Statement of Purpose

Historical Theology is an interdisciplinary project, which employs the tools and skills of historical research to examine what Anselm of Canterbury called “faith seeking understanding.” Yet history, like theology, is not monolithic in structure or univocal in expression. This seminar will introduce students to issues and questions that dominate historiographical debate, and by extension, theological discourse.

Historical accounts have the power to shape the corporate identity of a people, mold perceptions of the “other,” and suggest to its audience what is important (by inclusion), and what lacks value (by exclusion or neglect). Knowledge of historiography, its theory and practice, is an invaluable aid to scholars studying theological discourse in its past context and current application.

While the basic skills of bibliographical research and of organizing scholarly essays will be improved, the primary goal will be to cultivate an appreciation for the questions historians ask, and how these can be used in the study of theological discourse. Students will be introduced to the modern tradition of Western historiography and contemporary concerns in historical research. These will be applied to a project jointly pursued by the seminar. In this way students will be enabled to cultivate the skills required to effectively pursue their studies in historical theology.

Structure of the Course

Sessions will be a mixture of group and individual presentations, and interaction between the professor and students.

Evaluation

Your grade will be determined by the following:

Grade scale: A = 100-94

B = 93-88

C = 87-80

D = 79-70

F = 69-0
The course grade will be based on:

- Class attendance and participation: 10%
- Historiographical essay: 20%
- Review Bibliography: 10%
- Individual Bibliography: 10%
- Review Presentation: 10%
- Individual Presentation: 10%
- Research Paper: 30%

Textbooks

Required:


Requirements

Attendance and Participation:

Attendance at all sessions is required. Absences without explanation will affect your final grade.

Readings:

Students are expected to study all readings assigned for discussions in class.

Bibliographies:

You will prepare two bibliographies for this course. The format for these must conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style* (15th edition). These bibliographies are a critical part of your work in the course. The **individual bibliography** must be **as complete as possible**. The **literature review bibliography** must be a **careful selection of the last twenty years of scholarship** on the subject.

These bibliographies must be completed in a recent version of MS Word. One hard copy must be submitted the same day as presentations for literature review; and for the **final** individual bibliography, a week after the seminar presentation.

**NOTE:** Five typos, spelling mistakes, and/or stylistic faults will result in assignment being returned for revision and five points off.

Essays:

The essays are a critical part of your work in this course.

Formatting and footnoting must conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style* (15th edition). These essays must be available on a recent version of MS Word. One hard copy must be submitted on the date assigned.

**Historiographical Essay** – Using the works studied in the first portion of the semester, prepare an essay entitled “What is History? … and why should theologians care?”.

Develop your own explanation of the project of historians and how this relates to the study of theology. The length should be no more than 12 pages. **See calendar for due date.**

**Literature Reviews** – The paper you present and read in the seminar will be submitted to the professor at the end of the presentation. Because this presentation should be no more than twenty minutes long when read, the length of your paper will be no more than 8 to 10 pages. [Professor’s review of this written work is part of your presentation grade.]
Research Essay - The major essay is due one week after the student’s individual presentation to the seminar. This paper must be 20 to 25 pages long, excluding bibliography. The major research essay is due one week after the formal presentation to the seminar.

NOTE: Five typos, spelling mistakes, and/or stylistic faults will result in assignment being returned for revision and five points off.

**Literature Review Presentation**

Each student will prepare a review of literature that provides background to the seminar project for the semester.

MUST BE NO MORE THAN 15 MINUTES LONG!

**Individual Research Presentation**

Each student will research and make a presentation on a special topic related to the research project of the semester.

INDIVIDUAL PRESENTATIONS MUST BE NO MORE THAN A TOTAL OF 20 MINUTES LONG!

**Evaluation Forms:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria for Group and Individual Presentation Evaluations:</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Middle</th>
<th>High</th>
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<tr>
<td>General Qualities:</td>
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<td>Word choice and sentence structure appropriate for an oral presentation.</td>
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<td>Audience (your peers at SLU) and purpose (to inform) clear.</td>
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<td>Content:</td>
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<td>Thesis is clearly stated, carefully limited in scope and plausible.</td>
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<td>Demonstrated knowledge of subject.</td>
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<td>Ability to competently answer questions.</td>
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27 August – Introduction

Defining the historical theological project: an opening discussion.

Collective research project for the semester:

“In Search of the Origins of Historical Consciousness among the Christian Churches in the Early Modern Period”

Assignment (due 3 September):

Compile a complete bibliography of all sources available on individual topics assigned to you.

Be prepared to discuss Owen Chadwick’s From Bossuet to Newman.

3 September – History and Theology: The Challenge of the “Enlightenment”

Session One: First Library Instruction with Dr. Ron Crown

Session Two: Discussion of Chadwick’s From Bossuet to Newman.

Assignment (due 10 September):

Compile an extensive bibliography of all sources available for literature review assigned to you.

Be prepared to compare Newman’s Development of Doctrine (1845) with Acton’s “Inaugural Lecture on the Study of History” (1895)

10 September – Doctrine and the Study of History: Two 19th Century Catholics Speak

Session One: Second Library Instruction with Dr. Ron Crown

Session Two: Newman on Doctrinal Development and Acton on the Nature of History

17 September - **British Debates on the Nature of Historical Knowledge**

Session One: Third Library Instruction with Dr. Ron Crown

Session Two: What is History? A scholarly debate in 1920s England

24 September – **British Debates on the Nature of Historical Knowledge (continued)**

Session One: Fourth Library Instruction with Dr. Ron Crown

Session Two: What is History? A scholarly debate in 1920s England (continued)

Assignment (due **1 October**): Be prepared to analyze Bloch’s *The Historian’s Craft*. Come to the session with a working knowledge of the *Annales* School, and the concepts of *la longue durée* and *l’histoire événementielle*.

1 October – **The Structures of Historical Knowing**

Session One: Visit to the Midwest Jesuit Archives on West Pine Street

Session Two: French historical inquiry between the Wars

Assignment (due **8 October**): Read Thomas Kuhn’s *Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Be prepared to discuss the implications of Kuhn’s theory for the previous works studied.

8 October – **The Paradigmatic Shift of Thomas Kuhn’s Theory**

Session One: Visit to the Rare Books Collection at Pius Library

Session Two: Revolutions in (human) knowledge

Assignment (due **15 October**): Be prepared to discuss Michel Foucault’s *Archeology of Knowledge*.

15 October – **Postmodern Discourse: Deconstructing Historical Knowing**

Session One: Discussion of *Archeology of Knowledge*.

Session Two: General discussion of work accomplished to date.

Assignment (due **22 October**): Be prepared to discuss Justo Gonzalez’s *The Changing Shape of Church History*. 

22 October – North Atlantic Church History … and the rest of the World

Session One: Discussion of Justo Gonzalez’s *The Changing Shape of Church History*

Session Two: General discussion of previous weeks’ reading

Assignment (due 29 October): Submit essay entitled, “What is History? … and why should theologians care?”

29 October – Defining the Historical Theological Project

Session One: General discussion focused on the historiographical essays submitted

Session Two: Conference style presentation by professor

5 November - Reviews of Literature on Historical Context of Individual Projects

Factors to consider: Personal Biography, Social Trends, Political Trends, Technological Trends, Economic Trends, Intellectual/Education Trends, Cultural Trends, Religious Trends

Bob Munshaw: Bartalomeo Sacchi (Plantina)

Cate Stevenson: Lorenzo Valla

Andy Russell: Desiderius Erasmus

Andy Halaz: Martin Luther

Bud Marr: Matthias Flacius Illyricus

12 November - Reviews of Literature on Historical Context of Individual Projects

Factors to consider: Personal Biography, Social Trends, Political Trends, Technological Trends, Economic Trends, Intellectual/Education Trends, Cultural Trends, Religious Trends

Jared Goff: Caesar Baronius

Allison Rose: John Foxe

Kyle Schenkewitz: Jean Bodin

Rob Rexroat: Jacques Bénigne Bossuet

Alden Bass: Richard Simon
19 November - **Individual Presentations**

Session One – Bob Munshaw: Bartalomeo Sacchi (Plantina)

Cate Stevenson: Lorenzo Valla

Session Two – Andy Russell: Desiderius Erasmus

Andy Halaz: Martin Luther

26 November – **Thanksgiving Break**

3 December - **Individual Presentations**

Session One – Bud Marr: Matthias Flacius Illyricus

Jared Goff: Caesar Baronius

Session Two – Allison Rose: John Foxe

Kyle Schenkewitz: Jean Bodin

10 December - **Individual Presentations**

Session One – Rob Rexroat: Jacques Bénigne Bossuet

Alden Bass: Richard Simon

Session Two – General Discussion and Assessment of Seminar
Presentation Options

Name: _______________________________

Review of Literature (number in order of preference)

5 November - Reviews of Literature on Historical Context of Individual Projects

- Bob Munshaw: Bartalomeo Sacchi (Plantina)
- Cate Stevenson: Lorenzo Valla
- Andy Russell: Desiderius Erasmus
- Andy Halaz: Martin Luther
- Bud Marr: Matthias Flacius Illyricus

12 November - Reviews of Literature on Historical Context of Individual Projects

- Jared Goff: Caesar Baronius
- Allison Rose: John Foxe
- Kyle Schenkewitz: Jean Bodin
- Rob Rexroat: Jacques Bénigne Bossuet
- Alden Bass: Richard Simon

TURN OVER ➔
Individual Presentations (number in order of preference)

19 November - Individual Presentations
   _____ Bartalomeo Sacchi (Plantina)
   _____ Lorenzo Valla
   _____ Desiderius Erasmus
   _____ Martin Luther

3 December - Individual Presentations
   _____ Matthias Flacius Illyricus
   _____ Caesar Baronius
   _____ John Foxe
   _____ Jean Bodin

10 December - Individual Presentations
   _____ Jacques Bénigne Bossuet
   _____ Richard Simon