

Church History and Historical Theology

History is thinking about and studying the meaning of the past, not simply to examine it but to recover a usable past that can help shape the future. The courses offered trace church history and historical theology from the formation of the church to the present. Special emphasis is given to English church history and The Episcopal Church in the United States.

Courses

CHHT 501 Episcopal Church History (3)

This is a study of The Episcopal Church in the United States from 1607 until the present. It will focus on both the theology and history of The Episcopal Church. The course will stress understanding that which is distinctive about The Episcopal Church. This course also has the attribute of ANGL.

CHHT 511 Church History I: From the Formation of the Church to the Reformation (3)

This course focuses on the patristic and medieval periods. It concentrates on the narrative history of the church with emphasis on doctrinal developments, major theological controversies, heresies, missionary expansion, and the development of distinctive church institutions.

CHHT 512 Church History II: From the Reformation to the Present (3)

This course focuses on the Reformation period as well as on developments to the present. It concentrates on the Caroline Divines, the Evangelical Revival, the Tractarians, Christian Socialism, and the expansion of Anglicanism.

CHHT 528 Varieties of Early Christianity (3)

Scholars have become increasingly aware of the diversity of Christian beliefs and practices in the first three centuries. It is no longer sufficient to describe some groups as heretics, who fell from the orthodoxy that was handed down from the apostles; a much more complex process was involved in the definition of belief and practice in the early period of the church's history. This course will explore what various churches looked like on the ground as early Christians engaged with each other as well as pagans and Jews. We will examine the strengths and weaknesses of the practice of Christianity in the communities for which we have historical evidence.

CHHT 529 Classics of Anglicanism (3)

Beginning with the English Reformation and following the major writers in the history of Anglicanism, this course will examine Anglicanism's claim to represent a "via media" among churches, upheld by a threefold cord of Scripture, Tradition and Reason. In each class we will discuss a short text representative of the work of Richard Hooker, the Caroline Divines, the Nonjurors, the Evangelical Revival, the Oxford and Broad Church Movements, the Modernist controversy, the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral and the Anglican Covenant. The historical context of each text will help us understand the development of Anglicanism and provide a background to our own ministry whether as Anglicans or non-Anglicans today.

CHHT 531 American Church History (3)

This course focuses on the important religious movements in the United States, the authoritative figures and writings associated with them, and the major denominations. The purpose of the course is to study the history of Christianity in the United States in order to understand the present American religious context.

CHHT 543 Christian Origins (3)

This course introduces students the tumultuous first three hundred years of the Christian church, from its origins as a small apocalyptically-minded Jewish reform movement, through its centuries-long struggle to define and assert itself in a pervasively hostile "pagan" environment, to its eventual establishment as an imperial church complete with canon and creed and an increasingly influential cadre of powerful bishops. A theme running throughout the course will be the surprising variety that existed among these early Christ believers, as well as the significant challenges this diversity posed for developing orthodoxy.

CHHT 544 Christian Year (3)

An historical, theological, liturgical, and homiletic course on the origins and development of the idea of the "Christian Year", with detailed studies of examples from medieval mystery plays through Donne and Herbert to Keble and T.S. Eliot and representative Anglican sermons.

CHHT 545 Reformation to Revolution: Religion and Politics in Early Modern England (3)

This seminar examines political and religious change in England in the tumultuous sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, a period marked by religious schism, two revolutions, and a failed experiment in republican government. Topics include reformation of church and government, patterns of rebellion and political instability, Puritan culture, and the shaping of domestic life. This course also has the attribute of ANGL.

CHHT 546 The Oxford Movement (3)

This course will chart the history of the Oxford Movement and its impact on the liturgy and the religious and social beliefs of the Church of England. The Oxford Movement did not arise in a vacuum, so the course will begin by exploring the High Church and Evangelical background of 18th century Britain. Nor did the Movement exist in a vacuum, so we will see its interaction with other Anglicans as well as the so-called "crisis of faith" in the mid-19th century. Finally, we will examine the successors of the Oxford Movement into the 20th century: slum priests, the Liberal Catholics, the liturgical renewal and the parish communion movement. This course also has the attribute of ANGL.

CHHT 547 Augustine and North African Christianity (3)

This course is a seminar that will examine the theology and practice of early North African Christianity, with particular focus on Augustine of Hippo. We will seek to understand Augustine both within his own historical context and especially within the tradition of North African Christianity. Student work will be focused on reading selections of primary sources and developing skills of historical interpretation and analysis, with class sessions driven by discussion of student work. Secondary attention will be given to the significance of our historical work for contemporary ministry.

CHHT 550 Classics of the Christian Journey (3)

This is a course of readings in Christian spirituality that share the motif of "journey" or "pilgrimage." The readings, which are all primary sources, come from many ages and places in the church. They are highly diverse, though related by their profound Christianity and their use of the biblical motif of "journey" or "pilgrimage." The readings change each year the course is offered. Recent versions have selected among Ignatius of Antioch, Perpetua, Origen, Athanasius, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, Ephrem of Edessa, Bernard of Clairvaux, Dante, Julian of Norwich, Martin Luther, Teresa of Avila, John Bunyan, George Herbert, C. S. Lewis, Dorothy Day.

CHHT 551 Anglican History from the Reformation to the Windsor Report (3)

Beginning with the Reformation, this course traces the origins and the development of Anglicanism. Focusing on the Church of England, it will consider the events and ideas that shaped Anglicanism, especially the Reformers, the Deists, the Evangelical revival, the Oxford Movement and Anglo-Catholicism, the Social Gospel and the Anglican Communion. This course also has the attribute of ANGL.

CHHT 594 Directed Readings (1 to 4)

A Church History and Historical Theology topic developed by the student and a School of Theology faculty member to meet an educational goal not met through existing courses.

CHHT 628 Varieties of Early Christianity (3)

Scholars have become increasingly aware of the diversity of Christian beliefs and practices in the first three centuries. It is no longer sufficient to describe some groups as heretics, who fell from the orthodoxy that was handed down from the apostles; a much more complex process was involved in the definition of belief and practice in this early period of the church's history. This course will explore what various churches on the ground may have looked like as early Christians engaged with each other, as well as with pagans and Jews. Perhaps the insights of the early Christians will help our own ministries in a diverse society.

CHHT 629 Classics of Anglicanism (3)

Beginning with the English Reformation and following the major writers in the history of Anglicanism, this course will examine Anglicanism's claim to represent a "via media" among churches, upheld by a threefold cord of Scripture, Tradition and Reason. In each class we will discuss a short text representative of the work of Richard Hooker, the Caroline Divines, the Nonjurors, the Evangelical Revival, the Oxford and Broad Church Movements, the Modernist controversy, the Chicago-Lambeth Quadrilateral and the Anglican Covenant. The historical context of each text will help us understand the development of Anglicanism and provide a background to our own ministry whether as Anglicans or non-Anglicans today.

CHHT 630 An Introduction to Ancient Eastern Christianity (3)

In this course we look closely at early, eastern varieties of Christianity. The history of early Christianity is usually told from the perspective of Greek and Latin-speaking communities, but we will focus our attention instead on the wealth of literature that survives from Christian communities who lived in areas as diverse as Syria, Mesopotamia, Persia, India and China, who largely spoke and wrote in a dialect of Aramaic called 'Syriac,' and who have survived as a minority religion from the earliest centuries until today.

CHHT 631 Origen, Spiritual Exegesis, and the Roots of Universal Salvation (3)

This course will focus on the life and writings of the third-century Christian writer, Origen of Alexandria, widely regarded as one of the greatest and most influential theologians of early Christianity. He pioneered a practice of scriptural interpretation that sought to bring to the surface successive layers of spiritual meaning. This practice, sometimes called "allegorical" interpretation, was both wildly influential and controversial (and it remains so today). Origen is also (in)famous for defending universal salvation, that is, the conviction that all of creation will eventually be saved at the end of time—an event he calls the apokatastasis or "restoration of all things." He thought of our salvation as a pedagogical process, in which our embodied sojourn on earth serves to rehabilitate our fallen minds. Our reading of Origen will be with an eye to retrieving his theology for contemporary use, both his practice of spiritual exegesis (for preaching and bible study) and his controversial conviction in it.

CHHT 646 The Oxford Movement, the Liturgy and the Crisis of Faith (3)

This course will chart the history of the Oxford Movement and its impact on the liturgy and the religious and social beliefs of the Church of England primarily, but also on the wider Anglican Communion. The Oxford Movement did not arise in a vacuum, so the course will begin by exploring the High Church and Evangelical background of 18th century Britain. Nor did the Movement exist in a vacuum, so we will see its interaction with other Anglicans, as well as the so-called "crisis of faith" later in the 19th century. Finally, we will examine the successors of the Oxford Movement into the 20th century: slum priests, the Liberal Catholics, the liturgical renewal, the parish communion movement, and the theology of Radical Orthodoxy.

CHHT 647 Philosophy in the Desert: An Introduction to Early Christian Monasticism (3)

This course will inquire into the rise of Christian "monasticism" in the fourth-century, in which men and women withdrew from society, renounced sexuality and other pleasures (and burdens) of the flesh, and devoted themselves to spiritual exercises such as prayer, study, contemplation, and (crucially) wrestling with demons. This way of life was styled a new "philosophy," and was much informed by the vibrant intellectual scene in Alexandria. Egypt was at the center of this wider counter-cultural movement, and its deserts became the scenes for the pursuit of holiness – hence "philosophy in the desert." This course introduces students to the major figures and texts associated with Egyptian monasticism.