

CH502 Semlink: The Church since the Reformation | Spring 2020

Instructor: Dr. Gordon Isaac, Berkshire Professor of Church History and Advent Christian Studies
gisaac@gordonconwell.edu

Credit Hours: 3

This course occurs completely online with no scheduled classroom time. This course follows a weekly schedule that runs for 14 Weeks from Monday, January 27, through Monday, May 4, 2020. A week in this course begins on Tuesday and ends on Monday with the exception of the first week, which runs from Monday through Monday. You will have required activities due on certain days each week.

Course Information

Office Hours

Your instructor is available for email correspondence. If you have a question about the course, you can contact your instructor via email.

Technical Support

Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary offers technical support during regular business hours. If you have a technical issue with your course, please email servicedesk@gordonconwell.edu.

Course Description

The Church from the Reformation is a basic introduction to the development of the Christian Church in its various forms from the Protestant Reformation of the Sixteenth Century to the present time.

Gordon-Conwell Mission

This course satisfies the following institutional learning objectives

- **Article 2:** To maintain academic excellence in the highest tradition of Christian scholarship in the teaching of the biblical, historical and theological disciplines.
- **Article 3:** To train and encourage students, in cooperation with the Church, to become skilled in ministry.
- **Article 5:** To provide leadership and educational resources for shaping an effective evangelical presence in Church and society.
- **Article 6:** To develop in students a vision for God's redemptive work throughout the world and to formulate the strategies that will lead to effective missions, evangelism and discipleship.

Course Learning Objectives

In keeping with the institutional learning objective stated above, I intend that upon completing this course, you will:

1. Develop a working knowledge of the major themes, issues and personalities of Church History from the beginning of the Reformation to the present
2. Apply the rich resources of Church History in your practice of ministry
3. Demonstrate ability to communicate in a scholarly context via written assignments

Course Outline

Over 14 weeks, you will cover the following topics and lessons:

- **Module 1: Backgrounds (Week 1)**
 - Why Study the Past?
 - Medieval Backgrounds
- **Module 2: The Sixteenth Century (Weeks 2-4)**
 - Luther's Reformational Breakthrough
 - Luther and the Wittenberg Reformation
 - Ulrich Zwingli and the Swiss Reformation
 - John Calvin and the Genevan Reformation
 - Henry VIII and the English Reformation
 - Elizabeth I
 - The Counter-Reformation
- **Module 3: The Seventeenth Century (Weeks 5-7)**
 - Introduction to the Seventh Century
 - Stuart England and the English Civil War
 - Puritanism
 - The Enlightenment
 - Protestant Orthodoxy
 - The Dutch Revolt and Arminianism
- **Module 4: The Eighteenth Century (Weeks 8-9)**
 - Introduction to the Eighteenth Century
 - The Radical Enlightenment
 - German and Moravian Pietism
 - John Wesley
 - The Great Awakening
- **Module 5: The Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries (Weeks 10-14)**
 - Introduction to the Nineteenth Century
 - The Second Great Awakening
 - Christian Fundamentalism
 - Nineteenth Century Catholicism and Vatican I

- Nineteenth Century Protestant Theologians
- The Church and the American Civil War
- Introduction to the Twentieth Century
- The Civil Rights Movement
- Pentecostalism

Weekly Workflow

This course runs for 14 weeks with each week running from Tuesday to Monday. The weekly workflow will differ from week to week. "Overview and Objectives" pages for each week will describe the workflow that you should follow.

Required Materials

Reading

Below is a list of required texts for this course. Follow the links below to check availability of eBook versions of these texts through the Digital Theological Library.

González, Justo L., [*The Story of Christianity, Volume Two: The Reformation to the Present Day*](#). (New York: Harpers Collins, 2010). Spanish-speakers may read the Spanish version.

Pinn, Anne H. and Anthony B. Pinn, [*Fortress Introduction to Black Church History*](#). (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2002).

Isaac, Gordon L., [*Left Behind or Left Befuddled: The Subtle Dangers of Popularizing the End Times*](#). (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2008).

Placher, William and Derek R. Nelson, eds., [*Readings in the History of Christian Theology, Volume Two: From the Reformation to the Present, Revised Ed.*](#) (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2018).

Technology

Computer and Internet Connection

You will need regular access to a computer with high-speed internet and capable of downloading files and streaming multimedia presentations.

Software

You will need Microsoft Word or a comparable word processor installed on your computer.

Required Activities

To demonstrate achievement of course objectives, you will participate in various required activities. You will find detailed descriptions of these activities on your course site, but an overview of these requirements is given below:

Read Required Texts

You will begin each lesson by reading the required texts as assigned. You will read all of the required texts in their entirety by the end of this course. A suggested weekly reading schedule appears in the Weekly Overview and Objectives pages in your course site.

Watch Lectures

You will continue each lesson by watching assigned lectures.

Contribute to Discussions

At four points through the semester, you will receive prompts to contribute to Discussions. You will contribute original posts to these Discussions and respond to at least two peers. Discussions will encourage you to reflect and synthesize what you've been learning in the course.

Attend Online Conferences

Twice during the semester, you will attend an online Conference. The Conferences will focus on the implications of your study of Church History for your life and ministry today.

Write a Major Paper

By the end of Module 4, you will write a 12-14 page major research paper. It should focus on one significant individual or movement in Church History between A.D. 1500 and the present. Your research should include the reading of at least one major biography of the person or one major work produced by the movement and at least one additional major piece of writing by that person or of that movement.

Please avoid doing a simple biography of a person but rather find a specific angle by which to study that character. For example, instead of writing Calvin's life as biography, focus on one aspect of his writings such as the construction of the Institutes, his writings against the Anabaptists or his biblical commentaries. I do hope that specific ways (both positive and negative) in which your subject might be of help to you in your future ministry will be in your mind as you write. Have fun with this!

Write a Response Paper

By end of the course, you will write a response paper to either the text *Left Behind, Left Befuddled*, or *Fortress Press Introduction to Black Church History*. The paper will be five pages in length and will interact with this presentation of Dispensationalism or the black church. The paper

will include more personal responses about what surprised you, what you resonated with and what you learned. Note that you will read both texts but will pick only one of them to write about for your Response Paper.

Grading

Your assignments are categorized and weighted for grading as follows

Course Assignment	% of grade
Course Discussions	15%
Conference Attendance	5%
Response Paper	25%
Major Paper	55%

You must follow the criteria detailed in the Assignment Instructions posted on your course site. Grading will be based on your work's alignment with the performance criteria in the Assignment Instructions. You must also submit work by the "due by" dates listed in the Course Summary on the Syllabus tool of the course site. Any work submitted after these "due by" dates will be penalized the equivalent of one letter grade per week beyond the due date unless you make arrangements with you instructor ahead of time.

The grading scale will be as follows:

A 95, A- 90, B+ 87, B 83, B- 80, C+ 77, C 73, C- 70, D+ 67, D 63, D- 60, F below 60

Course Policies

Time Zone

All activities in this course follow Eastern Time (UTC-05:00). Be attentive to the due dates listed in the course site so that you submit your work on time in Eastern Time.

Instructor Feedback

Your instructor will reply to email within 1-2 business days. He or she will give feedback on assignments within one week of submission and post grades and any additional comments in the course gradebook within two weeks of submission.

Writing Standards and Submitting Written Assignments

Papers must be double-spaced with 1" margins (side margins as well as top and bottom margins of each page), using Times New Roman or Arial 12-point font. Do not exceed page limits. Sources must be properly documented using notes and bibliography. Citations should be professionally

formatted, meaning that it should adhere to either Turabian or APA style. Written assignments should be submitted as a Word or PDF file.

ADA accommodations

Gordon-Conwell is committed to creating a learning environment that meets the needs of its diverse student body. If you have a special need or disability, please refer to the ADA Accommodations section of your home campus's Student Handbook for information about the accommodation process. Students who have a special need are asked to discuss the provisions of their accommodation with the appropriate office at their home campus as soon as possible.

Violations of Academic Integrity

The seminary considers all breaches of personal and academic integrity to be serious offenses. As such, the seminary has zero tolerance for such behaviors. Cheating involves, but is not limited to, the use of unauthorized sources of information during an examination. Duplication of course requirements involves the submission of the same (or substantially same) work for credit in two or more courses without the knowledge and consent of the instructor. Plagiarism involves the use of another person's distinctive ideas or words, whether published or unpublished, and representing them as one's own instead of giving proper credit to the source (taken from the *Hamilton Student Handbook 2018-2019* – please be sure you understand your campus's most current Academic Integrity Policies).

Discussion Posts

When quoting from or paraphrasing course readings, provide the author's name and page(s) in parentheses. If quoting from other sources, provide appropriate documentation. Similarly, when referring to a specific lecture, identify it using the title of the segment.

Netiquette

Gordon-Conwell does not tolerate disruptive or disrespectful behavior in the online communications in any course. Students should review the netiquette policy in the Student Handbook and this website: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette>.

Seminary Policies

You must be familiar with current seminary policies, which are in place for academic activities. Please refer to the Student Handbook for your home campus to familiarize yourself with policies pertinent to participating in academic activities at the seminary. Policies pertaining to this course would include those on Academic Integrity, Late Work, and Accessibility, among others.