

****DRAFT SYLLABUS: SUBJECT TO CHANGE****

HSTY 5210: Christian History I:

The Early Church to the Early Reformation

North Park Theological Seminary

Fall 2025, 3 credit hours, hybrid format

Synchronous Sessions: Thursdays 7:30–9:00pm CT

In-person Friday Sept 12, 1:30–5pm CT

INSTRUCTOR

Hauna Ondrey, Associate Professor of Christian History

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Virtual office hours Wednesdays 4-5pm CT and by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers a survey of Christian history and theology from the apostolic times through the early Reformation. Course material pays balanced attention to Christianity's intellectual and social history, with sustained consideration of the church's evolving relationship to political and social structures and the question of unity in diversity. (from Catalog)

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. **Factual knowledge.** Students will identify and explain key figures, events, and ideas from Christian history, from the first century through the early Reformation.
2. **Historical interpretation.** Students will interpret primary source evidence with integrity and formulate strong historical arguments using original source evidence.
3. **Appropriation in the church.** Students will apply historical content and interpretation within Christian ministry.
4. **Virtue formation.** Students will demonstrate charity toward Christians of diverse times and places.

This course contributes toward the following MDiv learning outcomes: (1) Interpret the Christian historical and theological tradition for appropriation in the life and mission of the church; (2) engage diversity and exhibit growth towards inter-cultural competence for ministry reflective of God's global redemptive work.

COURSE STRUCTURE

As a hybrid class, this course is structured with both asynchronous and synchronous learning components:

1. Asynchronous learning (Friday through Thursday): Preparation for each Thursday evening session includes completing assigned reading, watching course lectures (average 1 hour/week), and writing notes in response to weekly discussion themes.
2. Synchronous learning (Thursday pm): Our 1.5-hour live sessions will be devoted to interactive engagement with the week's content and themes, building on your written notes.

REQUIRED TEXTS

1. [Justo L. González, *The Story of Christianity: The Early Church to the Dawn of the Reformation*](#) (vol. 1), 2nd ed. (HarperOne: 2010)

2. [Justo L. González, *The Story of Christianity: The Reformation to the Present Day* \(vol 2\), rev. and updated \(HarperOne: 2010\)](#)
3. [John W. Coakley and Andrea Sterk, eds. *Readings in World Christian History; Vol I: Earliest Christianity to 1453* \(Orbis Books, 2004\).](#)
4. [Helen Rhee, *Wealth and Poverty in Early Christianity* \(Fortress, 2017\).](#) This book is required for your essay on early Christian ethics. You can purchase a copy or access electronically through Brandel Library (available [here](#), or search in catalog).
5. Additional readings will be accessible through Canvas.

ASSESSMENTS

See below for more detailed guidelines and grading criteria for each assessment.

1. **Course checklist (pre-req).** Simple checklist to ensure you are equipped for success in the course, with clarity on course expectations, policies, and deadlines, as well as access to relevant instructional tools.
2. **Weekly reflection and participation (15% of final grade).** Active participation is required both in live sessions and in written discussion preparatory to those sessions. Specific discussion prompts are posted at the end of each week's module in Canvas ("Join Class Session" pages). Spend 30 minutes taking notes on these questions to ensure preparation.
3. **Listening exercise (15% of final grade).** Each student will write a detailed summary of the point of view of a person with whom they disagree on a controversial topic.
4. **Reading (15% of final grade).** Logs indicating completion of assigned course reading are due at midterm and end of the semester and will be graded based on percentage of reading completed. Page numbers for each source are noted within the logs. Note that reading from González, *Story of Christianity*, is assigned as a broad overview. It is a *very* accessible text, so do not be intimidated by page numbers.
5. **Essays (20% of final grade).** Through two focused (~2000-word) essays, students will engage in close reading of primary sources, practice charitable and critical historical thinking, and bring course content into conversation with contemporary questions.
6. **Exams (2x10% of final grade).** Objective exams at midterm and end of semester test your knowledge of course material. All possible terms are available below.

GRADING

Reflection & Participation	15%
Listening exercise	15%
Reading logs	20%
Essays	40%
Exams	20%

Letter grades will be assigned according to scale printed in the [Seminary Academic Catalog](#).

ADDITIONAL COURSE GUIDELINES

1. **Attendance.** Only two absences are permitted without penalty to your final grade. More than two absences will result in a lowered grade; more than four absences will result in failure. Three late arrivals will be considered an absence.

- Students joining in person: Registering for the campus section entails a commitment to joining the class in person every week. If you are too sick to come in person, or if you have an unavoidable scheduling conflict, please use one of your excused absences for the semester.
- Students joining by Teams: Ensure that you are in a private, stable location that is free of visual and audio distractions. Keep your camera on through the class session to be considered present.

2. **Assessment submission**

- Submit all work through Canvas as *Word files*, including your last name in the document title. All submission links are located under the week in which assignments are due.
- Essays are submitted through an external tool, Turnitin, which scans for plagiarism and AI use.
- All assessments are due 11:59pm on the date indicated. Work submitted late without prior arrangement will receive a 1/3 grade reduction each day (e.g., an A grade would receive A- after one day late, B+ after two, etc.). Work submitted over two weeks late will not receive credit.

3. **Communication.** I encourage you to email me with any questions and concerns, and I will make every effort to respond within 24 hours M–F. Before emailing a question, be sure the answer isn't contained in the course syllabus.

ACADEMIC HONESTY

In keeping with our Christian heritage and commitment, North Park University is committed to the highest possible ethical and moral standards. Just as we will constantly strive to live up to these high standards, we expect our students to do the same. To that end, cheating of any sort will not be tolerated. Students who are discovered cheating are subject to discipline up to and including failure of a course and expulsion. Our definition of cheating includes but is not limited to:

1. Plagiarism – the use of another's work as one's own without giving credit to the individual. This includes using materials from the internet.
2. Copying another's answers on an examination.
3. Deliberately allowing another to copy one's answers or work.
4. Signing an attendance roster for another who is not present.
5. Use of ChatGPT or other AI composition software to impersonate individual assignments.

For a fuller discussion of academic dishonesty, review the [Seminary Academic Catalog](#).

ACCOMMODATIONS

Your experience in this class is important to me. North Park is committed to creating inclusive and accessible learning environments consistent with federal and state law. If you have already established your accommodations, please share your accommodation letter with me so we can discuss how your accommodations will be implemented in this course. If you have not yet established services and have a temporary health condition or permanent disability that requires accommodations, please email the Disability Access Specialist or contact by phone (773-244-5737). Student Engagement facilitates the interactive process that establishes reasonable accommodations.

TITLE IX & EQUITY

In accordance with Title IX, North Park employees who become aware of any incident of discrimination, harassment or retaliation based on sex, gender, including pregnancy or related medical conditions, and other protected classes are required by law to notify North Park

University's Title IX & Equity Team by submitting a report [here](#). The Title IX Coordinator will respond and manage concerns about students. The Senior Director of Human Resources and Deputy Title IX Coordinator will respond and manage concerns about employees. More information can be obtained here: [NPU's Discrimination and Harassment Policy](#).

INCOMPLETE GRADES

If, due to extenuating circumstances (specifically, pregnancy, illness, personal and family issues, military assignment, etc.), a student anticipates they will be unable to complete course work within the allotted time, that student may request a grade of incomplete from the course instructor before the last week of class clearly stating the reason(s) for this request. Overscheduling and/or lack of self-discipline are not considered extenuating circumstances. If the request is timely and meets the criteria, student and instructor will submit the incomplete grade form and the grade for that class will be listed as "I" until the last day of the following semester. If coursework is not submitted by the last day of the following semester the listing of "I" will automatically be changed to "F." For the full policy, see the Seminary Academic Catalog.

COURSE SCHEDULE

To follow