

SYLLABUS  
**RELG 240, Introduction to Christianity**  
University of South Carolina

**I. COURSE TITLE and NUMBER: RELG 240.E01, Introduction to Christianity (3 credit hours)**

**II. COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Introduction to the Christian Religion with emphasis on the history of the major traditions and movements that have shaped the multicultural practices and social impact of modern global Christianity.

**III. COURSE LOCATION AND MEETING TIMES:** Tuesdays and Thursdays (6:00-7:15pm). Meeting place to be announced. (You may want to check on-line before the first class meeting to make sure no room change has been made).

**IV. INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Terry C. Dohm**

**\*HOME PHONE: (803)788-9348 (call me at home on any day at any time up to 10:00pm at night. I always have time if you have a need)**

**E-MAIL: [Dohm@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:Dohm@mailbox.sc.edu)**

**OFFICE HOURS:** Before or after class, or by appointment.

**V. TEXTBOOKS:**

1) **REQUIRED TEXT:** Ferguson, Everett. *Church History I: From Christ to the Pre-Reformation*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2013. ISBN: 978-0-310-51-6569.

2) **RECOMMENDED:** Gonzalez, Justo. *The Story of Christianity*, 2 vols. Peabody, Massachusetts: Prince Press/Hendrickson.

**VI. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:** After completion of this course, the student will be able to...

1. Discuss how cultural and social aspects of Judaism and Christianity impacted Christianity in the first four centuries.
2. Outline the history of the early church in a nutshell.
3. Engage in meaningful discussion about significant events in each period of church history.
4. Identify a sampling of personalities who have been instrumental in the development of the theology of the Christian church and the contributions of each.
5. Define and describe rival interpretations which led to a quest for orthodoxy.
6. Identify movements in early Christianity which sought reform.
7. Understand church history on an intellectual basis in order to develop a deeper appreciation for the church as it is making history today.
8. Understand in light of past church history that even one individual can make a difference toward the reformation of the church when the situation so dictates.

**VII. INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS:** Principally lecture but with discussion most days when material from previous class period is reviewed.

**VIII. ATTENDANCE AND OTHER CLASSROOM POLICIES:**

**A. ATTENDANCE:**

1. Since this is a 75 minute class, each absence will equal 1½ absences. Two times 1½ absences equal 3 absences. More than two undocumented absences (that is, 1½ + 1½ = 3) during the term will result in the loss of 5 points from the final grade.
2. Three or more undocumented absences may result in a failing grade for the course.
3. Documented Absences Due to Athletic Events and Other School Activities:  
\*\*To receive a documented absence the student must see the instructor in advance, 'in person', at the class period prior to the event to notify him of the anticipated absence.

**B. TARDINESS:**

1. DO NOT be late for class.
2. Twice tardy equals one absence.
3. Excessive tardiness (three or more) or leaving class early will also result in the loss of 5 points from the final grade.

**C. OTHER CLASSROOM POLICIES:**

1. Talking with peers while class is in progress is discourteous and will not be tolerated.
2. **Students must turn-off cell phones and other electronic devices during class time.**
  - a. **Phone calls, texting, checking emails or texts, being on the internet for anything not relevant to the class, etc. is not allowed in class.**
  - b. **Students may use laptops for taking notes. However using laptops for anything other than taking notes in class will result in the loss of that privilege.**

**IX. COURSE EVALUATION PROCEDURE:**

**A. Four tests, including the final exam, will be given during the semester. Each test is worth 25% of the grade.**

B. Policy for make-up tests.

1. A 'no show' for a test without a legitimate excuse will result in the lowering of the grade by a letter-grade when the make-up test is taken.
2. A 'no show' for a make-up test will result in a zero for that test.
3. A 'no show' for the final exam will result in a failing grade for the course.

C. \*\*The key to doing well in this class: Take thorough notes during class lectures and participate in daily class discussions when material from previous class period is reviewed each day. All tests come from class notes.

D. There are no opportunities in this course for extra credit.

## **X. COURSE GRADING SCALE:**

A = 90-100

B+ = 87-89

B = 80-86

C+ = 77-79

C = 70-76

D+ = 67-69

D = 60-66

F = 59 and below

**\*\*Note:** Cheating may result in an F for the course  
(see below)

## **XI. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

You are expected to practice the highest standards of academic integrity. Deviation from the expectation will result in disciplinary measures which may include an F for the assignment and could even result in a failing grade for the course. Violations include improper citation of sources when writing a paper, using another student's work, cheating on tests, or any other form of academic misrepresentation. Failure to practice academic integrity in any way may also entail referring you to the Office of Academic Integrity since you would have violated the university's Honor Code.

## **XII. POLICY ON SPECIAL NEEDS – STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

Reasonable accommodations are available with a documented disability. If you have a disability and need accommodations to fully participate in this class, contact the Office of Disability Services: 777-6142, TDD 777-6744, email [ads@mailbox.sc.edu](mailto:ads@mailbox.sc.edu), or stop by LeConte College, Room 112A. All accommodations must be approved through the Office of Student Disability Services.

**XVIII. COURSE CALENDAR:** (Chapters beside each topic is the reading assignment for that day) **\*\*Tentative Course Outline:**

- |           |   |
|-----------|---|
| Session 1 | Jesus the Historical Basis, and Easter the Birthday of the Church<br>(Read your textbook: Ferguson, chpts. 1-2)                                   |
| 2         | The Hellenists and the Hebrews: A Split in the Early Church and Paul's Missionary Journeys, Opponents, Council of Jerusalem<br>Chpts. 1-2 cont'd. |
| 3         | The Sub-Apostolic Age: What Became of Jewish Christianity?,<br>Gentile Christian Literature: Apostolic Fathers, NT Apocrypha<br>(chpt. 3)         |
| 4         | Chpt. 3 cont'd.   |
| 5         | Church and Empire: Roman Empire's Attitude Toward Christians,<br>Christian Responses to Persecution: Apologies, Martyrdom (chpt.<br>4)            |
| 6         | Heresies and Schisms in the 2 <sup>nd</sup> Century: Gnosticism,  |

- Marcionism, Montanism (chpt. 5)
- 7     **Test #1**
- 8     Reactions Against Rival Interpretations: Apostolic Succession, Apostolic Creed, Canonization of Scripture (chpt. 6)
- 9     Beginnings of Early Christian Theology: Writings Against Heresies, Developing Philosophical Theologies, Problems Facing Early Theologians (chpt. 7)
- 10    Church Life in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Centuries: Christian Baptism, Christian Worship, Christian Life, Christian Hope (chpt. 8)
- 11    Development of the Church in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century: Persecution, Controversies Over the 'Lapsed', Christian Art, Church Growth (chpt. 9)
- 12    Diocletian, Constantine, Imperial Christianity, the Arian Controversy, Council of Nicea and Its Significance (chpt. 10)
- 13    The Church in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century: Arianism Alive and Well, Julian: Unexpected Unifier, Theodosius I - Christianity Official Religion, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers (chpt. 11)
- 14    **Test #2**
- 15    4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Centuries: Monasticism, Donatism and Missions (chpt. 12)
- 16    The Church's Relationship to the State in 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Centuries (chpt. 12 cont'd.); Other Christological Controversies (chpt. 13)
- 17    Augustine vs. Pelagius et al. (chpt. 14)
- 18    Transition to the Middle Ages and Proposed Dates for It, Germanic Migrations and Invasions by So-Called Barbarians, Effects on Society, Effects on the Church, Reform of the Papacy (chpt. 15)
- 19    The Church in East and West in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Cent.: 1) Theological Developments in the East and the Rule and Influence of Justinian; 2) Stability in the West Through Benedictine Rule and Pope Gregory the Great; Differences

Between East and West (chpt. 16)

- 20 Impact of Arab Invasion and Spread of Islam on the Eastern Church 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> Centuries, Iconoclastic Controversy, Photian Schism, Flowering of the Eastern Church (chpt. 17)
- 21 **Test #3**
- 22 The Western Church, 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> Centuries: Anglo-Saxon Christianity, The Age of Charlemagne (Military Expansion)
- 23 Restructuring the Church, Establishment of Schools, Coronation), Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals (chpt. 18)
- 24 Decay in the Papacy, Renewal Movements in the West, 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> Centuries (chpt. 19)
- 25 Papal Reform and the Crusades (chpt. 20)
- 26 Intellectual Revival: Scholasticism and the Church in the Twelfth Century (chpts. 21&22); Golden Age of the Western Medieval Church, 13<sup>th</sup> Cent.: Mendicant Religious Orders (chpt. 23)
- 27 Universities, Thomas Aquinas (chpt. 23 cont'd.); Decline and Collapse (chpt. 24)
- 28 Reformation is in the Air: John Wycliff, John Hus, Martin Luther

### **Final Exam**

**\*\*Note:** This is a 'tentative' Course Outline. Its purpose is to give the student an idea of where we are going and an approximate time when we will arrive there. It is left to the discretion of the instructor to make changes and modifications when necessary to improve the learning experience.