HISTORY 230: ANCIENT-MEDIEVAL SEMINAR

History 230
W 1800-2045
Ancient Medieval Seminar
Spring 2012

San José State University

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Office hours: Tues. 9:15-10:00p.m.; Wed. 1300-1400, 9:00-10:00; Thursday 1130-1230 and by prearranged appointment.

Topic: Aspects of Ancient and Medieval Christianity

This seminar will address aspects of the rise and spread of Western Christianity from the early Roman Empire into the High Middle Ages. First, we shall read and discuss numerous classic or seminal works of secondary scholarship ranging from the beginnings of Christianity, its interactions with Roman paganism, the creation of its ideas of sexual renunciation and attitudes toward the body, the ideal of the monastic life, and the crises between the Christian Church and the secular world, to the development characteristic high medieval ideas of Christian spirituality. I have designed the seminar and the topics so that both students in Ancient history as well as those in Medieval should be able to find topics for their seminar papers in areas of their primary interest. In addition to a final seminar research paper, students will be expected to write a substantial academic review of a book, give short oral reports on assigned or selected topics, lead the discussion on a book or parts of a book, and participate in active discussion of the secondary literature. As this is the only graduate level course—a seminar—offered this academic year in Ancient-Medieval History (and only one graduate level course—a colloquium—will be offered next year), it is highly recommended that graduate students with a major concentration in Ancient-Medieval History should take this opportunity to take the seminar.

Reading List (in the order that we will read during the first ca. 10 weeks):

MacMullen, Ramsay, Christianity and Paganism in the Fourth to Eighth Centuries (Yale 1999) ISBN: 0300080778
Course Objectives:

1) **Renew and update your library skills**: In addition to normal library research skills, you will need to make use of interlibrary loan and search tools such as CD ROM resources, especially the IMB (International Medieval Bibliography). Working together and sharing information you will have to investigate what use can and cannot be made of the WWW in your research? You should also examine other databases and electronic resources in the SJSU library other libraries that might assist you with your research and then report back to the class and share your knowledge.

2) **Renew, update and improve your writing skills by means of both theory and practice**: Graduate school requires a higher standard of writing, and so, of course, does publication. Graduate students constantly must improve and hone their writing skills to strive for clarity and elegance. I will give you ample opportunities to do this and will give you as much feedback and criticism of your writing (and thinking) as possible. **I am, however, not your copy editor!!!** I expect and demand grammatically correct writing, well-formulated ideas, and work that has been well proofread to eliminate errors of grammar, writing, and spelling.

3) **Content enhancement and mastery**: Introduce graduate students to multiple aspects of research and scholarship on antique and medieval Christianity. We will attempt on the basis of the selected readings to examine both classic and current historiographical scholarship on antique and medieval Christianity.

4) **Introduce and employ primary research in history**: We will exam how various scholars have used the primary and secondary sources in their research and each student then will select a topic of her or his choice on which on which to write a research paper.

5) **Learn and Practice Techniques of Critical Evaluation**: Graduate students must learn how to critique their own writing and that of others. From my comments on student writing, students will learn how to critically evaluate their own writing. Then in a series of presentations at the end of the semester, students will be called upon to evaluate their own work and that of their colleagues. In this process, one cannot be insulted or overly defensive about their own writing; and one must be constructive, not insulting or demeaning in their criticism of others.

Teaching Methods:

I will not lecture in this class, but instead I will guide the discussion (although at times I may provide commentary). Thus the primary mode of instruction will be directed discussion based on assigned readings, individual readings, and class presentations.

What's Expected of You?

The class contains a significant amount of difficult reading, as any graduate history class should. A "seminar" type class can only function properly when all members (including myself) come well prepared for class and prepared to participate actively. If you come ill prepared, do not participate, or fail to come at all, you break a contract of participation—implicit in the act of enrolling—to your fellow graduate students who constitute the seminar. If you cannot attend a class meeting for any compelling reason, please let me know as far in advance as possible. Lack of participation, which is inherent in poor attendance, will be reflected in your grade.
Course Requirements:

1. **General Participation**: regular attendance in the colloquium and participation in discussion are demanded, crucial and necessary! It will be reflected in your grade!

2. **Readings**: students should complete all readings as assigned each week and be prepared to pose intelligent questions and thoughtful comments in a thorough discussion of the reading. To that end each student (except the discussion facilitators) must each week formulate three substantive questions about the book assigned for that week. Each student then will be asked to recite some of those questions to the whole class from which we can begin our discussion.

   **These should be typed briefly and submitted to me each week.**

3. **Class activities**: Each student will be assigned one of our readings (or part of the readings) for which he or she will be responsible to prepare questions or aspects for the weekly discussion and will lead the discussion. In addition, students may be asked to make oral reports or presentations to the class on selected assigned topics, from which the collegial discussion and analysis will then proceed.

4. **Book Review**—Each student must write a critical and analytical book review (ca. 1250-1500 words = five-six double-spaced pages—no less than five pages nor more than six pages using 12 font) of one of the texts that we read for the class (or of another book that one must use for his or her research).

5. **Book Précis**: each student will prepare a précis on one of the books from those which we will read, that will elucidate its subject matter, main arguments, and significance. I will then read and evaluate it.

6. **Discussion Facilitations**: Each student must preside over the discussion of two of the assigned books, one long and one short, along with another colleague. You should briefly address the work generally and specifically and from this overview the collegial discussion and analysis will then proceed, which should be directed and led by the assigned students as much as possible.

7. **Semester Final Exercise**: As the culminating project of the course, each student will be required to write a seminar paper on a topic dealing with some aspect of ancient or medieval Christian history (or a reaction to it). This paper should be based in primary sources as well as the pertinent secondary literature. Hopefully, the diverse examples that we have read during the semester will provide some initial interest or inspirations for a larger topic. Students should make the identification and selection of the topic for their research papers their number one priority during the first month of the semester. You should attempt to find a research topic which interests you, which is manageable with your skills, which addresses an historical question or asks an historical question of the sources, and which you can accomplish reasonably with the primary and secondary sources available in the Bay Area. After you identify one or several areas of interest and investigate their feasibility, you should then consult with the seminar instructor about the topic before starting the core research and writing. I expect everyone to have a final selection of a topic for his or her research paper by **03 April**. You must turn in the original and an electronic copy to me, and three copies for you colleagues on **15 May**. My tentative plan in lieu of an exam is to meet the class on **Wednesday 22 May** for the group critique of the seminar papers. This research paper should comprise 20-25 typed, double-spaced pages (11 or 12 font with one-inch margins on all sides except 1.25 on the top), should contain a full and correct academic apparatus (end notes or footnotes—if you use MS Word and want to use footnotes see me before writing your first footnote), and should demonstrate an understanding and use of ample amounts of primary and secondary literature. (NB: The history department uses Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7th ed., as its default style manual. Please refer and defer to it on technical
questions of correct citation, footnote, and bibliographical format.) Please use a reader/professor friendly font and make and please make sure that you use a clear, readable, and dark printer ribbon.

Overview: The general outline of the semester will be as follows.

First Ten Weeks: During these weeks through the readings assigned and the discussions of them we will familiarize ourselves with various aspects and approaches to ancient and medieval Christianity. In addition, the students will endeavor to identify specific areas of interest for further research from which one can formulate a project for the seminar paper. This will include examining other sources, both primary and secondary, beyond our specific reading.

Tenth Week (10 April): For this class session, each student will have prepared (and possibly present orally) a précis or formal summary of their intended research paper. If you already have completed substantial research, you may present a kind of cameo paper on the topic.

Last five weeks: After 10 April, instead of weekly class meetings, you will work on your research and writing and I generally will be available on Wednesday evenings for consultation and assistance with students on their research projects and papers.

Course Assessment Distribution:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General Participation</th>
<th>10% (100 points)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Book Review</td>
<td>10% (100 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Book Précis</td>
<td>10% (100 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussion Facilitations</td>
<td>20% (200 points)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar Paper</td>
<td>50% (500 points)</td>
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Extraneous Matters of Note:

Disability Policy and Access: Should any student need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, or if you have emergency medical information to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please make an appointment with me or let me know as soon as possible or see me during my office hours and I will make every effort to accommodate you. Presidential Directive 97-03 requires that students with disabilities requesting accommodations must register with DRC to establish a record of their disability. You can also contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 924-6000, 924-6542 (Deaf and HoH - voice), 924-5990 (Deaf and HoH - TTY), 808-2123 (ATC).

Proper, correct, and readable English is a prime criterion in the grading of all written work. Use some kind of an English handbook (e.g., Strunk and White, The Elements of Style, is old but concise and good) and a dictionary regularly. For technical historical writing and citations use: Turabian, Kate L, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, 6th rev. ed. (Chicago1995).

All audible pagers and cell phones must be switched off or to the inaudible setting during class!!!

As a general rule I do not grant incompletes, yet I can authorize them in a bona fide and demonstrated emergency (usually medical) after you have been able to convince me fully of that need. This can only be granted after 60% of the classwork has been performed. In order to obtain an incomplete you must file a written form, signed by me, in the history office delineating exactly what work remains to be completed. Should an incomplete be authorized and granted by me (probably not!), you will have one year to complete the work. If you complete the work, the grade which you have earned will replace the "I" (=Incomplete). If however, you do not complete the missing classwork in the one-year
period, the "I" will become an "F" and remain so. **Prof. Bernhardt's advice:** drop early if you must and forget that incompletes exist, barring an extreme medical emergency (academic reasons usually do not cut the mustard—which is why you drop other courses).

Anyone wishing or needing to withdraw from the class must follow proper university withdrawal procedures. You will not automatically be withdrawn should you merely stop attending. **Monday 06 February is the last day that you can drop the class without a "W" and with a refund of fees. Monday 13 February is the last day that you can add the class and register late.** Please, do not assume that you will be dropped from the class simply if you stop attending. **After 06 February, you may withdraw from the course only for "serious and compelling reasons" and only through the Director of Academic Services.** If your withdrawal is authorized, and only then, you will receive a "W" on your transcript. Professors cannot arrange or authorize a withdrawal; if you are contemplating withdrawing from the class, please discuss it with me first and attempt to resolve whatever problems you may be encountering. **No Late Adds (after 13 February) will be approved by the History Department FOR ANY REASON, even if you are willing to pay the late fee.**

**Academic Integrity:** "Your own commitment to learning, as evidenced by your enrollment at San José State University, and the University's Academic Integrity Policy requires you to be honest in all your academic course work. Faculty members are required to report all infractions to the Office of Student Conduct and Ethical Development. The policy on academic integrity can be found at [http://dev.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/Policies/](http://dev.sjsu.edu/studentconduct/Policies/). Thus academic integrity is essential to the mission of San Jose State University. As such, students are expected to perform their own work (except when collaboration is expressly permitted by the course instructor) without the unacknowledged use of outside resources. Students are not permitted to use old tests or quizzes when preparing for exams, nor may they consult with students who have already taken the exam. When practiced, academic integrity ensures that all students receive fair evaluation. Violations to the academic integrity policy undermine the education process and will not be tolerated. They also demonstrate a lack of respect for oneself, fellow students, the course instructor, and can ruin the university's reputation and the value of the degrees it offers. We all share the obligation to maintain an environment that practices academic integrity. Violators of the academic integrity policy will be subject to failing this course and being reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs for disciplinary action that could result in suspension or expulsion from SJSU. For the full policy of the Academic Senate on academic integrity go to: [http://www.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html](http://www.sjsu.edu/judicial_affairs/index.html). In this class I employ the outside assistance/Plagiarism zero-tolerance policy: **Episodes of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated.** These include cheating, plagiarism, the use of someone else's work, or the use of papers written by other people. **Cheating** is the act of obtaining or attempting to obtain credit for academic work through the use of any dishonest, deceptive, or fraudulent means. Cheating includes but is not limited to: looking at or copying from another student's exam, in whole or in part; submitting work previously graded in another course unless this has been approved by the instructor; submitting work simultaneously presented in two courses, unless this has been approved by both instructors; altering or interfering with the grading process; obtaining advance information about any exam; using or consulting, prior to, or during an examination, sources or materials not authorized by the instructor; using a surrogate or serving as a surrogate in taking an exam; or any other act committed by a student in the course of his or her academic work which defrauds or misrepresents, including aiding or abetting in any of the actions defined above. **Remember, papers written for other courses will not be accepted in this class!**

**Plagiarism** is the act of representing the work of another as one's own without giving appropriate credit, regardless of how that work was obtained, and/or submitting it to fulfill academic requirements. Plagiarism includes but is not limited to: the act of incorporating the ideas, words, sentences, paragraphs, or parts thereof, and/or the specific substance of another's work (including materials on the internet), without giving appropriate credit, and/or representing the product as one's own work. **The presence of your name on your submitted work is your promise that it represents your own intellectual effort.** If a student can be shown to have been involved in cheating, plagiarism, or using a previously written paper in this course, he or she will receive a **failing grade for the course.** All instances of cheating and plagiarism will be reported to the Vice President for Student Affairs (from the SJSU Policy on Academic Dishonesty, [http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.pdf](http://www2.sjsu.edu/senate/S04-12.pdf), which could result in suspension or expulsion from the university.

**STUDENT CONSENT & RESPONSIBILITIES**

Enrolling in this course signifies your consent to all course requirements listed in this syllabus. Ask Prof. Bernhardt to clarify anything that you do not understand. Moreover, Prof. Bernhardt reserves the right to make changes in course organization or requirements that will be announced in class. It is your responsibility to read this syllabus,
know the requirements, and keep current with any changes. It is also your responsibility to drop this course before the drop deadline and to verify your enrollment before the add deadline. The History Department does not allow late adds.

**SEMINAR SCHEDULE:**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>T 31 January</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>T 07 February</td>
<td>Fredriksen</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>T 14 February</td>
<td>Meeks</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>T 21 February</td>
<td>MacMullen</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>T 28 February</td>
<td>Markus</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>T 06 March</td>
<td>Tellenbach</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>T 13 March</td>
<td>Tellenbach/Constable</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>T 20 March</td>
<td>Tellenbach/Constable</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>T 27 March</td>
<td>NO CLASS—SPRING BREAK</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>T 03 April</td>
<td>Grundmann</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>T 10 April</td>
<td>Bynum</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>T 17 April</td>
<td>Research, Writing, and Personal Advising</td>
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<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>T 24 April</td>
<td>Research, Writing, and Personal Advising</td>
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<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>T 01 May</td>
<td>Research, Writing, and Personal Advising</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>T 08 May</td>
<td>Research, Writing, and Personal Advising</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>T 15 May</td>
<td>Class Discussion of and Submission of Papers</td>
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<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>T 22 May</td>
<td>Full Class Critique of Papers</td>
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