American Christianity Through the Colonial Period

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Office Hours: M 3:00–5:00 pm / R 12:00–2:00 pm / Or another time by appointment

Course Description
In this course, we will reevaluate the historical development of Christianity in North America from the start of the sixteenth century up to the start of the Second Great Awakening at the end of the eighteenth century. We will trace the migration of European religious traditions to North America to reassess the planting, development and proliferation of various forms of Christian doctrine, practice and social engagement. We will compare and contrast the emergence of diverse forms of Christianity along denominational, racial, social, intellectual, political and gender inflected locations. Major topics to be examined include the Puritans, Christian missionary efforts in North America, Catholicism and Protestantism, religious experience and autonomy, slavery and race, the First Great Awakening, the Democratization of Christianity and the American Revolution, and the Second Great Awakening.

Required Readings


Primary Source Documents
In addition to the required readings, we will discuss excerpts from historical documents. The historical will be made accessible on Canvas. Many of our primary source excerpts are borrowed from Edwin S. Gaustad and Mark A. Noll, eds. A Documentary History of Religion in America to 1877. 3rd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003).
**Electronics Policy:** To cultivate an engaged classroom culture, thank you, for refraining from the use of electronic device (e.g., laptops, phones, etc.) during our time together. If you need to use an electronic device, please step out of class and return when able. Negative consequences for violating this policy could include a reduction in the student’s grade. All lectures will be posted on Canvas (or sent by email), additionally, **students should bring materials to class for the purpose of note taking.**

**Learning Objectives**

Upon successfully completing this course, the following outcomes will have been met:

1. Students will identity, interpret, compare and contrast movements and denominations that comprise the diverse expressions of the Christianity in North America from the 1500’s then up to the beginning of the Second Great Awakening.
2. Students will improve upon their interdisciplinary approach to the study of religion by asking a range of questions across the theological, economic, racial, gendered, political and cultural spheres.
3. Students will improve upon analytical reading of Christian documents from the sixteenth to end of eighteenth century in North America.
4. Students will have improved upon their analytical writing and research skills.
5. Students, in writing and class discussions, will learn how to critically engage scholarship (to analyze and evaluate historical documents (primary source documents)).
6. Students will practice developing their own sense of critical self-awareness as the evaluator of religious traditions.

**Structure and Method of the Course**

In both lectures, discussions, and student led facilitations, we aim to connect the themes and issues discussed in the textbook to additional material, content and media. In collaboration with the Guided Reading Documents (distributed throughout the semester), students will facilitate discussions around primary source documents.

**Evaluation and Grade Breakdown**

**Attendance, Participation, Facilitation = 20% [200 Points]** | Attendance is mandatory. With the proper documentation, absences will be excused for school related activities. After three unexcused absences, each subsequent absence will result in a half a letter grade drop of the attendance-participation grade. Participation is expected and evaluated throughout the course of the semester. Participation includes active listening, and facilitation of our class discussions, which will be based around Primary Source Documents [=PSD in the Calendar].

**Ten Reading Quizzes = 10% [100 Points]** | The top ten scored [out of the provided twelve reading quizzes] will be counted towards your overall course grade. If a student misses a quiz, there will be no opportunity to retake it unless by my discretion. The quizzes will always consist of ten multiple choice questions based on assigned readings. The reading quizzes may be announced ahead of time (in class or via email correspondence) or could be administered at the beginning of our class without providing any advanced notice.
ANALYTICAL ESSAY = 20% [200 POINTS] | Guidelines and rubric will be provided. Due: 9/26.

EXTENDED PAPER = 30% [300 POINTS] | Guidelines and rubric will be provided. Due: 11/28.

FINAL EXAM = 20% [200 POINTS] | Study guide and review (in class) will be provided.

LATE WORK POLICY
Late work will be accepted up to one week after its original due date with a possible reduction of the grade (prior to grading) of 25%. Generally, if the student reaches out to me, explains their reason for late work and ensures me they will turn it in as soon as possible, the late penalty will be minimal.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
OSU is committed to maintaining the highest standards of integrity and ethical conduct. This level of ethical behavior and integrity will be maintained in this course. Participating in a behavior that violates academic integrity (e.g., unauthorized collaboration, plagiarism, multiple submissions, cheating on examinations, fabricating information, helping another person cheat, unauthorized advance access to examinations, altering or destroying the work of others, and altering academic records) will result in an official academic sanction. Violations may subject you to disciplinary action including the following: receiving a failing grade on an assignment, examination or course, receiving a notation of a violation of academic integrity on your transcript, and being suspended from the University. You have the right to appeal the charge.

101 Whitehurst | Phone: (405) 744-5627 | Website: http://academicintegrity.okstate.edu

STUDENTS WITH PHYSICAL OR LEARNING DISABILITIES
If you need special accommodations the University will try to make appropriate arrangements. These arrangements will need to be made ahead of time through the Student Disability Services Office, 315 Student Union | Phone: (405) 744–7116 | Website: https://sds.okstate.edu/.

CALENDAR | LECTURES, READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS
Three asterisks [***] at the end of assigned reading indicates it will be made available on Canvas.

WEEK ONE | EUROPEAN CHRISTIANITY
8/20 Introductions and Review of Aims and Expectations

8/22 Augustine, the European Reformation, and the Ideal of a Pure Church
  Reading: Morgan, Visible Saints, chapter 1, pp. 1–32.

WEEK TWO | EUROPEAN REFORMATION
8/27 Fragmentation and Proliferation

8/29 Jesuit Missions
Reading: Butler, New World Faiths, pp. 1–46.  
PSD: “Pedro Menéndez de Avilés and the Jesuits,” A Documentary History of Religion in America to 1877 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), pp. 28–29.***  

WEEK THREE | RELIGION IN NEW ENGLAND  
9/3 Puritans and Religion in New England  
Reading: Morgan, Visible Saints, pp. 33–63.  
Reading: Butler, New World Faiths, pp. 47–70.  

9/5 Protestantism and the New England System  
Reading: Morgan, Visible Saints, pp. 64–112.  
Reading: Kidd, Protestant Interest, pp. 29–50.  

WEEK FOUR | SOCIAL ORDER AND THE CHALLENGE OF DIVERSITY  
9/10 The Case of Anne Hutchinson  
Reading: Morgan, Visible Saints, pp. 113–138.  
PSD: “The Examination of Anne Hutchinson,” A Documentary History of Religion in America to 1877 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), pp. 72–75  

9/12 Flowering of Religious Diversity  
Reading: Butler, New World Faiths, pp. 71–90.  
Reading: Morgan, Visible Saints, pp. 139–152.  

WEEK FIVE | CATHOLICISM IN COLONIAL AMERICA  
9/17 Protestant Interest in Print and Media  
Reading: Kidd, Protestant Interest, pp. 51–90.  

9/19 The Threat of Catholicism in Colonial America  
Reading: Kidd, Protestant Interest, pp. 91–135.  
PSD: “Maryland and Roman Catholics [A Pamphlet], “ A Documentary History of Religion in America to 1877 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), pp. 72–75.***  

WEEK SIX | AFRICAN RELIGION  
9/24 African Religion  
Reading: Reading: Butler, New World Faiths, pp. 91–109.  

9/26 Christianity and African Religion
**Reading:** Goetz, *Baptism of Early Virginia*, 13–34.

**Due:** Analytical Essay

### WEEK SEVEN | AFRICAN RELIGION

10/1 Baptism and the Construction of Race

**Reading:** Goetz, *Baptism of Early Virginia*, 86–137.

10/3 African Americans in the South


### WEEK EIGHT | AMERICAN INDIAN RELIGION

10/8 American Indians and Christianity


10/10 The Anglo-Indian Christian Commonwealth

**Reading:** Goetz, *Baptism of Early Virginia*, pp. 35–60.


### WEEK NINE | PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS

10/15 Moravians and American Indians


10/17 Quaker Pennsylvania and Catholic Maryland


### WEEK TEN | PROTESTANT DENOMINATIONS

10/22 Dutch Reformed and Swedish Lutherans


10/24 Methodism and Anglicanism [New York]

**WEEK ELEVEN | FIRST GREAT AWAKENING**

10/29  Early Revivals and the Christian Future  
**Reading:** Butler, *New World Faiths*, Ch. 6 (pp. 110–131)  

10/31  Egalitarianism and the First Great Awakening  

**WEEK TWELVE | FIRST GREAT AWAKENING**

11/5  Jonathan Edwards and Religious Experience  

11/7  Black Experience in the First Great Awakening  

**WEEK THIRTEEN | DEMOCRACY, PATRIOTISM, AND THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION**

11/12  Democratization of Christianity  
**PSD:** Randy L. Maddox, “John Wesley on ’Patriotism,’” *Wesley and Methodist Studies*, vol. 9.2 (2017), pp. 184–188.***

11/14  Preaching Revolution  
**PSD:** John Allen, “To the Right Honorable the Earl of Dartmouth,”*A Documentary History of Religion in America to 1877* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), pp. 221–223.***
**WEEK FOURTEEN | THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING**

**11/19** Charles Grandison Finney


**PSD:** Charles Finney, “A Revival of Religion is not a Miracle” and “I Aim to Show what a Revival Is,” *A Documentary History of Religion in America to 1877* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2003), pp. 321–324.***

**11/21** Social Change and the Second Great Awakening


**Reading:** Nancy F. Cott, “Young Women in the Second Great Awakening in New England,” *Feminist Studies*, vol. 3.1/2 (Autumn, 1975), pp. 15–29.***

**WEEK FIFTEEN | THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING**

**11/26** Calvinism and the Second Great Awakening


**Reading:** Butler, *New World Faiths*, Ch. 7, pp. 132–151.

**11/28** **UNIVERSITY HOLIDAY**

**WEEK SIXTEEN | PRE-FINALS WEEK**

**12/2** PRE-FINALS WEEK

**12/4** PRE-FINALS WEEK

**12/6** PRE-FINALS WEEK | **CONCLUSION OF CLASS WORK**

**TENTATIVE NATURE OF THE SYLLABUS**

If necessary, this syllabus and its contents are subject to revision. Students will be held responsible for any changes or modifications distributed in class time, or communicated by an email correspondence, or on Canvas. Usually, all three of these mediums will be employed to communicate any changes.