

Syllabus for American Church History (CH 605)

Front Range Bible Institute
(Spring 2016)

Course Description

The course “American Church History” is a study of the church in America from the time of British colonization until the mid-nineteenth century, with special attention given to the roots and varieties of American evangelicalism. The course will have classroom lectures that are primarily based upon the professor’s notes. Students are encouraged to participate by asking and answering questions and taking notes. Notes will be provided, but the student is encouraged to make additions based upon classroom discussions.

The course will include outside reading, quizzes and exams from the classroom lectures, and a research paper. The paper is a very important tool for the student to gain first-hand acquaintance with and evaluation of American church history. The paper will be aimed at taking the classroom learning and transferring it into a useable student tool for practical ministry purposes.

Course Objectives:

- To give the student a working knowledge of the major figures and the theologies of the various forms of Christianity in early America
- To equip the student to better understand the current ecclesiastical landscape in America by understanding its roots in the colonial and founding eras.
- To sharpen the student’s ability to utilize Scripture accurately by observing the way early Americans applied the Bible to their context
- To inspire the student to be grateful for our Christian heritage
- To alert students to the particular historical strengths and weaknesses of American evangelicalism
- To deepen the student’s appreciation for how Christ builds his church

Required Course Materials

- Reading materials
 - Professor’s notes
 - *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* by Mark A. Noll, Eerdmans (244 pages, intro through chapter 9) – **Required reading**
 - *A Documentary History of Religion in America to the Civil War* by Edwin S. Gaustad, 2nd edition, Eerdmans (339 pages through chapter 5.1) – **Required reading**
- Computer
 - All work submitted electronically should be in Microsoft Word documents (.doc).

Course Requirements

- Attendance at all classes
 - Take notes and participate in class discussion.

- If you know in advance that you will miss a class, please notify the professor ahead of time to obtain an excused absence.
- It may be possible to listen to missed lectures via mp3 recordings.
- **Reading – Due June 14**
 - Certificate level – 500 pages from reading materials list
 - B.B.S. – 600 pages from reading materials list
 - M.B.S. – 900 pages from reading materials list
 - M.Div. – 900 pages from reading materials list
- **Quizzes/Examinations**
 - All students will take periodic quizzes over the material covered in class. These will be unannounced and at the discretion of the professor.
 - There will one mid-term exam and one final exam.
- **Research paper – Due June 7**
 - All students will complete a paper of original historical research on a topic of the student's choosing.
 - The professor must approve the topic.
 - Paper requirements
 - Certificate level – 5 page (double spaced)
 - B.B.S. – 10 page (double spaced)
 - M.B.S. – 20 page (double spaced)
 - M.Div. – 20 page (double spaced)

Course Grading Criteria

- 10% Attendance and participation
- 30% Reading
- 30% Quizzes/Examinations
- 30% Paper

Course Schedule

Date:	Requirements and Lecture Topic:
Apr 5	Introduction to course European Background Anglicanism in Virginia
Apr 12	Pilgrims Puritans in New England
Apr 19	New England Puritans (continued)
Apr 26	Deadline for paper topic selected and approved Minority Groups in New England Christianity in the Middle and Southern Colonies

May 3	Mid-term exam The Great Awakening
May 10	The Revolutionary Era and Separation of Church and State
May 17	Unitarians and Rational Religion
May 24	The Second Great Awakening
May 31	Methodists and Baptists
June 7	Papers due Explosion of Democratic Religion
June 14	Final Examination Reading Reports Due

SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Fischer, David Hackett. *Liberty and Freedom: A Visual History of America's Founding Ideals*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.
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- Genovese, Eugene D. *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made*. New York: Vintage Books, 1974.

- Gonzalez, Justo L. *The Story of Christianity. Volume 2: The Reformation to the Present Day*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1985.
- Hatch, Nathan O. *The Democratization of American Christianity*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989.
- Hawke, David Freeman. *Everyday Life in Early America*. New York: Harper & Row, 1988.
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- Isaac, Rhys. *The Transformation of Virginia 1740-1790*. New Paperback edition. Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999.
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- Kidd, Thomas S. *God of Liberty: A Religious History of the American Revolution*. New York: Basic Books, 2010.
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- Morison, Samuel Eliot. *The Intellectual Life of Colonial New England*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1960.
- Murray, Iain H. *Revival & Revivalism: The Making and Marring of American Evangelicalism 1750-1858*. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 1994.
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