I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

A study of the development of Christian doctrine from the second to the fifth centuries.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

A. The student will be able to trace and describe the general development of the early church’s views on Theology Proper, Trinitarianism, Christology, Pneumatology, Anthropology, Hamartiology, Soteriology, Bibliology, Ecclesiology, the Sacraments, and Eschatology.

B. The student will describe the development of Christian doctrine from the second to the fifth centuries.

C. The student will discuss theological issues from primary materials of the second through the fifth centuries.

D. The student will grow in his or her perspective of how exegesis, culture, and tradition shape theological concepts.

III. COURSE TEXTBOOKS

A. Required


Primary Source reading as assigned in schedule:

The Didache
Ignatius of Antioch, Ephesians, Magnesians, Trallians, Romans, Philadelphians, Smyrnaeans, Polycarp
Polycarp, Letter to the Philippians
Aristides of Athens, Apology
Melito of Sardis, On Pascha
Athenagoras, Embassy for the Christians and Resurrection of the Dead.
Theophilus of Antioch, To Autolycus
Justin Martyr, First and Second Apologies and Dialogue with Trypho
Irenaeus, Demonstration of the Apostolic Preaching and Against Heresies, Book 1
Hippolytus, On Christ and Antichrist
Tertullian, Against Praxeas and On the Flesh of Christ
Origen, On First Principles, Books 1–2
Cyprian, On the Unity of the Church
Lactantius, Epitome of the Divine Institutes (NOTE: Read only the epitome, not the entire work!)
Athenasius, On the Incarnation
Basil of Caesarea, On the Holy Spirit
Augustine, On Christian Doctrine, Books 1–4
Vincent of Lérins, Commonitorium
Boethius, The Trinity Is One God, Not Three Gods and On the Catholic Faith

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Reading Assignments (60%)

Reading of textbooks and ancient writings must be completed according to the class schedule. No credit is given for late reading. Reading will be the basis for class discussion. Because this is a seminar
style upper-level elective in historical theology, students are expected to read critically, placing the writing in its historical-theological context and being prepared to participate in discussion.

To assist students in preparing for class discussion, a reading guide for J.N.D. Kelly’s Early Christian Doctrines will be provided on the course documents page at campusnet.dts.edu. Though students are not required to provide written answers to all of these questions, each student should come fully prepared to interact with the topics addressed in the reading guide, as these will form the basis for class discussion.

B. Written Assignments (20%)

1. **Doctrinal Development Notes** (10%). Each student will be assigned one of the following areas of doctrine for which he or she will be responsible throughout the course during primary source reading and discussion:

   a. Theology Proper—Existence, nature, and attributes of divinity per se, including contrasting Christian concept with others
   b. Trinitarianism—Intratrinitarian relationships of Father, Son, and Spirit; Trinitarian articulation
   c. Christology—Deity and humanity of Christ, incarnation, death, resurrection
   d. Pneumatology—The personhood, divinity, and works of the Holy Spirit, including spiritual gifts
   e. Anthropology—The creation, material and immaterial natures of humanity, and the image of God
   f. Hamartiology—The Fall and resulting lostness of humanity, including original sin, depravity, and the need for grace
   g. Soteriology—Atonement, role of faith and works in salvation, election, free will, and security
   h. Bibliology—General and special revelation, inspiration of Scripture, inerrancy, authority, and sufficiency of Scripture, function of tradition
   i. Ecclesiology—Origin, nature, purpose of the church, its organization, authority, unity, holiness, catholicity, apostolicity
   j. Sacraments—Baptism and eucharist, nature and function of sacraments, place in worship and life of the church
   k. Eschatology—Return of Christ, millennial views, order of events, resurrection, and personal salvation (what happens to a person when they die)

   Students will come to class prepared to orally present a summary of his or her assigned doctrine’s explication, defense, or development based on the readings for that day. Even if a student is not called upon to present, she or he must come prepared with written notes or a summary. These brief presentations will be the basis for class discussions regarding that particular topic related to the reading that day. NOTE: Daily single-sheet summaries will not be turned in either online or to the professor.

2. **Doctrinal Development Synopsis** (10%). Building on his or her doctrinal notes prepared for class throughout the semester, each student will write a brief five-page paper that traces the development of his or her particular doctrine through the first five centuries of the church. The student is expected to supplement his or her synopsis with additional primary and secondary source research related to the topic. The five-page paper may be single-spaced, but its footnotes must conform to Turabian style. The Doctrinal Development Synopsis will be turned in on the Canvas course page by the end of finals week.

C. **Final Exam** (20%)

A final exam will be given at the end of the semester covering major introductory and content issues in the theology of the early church. This exam will consist of 20 multiple-choice questions and will be taken online (on the course Canvas page) before the end of finals week. It will be a closed-book, closed-note type of exam with a very short time limit. All questions will be drawn from core content and key concepts covered in the Reading/Discussion Guide for J. N. D. Kelly’s Early Christian Doctrines.
Doctrines. This exam will not delve into irrelevant minutiae. The purpose of the exam is to encourage a final review of the course material and to reinforce major persons, issues, and developments.

V. COURSE POLICIES

A. Weight Given to Course Requirements for Grading
   Reading: 60%
   Notes and Presentations/Participation: 10%
   Doctrinal Development Synopsis 10%
   Final Exam 20%

B. Class Participation
   The student is expected to attend every class period fully prepared to contribute to class discussion with collegiality.

C. Late Assignments
   NO late assignments are accepted except under extraordinary circumstances.

D. Absences
   Absences may be penalized in accordance with the policy outlined in the Student Handbook.

E. Letter/Numerical Grade Scale

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<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>96-98</td>
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VI. COURSE SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

Students with Disabilities or Medical Incidents:

Dallas Theological Seminary works to provide reasonable and appropriate accommodations to students with psychological, medical, physical, and learning disabilities. A student desiring or needing accommodations on the basis of such disabilities or of medical incidents such as hospitalization or severe injury is to contact the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities (https://students.dts.edu/studentlife/disability-services/). If the student is aware of a condition that may impact his/her studies, the student should contact the Director of Services for Students with Disabilities at prior to the beginning of the semester or at the onset of a crisis.

VII. COURSE LECTURES AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

ANF=Ante-Nicene Fathers; NPNF 1=Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 1: Writings of Augustine; NPNF 2=Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, Series 2, all of which are available online at www.ccel.org. Students are not required to purchase primary source texts. Bibliographic data of alternate English translations and primary text editions are given to aid the student in locating these volumes as needed. Please note that although many of the primary source documents are in the public domain and therefore available online at www.ccel.org or at books.google.com, recent editions and translations are available in hard copy and Melito’s On Pascha is not available online.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignments Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8/25</td>
<td>None. Overview of the Patristic Period.</td>
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<td>Reading Assignment</td>
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<td>11/16-11/27 Reading Week and Thanksgiving Break: No Class</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>12/14-12/27 <strong>Doctrinal Development Synopsis</strong> (Turned in Online at Canvas Course Page) <strong>Final Exam</strong> (Taken Online at Canvas Course Page)</td>
<td>All assignments due by MIDNIGHT on THURSDAY of Finals Week</td>
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Note: The professor reserves the right to make modifications to the above schedule.