THEO 203-01 The Eastern Orthodox Church

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This course is designed as a detailed survey meant to familiarize the student with the history and beliefs of the Orthodox Church over the course of its existence from the Day of Pentecost to the present. The first half of the course (culminating in a Mid-term exam) will deal primarily with the history of the Orthodox Church. The second half of the course (culminating in a Final exam) will concentrate on the theology of the Orthodox Church comprehensively understood: doctrine, spiritual life, liturgy, iconography, moral/ethical issues, etc.

REQUIRED READING LIST:

The Orthodox Church - Timothy Ware  
Welcome to the Orthodox Church – Frederica Mathewes-Green  
Becoming Human – John Behr  
Social Justice – St. Basil the Great

Course Requirements

There will be a Mid-term exam (taken in two parts) after the 4th week (09/18 tentatively); and end of the 8th week (10/16 tentatively). Also, a Final exam (taken in two parts) after the 12th week (11/13 tentatively); and during the designated time slot in finals week. Exact test date will be announced well in advance, and you will receive a Study Sheet to help you prepare. In addition, two papers will be required. The first paper (3-4 pages) will be a Book Review of Becoming Man by John Behr. The Book Review will be due on Friday, (10/02). If this paper is turned in late, then you will lose a full grade for every late day. The second paper (8-10 pages) will be an extended essay based upon your choice of any historical or theological subject that appears on the syllabus. You will develop your chosen subject with some detail based upon the lectures, the Required Reading List, and at least one book other than the ones on the Required Reading List. You are free to do any further supplementary reading and research. You must have your topic approved by me before your paper will be accepted. This paper will be due around two weeks before finals week. If this paper is turned in late, you will lose a full grade for every late day. You must also attend one Divine Liturgy of the Orthodox Church. Failure to attend the Liturgy will result in your grade be lowered by a half-grade.

Assignments

Most of the assignments are simply based on the reading material as we go through our various texts. These assignments will be posted on canvas. There may also be some very short writing assignments periodically. These will be due at the class following the assignment. A missing assignment will result in a loss of points toward your final grade.

Attendance

Students are expected to regularly attend the lectures, video showings, etc. Attendance will be recorded. Good or poor attendance will be a determining factor in one’s grade. An accumulation of three unexcused absences will lower your grade.
Class Participation

Participation in class in the form of questions, comments and dialogue is highly encouraged. Always feel free to stop me during a lecture if something proves to be unclear or confusing (or even interesting). No question is “too simple,” for it usually leads to a deeper discussion. **All cell phones must be turned off during class.**

Dates to Remember

- September 7 – Labor Day – no class
- October 8-9 - Fall Holiday – no classes
- November 23 – Final Day to withdraw from class
- November 25-29 – Thanksgiving Day Holiday – no classes
- December 11 – Final Day of Class

Grading

The grading scale for exams is based upon an eight-point range. But I also use + and – for higher or lower scores within that range respectively:

- 92 - 100 = A
- 90 - 91 = A-
- 88 - 89 = B+
- 84 - 87 = B
- 82 - 83 = B-
- 80 - 81 = C+
- 76 - 79 = C
- 74 - 75 = C-
- 72 - 73 = D+
- 68 - 71 = D
- 66 - 67 = D-
- 65 = F

The papers are given a letter grade. Each grade, in turn, has a corresponding point value:

- A = 11; A- = 10; D- = 1. Your longer paper is worth two grades or 40% of your over-all grade and therefore the point total is doubled. Your five grades are then averaged out for your final grade, and quiz scores are taken into account.

Office Hours

As a member of the adjunct faculty, I do not have a permanent office and thus regular office hours. Therefore all meetings will be made by scheduling an appointment with me. I can be reached at the following number: 351-0907 or 462-8062. In addition to my email server on the XU portal, you can also communicate with me at Steven.k@zoomtown.com