the following procedure:

- On the weekend: Do the textbook reading for the week - as if you were reading a novel. Don't underline or take notes, just get the general idea. Pay special attention to headings, maps, illustrations, etc.

- The day before class (or earlier!): read the material assigned for that day. Take notes, concentrating on any topics I have mentioned in the preceding class period. Identify new terms and consider how the material "fits together." How does it compare with what you have learned in the course so far?

NB: I strongly advocate taking notes - by hand or on a computer - rather than using a highlighting pen. Writing out the notes out by hand will make them stick in your head longer, and highlighting decreases the amount you will get from the bookstore if you want to sell the book at the end of the semester.

2) In class: Take careful notes. This does NOT mean copying down every word I say. Write down key names, dates, definitions, outlines, etc. As a rule, anything written on the blackboard belongs in your notes, as does anything the professor repeats. If something is said in class that you miss, or don't understand, raise your hand and ask!

3) After class: Compare your class notes and notes from the readings. Do they make sense together? If your class notes are messy, re-write them in a form you can understand while the class is fresh in your memory. This is the time to memorize definitions, outline the relationship of important concepts, etc. If there is something you don't understand, go back over your notes and text, to make sure you understood what was said. If there's still a problem, ask about it, either in my office hour or in class. Don't be shy about asking questions in class; if you are confused, probably someone else is, too. This is especially the case if you perceive a conflict between the textbook and the lecture. The time to straighten out misunderstandings is always AS SOON AS POSSIBLE - the later you leave it, the less you and I will remember about the original context, and the harder it will be clarify the issue.

If there is a special discussion topic or short essay assignment for a given day, the procedure described above applies as follows. 1) Read through the text once for an overview. 2) Read a second time, taking notes; formulate your opinion on the question and draft your answer. 3) REREAD the material to make sure your ideas hold up! If you find apparent contradictions, or evidence that might support a different point of view, consider why this is so, and whether the opposing perspectives can be reconciled.

If you follow this plan on a regular basis, you will have a wonderful set of reliable notes to use when writing a paper or studying for an exam. Not only that, careful studying at the time the material is presented means that studying for exams will be far less stressful.

FINAL WORD OF WARNING: ALWAYS BACK UP YOUR COMPUTER - and PRINT OUT THE LATEST VERSION! Computers invariably crash during the final draft, especially if it is being written at 2 AM the night before the paper is due. Under such circumstances, it's far better to get some rest . . .

COMMON VOCABULARY ERRORS

Misspelling or misusing the following words is anathema in this course. If you don't know what "anathema" means, look it up in the dictionary. In practical terms, misspelling these words can lose you points on assignments and exams. If you don't own a dictionary and can't afford to buy one, there are copies in the Robert Scott Small library. Note that for specialized religious vocabulary the definitions in the textbooks that we will be using take precedence over the definitions in Webster's.

altar	alter
affect	effect
ascetic	aesthetic
accept	except
ancestor	descendant
crucifixion	crucifiction (this word does not actually exist)
devout	devote
era	error
holy	wholly
imply	infer
incidence	incidents
mediate	meditate
prescribe	proscribe
prophet	profit
purest	purist
renounce	denounce
soul	sole

STUDY SKILLS SEMINARS FALL 2007

Location: Maybank 100

Tuesdays at 4 pm

Wednesdays at 6 pm

Tues. 8/28	Time Flies!	4 pm
Wed. 8/29	Time Flies!	6 pm
Tues. 9/4	Re-Think Research!	4 pm
Wed. 9/5	Re-Think Research!	6 pm
Tues. 9/11	Read and Remember!	4 pm
Wed. 9/12	Read and Remember!	6 pm
Tues. 9/18	Find your Focus!	4 pm
Wed. 9/19	Find your Focus!	6 pm
Tues. 9/25	Noteworthy Notes!	4 pm
Wed. 9/26	Noteworthy Notes!	6 pm
Tues. 10/2	Take your Best Test!	4 pm
Wed. 10/3	Take your Best Test!	6 pm
Tues. 10/9	It's Wise to Get Advised!	4 pm
Wed. 10/10	It's Wise to Get Advised!	6 pm
Tues. 10/30	Memory Matters!	4 pm
Wed. 10/31	Memory Matters!	6 pm
Tues. 11/6	Your Future, Beyond the Cistern!	4 pm
Wed. 11/7	Your Future, Beyond the Cistern!	6 pm
Tues. 11/13	Plan for Exams!	4 pm
Wed. 11/14	Plan for Exams!	6 pm

North Campus Seminars

Location: Classroom 203-A

College of Charleston North Campus Seminars	
Title	Date and Time
Time Flies	September 10, 5:15-5:45 pm
Re-Think Research (with North Campus library)	September 17, 5:15-5:45 pm
Time Flies (encore presentation)	September 24, 5:15-5:45 pm
Read to Remember/Noteworthy Notes	October 8, 5:15-5:45 pm
Plan for Exams	November 5, 5:15-5:45 pm
Plan for Exams (encore presentation)	November 12, 5:15-5:45 pm

Time-limited offer (expires August 28 at NOON)

If you sign the following and put it IN MY MAILBOX by noon, Aug 28, you will receive **1 EXTRA CREDIT POINT.**

I have read the above syllabus, and understand that it will be necessary to study hard on a regular basis (c. 2 hours for each class period) if I want pass this course. I understand that the exams will be essay exams, and that I am responsible for doing all readings before the class period at which they are assigned.

I have read, and promise to abide by, the Honor Code of the College of Charleston.

I will keep a xerox copy or second printout of any assignments I hand in.

Signed,

local phone number:

email: