

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

History & Religious Studies 409

CHRISTIANITY IN THE ATLANTIC WORLD, 1500-1800

Fall 2023

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:30-10:45 a.m.
2367 Mosse Humanities

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Office hours: Tuesdays 11:00-1:00 and by appointment

Course Description

Between the late Middle Ages and the French Revolution (c. 1500-1800), Christianity was woven deeply into the fabric of European life. Religion permeated politics, law, ideas, culture, and the everyday lives of ordinary people. During this period, Western Christianity also experienced revolutionary changes. The Reformations of the sixteenth century broke up the unity of the Catholic Church based in Rome and created multiple Christian confessions. This, in turn, had monumental consequences for the course of European and, indeed, world history. The ripple effects of the Reformations were felt in all aspects of European politics and society, and impacted how people from all social strata experienced and expressed their religious identities, beliefs, and practices. Moreover, these developments occurred just as Europe's colonial enterprise was taking off, and so they also profoundly affected peoples in other parts of the globe, including those who were indigenous, or forcibly brought, to the "New World" of the Americas. In this course, we will examine these momentous shifts by focusing on some key moments in the history of Christianity in the early modern Atlantic world.

Learning Outcomes

My main goal in this course is to spark and nourish your fascination with religious history in general and the history of early modern Christianity, in particular. That's because I'm convinced that if you find a subject intrinsically interesting, you'll be motivated to pursue it. If you invest time, thought, and hard work in the course, you will also improve your ability to:

- identify major trends, events, and personalities in Western Christianity in the early modern period
- think historically about the phenomenon of religion and how religious systems, institutions, identities, beliefs, and practices change across time and place
- interpret sources from the past contextually, critically, and empathetically
- construct strong historical arguments based on evidence and careful reasoning
- compose clear analytical and argumentative written prose

Course Credit and Requisite

This a three-credit, intermediate-level course that counts for either Humanities or Social Science breadth and for Liberal Arts and Science credit in L&S. The requisite is sophomore standing.

Workload

This course meets for two 75-minute periods each week over the semester and carries the expectation that you will spend an average of 3 hours outside of class for each class meeting. In other words, plan to allot an average of 6 hours per week for reading, writing papers, and preparing for class meetings. Some weeks the workload will be heavier; other weeks it will be lighter. Please plan accordingly.

Requirements and Assessment

1. Read all assigned texts and participate actively in class meetings. In opting to take this course you are committing yourself to come to class regularly. I will take attendance throughout the semester. If you become ill or face an emergency that forces you to miss a class session, please email me as soon as possible. More than two unexcused absences will lower your class participation grade.

We will discuss assigned readings at every class meeting and on a few days we will spend most of the period in discussion. You are expected to read all required texts closely beforehand and to come ready to voice your insights and questions and to engage with those of your classmates. You must bring a copy of the assigned readings, in either paper or electronic form, to class on the day they will be discussed.

Your class participation will be evaluated using this rubric:

Excellent (93-100)	Good (83-92)	Competent (70-82)	Inadequate (60-69)	Fail (0-59)
-Mastery over readings and previous discussion -Explores questions rigorously -Comes to class with interpretations and questions -Engages others	-Knows readings well -Consistent preparation and involvement -Offers analysis of texts in class	-Basic grasp of reading -Mostly offers facts or surface-level interpretations -Contributes when called upon but not actively engaged	-Insufficient command of reading -Attempts to contribute facts or interpretations when called but unable to offer substance	-Uninvolved -Unexcused -Disruptive

You will receive a participation grade three times during the semester: on October 5, November 9, and December 12. Attendance and class participation count for 15% of your final grade.

2. Write four 250-300-word responses to assigned readings. All prompts will be posted on Canvas. You will have the option to write on most texts and may choose which readings you respond to. If you wish, you may write more than four response papers; in that case the four highest grades will count. All responses are due on Canvas at 10:00 p.m. the day before the text will be discussed in class. You must complete the first response by September 25, the second by October 23, the third by November 8, the fourth by December 6. Responses will be graded using the following criteria:

- Did you answer the question clearly and directly?
- Does your response reflect a close reading of the whole of the relevant text(s)?
- Does your paper display insight and thoughtful grappling with the text?
- Is it written in clear and concise prose, polished for typos and grammatical errors?

Together, the four responses make up 20% of your final grade.

3. Write two analytical papers of 1600-1800 words (about 5 pages) each, due on Canvas at 10:00 p.m. on October 9 and November 15, respectively. Each paper will address a question based on texts and themes that we will have discussed in class. The grading criteria for the papers is posted in the “Paper Assignments” module on Canvas. Each paper counts for 20% of your final grade.

Rewrites: You may rewrite one or both of the two analytical papers. To do so, you must talk with me within two days after I return the original version. We will agree on the revisions to be made and set a new due date, typically one week after the paper was returned. Rewriting a paper does not guarantee a higher grade. To raise your grade, you must revise your essay substantially, taking my comments into account and also initiating your own improvements.

Late Papers: If you face a situation that will prevent you from turning in a paper on time, please contact me as early as possible, and at least three days before the assignment is due, and we can work out another due date. Late papers that haven’t received an extension will be lowered one grade for each day they are late (e.g., a B paper becomes a BC if turned in a day late, a C the next day, etc.).

4. Write a final paper of 1900-2100 words (about 6 pages), due on Canvas by 5:00 p.m. on Monday, December 18. The essay prompts will be posted during the last week of class. The final paper makes up 25% of your course grade.

Grading Scale

All assignments and your final course grade will be calculated using the following scale:

93-100% =A	83-87%=B	70-77%=C	0-59%=F
88-92%=AB	78-82%=BC	60-69%=D	

Academic Integrity

By enrolling in this course, you agree to uphold the high academic standards of UW-Madison. All work you turn in must be your own. In your papers you must cite sources carefully, whether you repeat someone else’s exact words or paraphrase or draw on their ideas. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism. Submitting work generated by AI tools, such as ChatGPT, also constitutes plagiarism. If you have specific questions about plagiarism and how to avoid it, please speak with me or consult <https://writing.wisc.edu/handbook/assignments/quoting/sources/>. If you turn in plagiarized work, you will earn a zero on the assignment, an academic misconduct report will be filed, and you may fail the course. For university policies on academic misconduct, see <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-misconduct/>.

Honors Credit

Students taking the course for honors credit will pursue an independent project arising out of course topics and their own interests. This may take the form of a research paper or scholarly review. For those interested in literature, art, film, or other media, there are other possibilities. If

you are taking the course for honors, please come to my office hours by the week of October 2 to discuss options, determine a project, and set a schedule for completing it.

Communication and Office Hours

I welcome meeting with students outside of class time. You are encouraged to come to office hours at any time during the semester, whether to discuss a question or problem you've encountered in the course, to get help on an assignment, to explore an idea, or simply to chat. I hold regular office hours in 5217 Mosse Humanities on Tuesdays, 11:00 am-1:00 pm. If you have a schedule conflict then, let me know and we can arrange another time to meet. The best way to reach me is by email (eric.carlsson@wisc.edu). I check email regularly and will try to respond within 24 hours. Often I can reply sooner than that, but on weekends response time may be up to 48 hours.

Electronic Devices

You may bring a laptop or tablet to class to access readings posted to Canvas and to take notes. (Note, however, that a growing body of research suggests that students process information more thoughtfully, grasp concepts better, focus their attention more sharply, and consequently earn better grades when they take notes with pen and paper rather than on a computer.) You may use your device for Hist/RS 409 purposes only. Please turn off texting, email, and other notifications. Phones should be silenced and put away before class starts.

The History Lab

The History Lab is the Department of History's in-house writing center. Its graduate student staff offer expert, one-on-one advising on your history projects, both in-person and virtually. No matter your stage in the writing process—choosing a topic, conducting research, composing a thesis, outlining your argument, or revising your drafts—the History Lab staff will help you sharpen your skills and become a more successful writer. For instructions on how to schedule an appointment with a Lab TA, or to find tips, guides, and other resources for all of your history assignment needs, visit <https://history.wisc.edu/undergraduate-program/the-history-lab/>.

Learning Accessibility

If you have an instructional need that requires accommodations, please inform me of this at the start of the semester or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. I will then either work directly with you or coordinate with the McBurney Center to provide reasonable accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA.

UW-Madison Statement on Diversity

Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. UW-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background—people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

Course Readings

All required and recommended readings are posted on our Canvas website. The sole exception—Jon F. Sensbach, *Rebecca's Revival: Creating Black Christianity in the Atlantic World* (Harvard University Press, 2005)—can be accessed as an e-book via UW Libraries or purchased in hard copy from local and online bookstores. Full bibliographical information for all readings is posted in the “Course Documents” module on Canvas.

The required readings for each class session are listed below. On Canvas you will also find recommended readings for each session if you would like to pursue a particular topic further.

COURSE SCHEDULE

I. Background

Th Sep 7 Course Introduction

Tu Sep 12 From Christ to Christendom

- Dana L. Robert, *Christian Mission: How Christianity Became a World Religion*, 7-30

II. Reformations

Th Sep 14 Late Medieval Christendom

- Diarmaid MacCulloch, *Christianity*, 553-558, 564-584, 594-603
- Thomas à Kempis, *The Imitation of Christ*
- Erasmus, *Paraclesis*

Tu Sep 19 An Accidental Revolution

- Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation: A History*, 106-132
- Martin Luther, *Preface to the New Testament* and *Preface to the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans*

Th Sep 21 The Reformation Spreads

- Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation: A History*, 132-157
- The Twelve Articles of the Swabian Peasants

Tu Sep 26 Radicals and Martyrs

→Response 1 due 9/25

- Diarmaid MacCulloch, *The Reformation: A History*, 158-189, 204-212
- Proceedings from the trial of Augustin Würzlburger
- Letter from Elizabeth, a Dutch Anabaptist martyr, to her daughter

Th Sep 28 Calvinism and Society

- Mack P. Holt, “Calvin and Reformed Protestantism”
- John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*

- Tu Oct 3 Catholic Reform
- Robert Bireley, SJ, "Redefining Catholicism: Trent and Beyond"
 - Decrees of the Council of Trent

- Th Oct 5 New Religious Orders and Catholic Spirituality
- R. Po-Chia Hsia, *The World of Catholic Renewal 1540-1770*, 26-42
 - St. Ignatius Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*
 - St. Teresa of Ávila, *Life*

III. Catholicism, Colonization, and Missions to the "New World"

- Tu Oct 10 Conquest and Mission →Paper 1 due 10/9
- Carlos Eire, *Reformations*, 466-481
 - Documents: Legitimation and Criticism of the Conquest

- Th Oct 12 Debating Human Rights
- Carlos Eire, *Reformations*, 481-493
 - Bartolomé de las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*

- Tu Oct 17 Jesuit Reductions
- View: *The Mission* (dir. Roland Joffé)
 - Documents: The Jesuit Reductions

- Th Oct 19 Confrontation and Dialogue
- Sabine MacCormack, "'The Heart Has Its Reasons': Predicaments of Missionary Christianity in Colonial Peru"
 - Documents: Religious Dialogue and Native Voices

- Tu Oct 24 Into the Wilderness →Response 2 due 10/23
- Natalie Zemon Davis, "Marie de l'Incarnation: New Worlds"

IV. Protestant Renewal in the Atlantic World

- Th Oct 26 Confession and Conflict
- Carlos Eire, *Reformations*, 562-574

- Tu Oct 31 The Protestant Evangelical Awakening
- Ulrike Gleixner, "Pietism"
 - Philipp Jacob Spener, *Pia Desideria*
 - August Hermann Francke, "If and How One May Be Certain That One is a Child of God"

- Th Nov 2 Pietism and Social Reform
- Jon F. Sensbach, *Rebecca's Revival*, 1-68

- Tu Nov 7 Afro-Caribbean Protestantism
- Jon F. Sensbach, *Rebecca's Revival*, 69-161

Th Nov 9 Transatlantic Religious Networks →Response 3 due 11/8
• Jon F. Sensbach, *Rebecca's Revival*, 162-247

V. Revolutions Intellectual and Political

Tu Nov 14 Jansenism: From Theology to Politics
• Carlos Eire, *Reformations*, 574-583

Th Nov 16 Toleration and Religious Liberty →Paper 2 due 11/15
• Robert Louis Wilken, *Liberty in the Things of God*, 155-79
• John Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration*

Tu Nov 21 Christianity on Trial
• Margaret C. Jacob, "The Enlightenment Critique of Christianity"
• Thomas Woolston, *A Sixth Discourse on the Miracles of Our Saviour*
• Matthew Tindal, *Christianity as Old as the Creation*

Th Nov 23 THANKSGIVING

Tu Nov 28 The Protestant Enlightenment
• Ritchie Robertson, *The Enlightenment*, 136-7, 157-70
• John Locke, *The Reasonableness of Christianity*
• William Law, *The Case of Reason, or Natural Religion, Fairly and Fully Stated*

Th Nov 30 The Catholic Enlightenment
• Ulrich L. Lehner, *The Catholic Enlightenment*, 1-33, 41-46
• Johann Caspar Ruef, "My Convictions about the Oldest Form of Christianity"

Tu Dec 5 Religion and the French Revolution I
• Timothy Tackett, "The French Revolution and Religion to 1794"
• Documents on the Civil Constitution of the Clergy

Th Dec 7 Religion and the French Revolution II →Response 4 due 12/6
• Suzanne Desan, "The French Revolution and Religion, 1795-1815"
• Documents on Dechristianization

Tu Dec 12 How Did Christianity Change between 1500 and 1800?
• Stewart J. Brown, "Movements of Christian Awakening in Revolutionary Europe, 1790-1815"

Final paper due on Canvas on Monday, December 18 at 5:00 p.m.