

Church history is typically divided into three parts. At Ryle, these divisions are *Early Church* (ca. 100 AD to early Middle Ages), *Reformation* (Late Middle Ages to end of the 16th century), and *Modern Church* (17th century down to the present). This course covers this final era of Christian history. There are no prerequisites required for taking the present course; history courses may be taken in any order.

Our emphasis in this course will be the history of the church--particularly in western Europe and North America--in its doctrinal, intellectual, and social contexts. This will include major doctrinal developments, theological controversies, and trends throughout the period, including the rise of denominations, and the mission expansion that took the Gospel throughout the world. We will also discuss important theologians and movements that have arisen, including examination of their antecedents and lasting results.

The goal of the course is to equip the student with a well-rounded understanding and appreciation of this period of church history, to give the ability to place one's own denominational and/or national heritage in the proper context of historical Christianity, and be able to articulate a reasonable summary of the period, its key theologians, and different denominational distinctions.

### **Textbooks**

There are two required textbooks. These are Bruce Shelley, *Church History in Plain Language*, 4th ed. (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2013), and Justo Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity, Vol. II: The Reformation to the Present Day* (New York: HarperCollins, 2010). In addition, Henry Bettenson, ed., *Documents of the Christian Church* (any edition) is a recommended, but not required, text. I will place a copy of this on reserve shelf. Assigned readings from this, and other sources of primary material, will be distributed in class, from week to week.

### **Course Requirements**

Besides the required reading, which is presumed, there are five course requirements, which are equally weighted (20% each) of the final mark each. I will discuss these requirements in class; feel free to ask if you have questions or need clarification. **(Specific due dates will be provided in the final syllabus handed out on first day of class.)**

1. Essay #1 (approx. 8-10 pages) on a topic approved by the professor. Specifically, this will be on the history of a particular denomination of your choice. Specifics pertaining to the essay will be discussed in class. **Due date:** Early October.
2. A book report (approx. 5 pages) on one of the following books. **Due date:** Late October.  
Alec Vidler, *The Church in an Age of Revolution* (Penguin, 1961)  
Mark Noll, *Protestantism: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford University Press, 2011)  
Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Mission* (Penguin, 1986)  
Mark Noll, *A History of Christianity in the United States and Canada* (Eerdmans, 1992)  
(I am willing to add a specific book to this list, if you have one in mind that is appropriate)
3. A class presentation (approx. 15 minutes), on the topic of your essay noted in #1 above. **Due date:** Variable (arrange with me), but the last day for presentations will be early November.
4. Essay #2 (approx. 8-10 pages) on a topic approved by the professor. This essay topic will be focused on a theological controversy in our period. More details provided in class. **Due date:** Late November.

5. Final Exam (three hours). **Date:** Monday, December 2. (I will hand out a study guide for the final, one week before the exam date.)

**Submitting Assignments, and Late Penalties**

Written assignments may be given to me in person, or via email (dean@ryleseminary.ca). If submitting something electronically, I prefer pdf or Word files. I will acknowledge receipt by email.

Assignments are due (in my inbox, or handed to me) at 2pm on the due date. If you have sufficient reason to ask for an extension, by all means do so. But asking after the due date, or without sufficient reason, will result in my answering "no" to an extension request. (Being "too busy" to complete an assignment on time is not a sufficient reason.) Late submissions will be penalized.

**CLASS SCHEDULE *(subject to change)***

<b><u>Class/Date</u></b>	<b><u>Topics (handouts underneath)</u></b>	<b><u>Assigned Readings</u></b>
1. September 9	Introduction / Old World & New World	--
2. September 16	Puritanism / Wars of Religion / Birth of Denominations Bettenson, Section XIV, part III	Shelley, ch. 28-31 Gonzalez, ch. 16-18
3. September 23	Theologians & Movements I Bettenson, Section XII, part I	Shelley, ch. 32-33 Gonzalez, ch. 19-21
4. September 30	Age of Reason / Age of Revival Bettenson, Section X, part IV	Shelley, ch. 34-35 Gonzalez, ch. 22, 24
5. October 7	Theologians & Movements II  [ Week of October 14, Reading Week / Thanksgiving ]	Shelley, ch. 36, 38 Gonzalez, ch. 28, 30
6. October 22	Nineteenth Century / World Missions Bettenson, Section XI, part VIII	Shelley, ch. 37, 39 Gonzalez, ch. 31-33
7. October 28	Optimism & Tragedy: the 20th Century Bettenson, Section XII, part XII	Shelley, ch. 40-41 Gonzalez, ch. 35-36
8. November 4	Canadian Christianity  [ November 11: no class ]	Gonzalez, ch. 26
9. November 18	Ecumenism / World Trends Bettenson, Section XIV, part V	Shelley, ch. 42-45 Gonzalez, ch. 34
10. November 25	Global South / Contemporary Christianity Jerusalem Declaration	Shelley, ch. 46-48 Gonzalez, ch. 37
11. December 2	Final Examination	--