

History of Christian Experience II

TF 1133

Fall 2017

Fellowship Hall, Caldwell Chapel

Tuesday and Thursday, 10:00-11:20 am

Instructor: Christopher Elwood

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Course description

This is the second part of a two-semester sequence introducing students to the global history of Christianity. Special attention is paid to formation of Christian identity and theological expression in diverse cultural contexts and in relation to other religious and philosophical traditions. Class sessions will include both lecture and discussion.

Goals and objectives:

This course aims to help students develop their capacity for faithful and coherent theological expression in pastoral practice by giving them a basic understanding of Christianity's global history and equipping them with tools of historical and contextual theological interpretation. In LPTS's structure of assessment and accreditation, this aim is most closely related to Student Learning Outcome 2: Students will demonstrate an understanding and appreciation of the global history of the Church, and QEP Student Learning Outcome 1b: Students will be able to articulate important elements of more than one Christian tradition.

Students will

- through reading of primary and secondary sources, listening to and viewing audio and visual media, and participation in lectures and class discussion, develop an appreciation and basic understanding of the diverse contexts of Christian experience in the modern period, as well as key elements of controversy and struggle for Christian identity in changing times;
- through reading, lectures, discussion, and writing, explore the variety of ways Christian communities in the modern period have understood and responded to religious difference;
- through reading, discussion, and in writing, develop skills of theological/ethical-cultural analysis;
- through writing essays and in an exam, clarify their own theological and ethical positions.

Required text:

Adrian Hastings, ed. *A World History of Christianity*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 2000. ISBN-10: 0802848753 (abbreviated *Hastings* in the schedule of assignments)

Other (mostly primary source) required readings are posted on the HCE II course site, <https://historyofchristianexperienceii.wordpress.com/>, and hyperlinked in this document (in the Schedule of classes and assignments, pages 4-11, below). On the course site, click on the "Syllabus" tab for a list of readings and links to documents available on the site.

Course requirements:

1. Preparation for class and active, thoughtful participation in discussion.
2. 50-word sentences. Students will record their response to the reflection question posed in the syllabus for each class's reading. These will take the form of one 50-word sentence (see description by Professor Charles Cohen of the University of Wisconsin in Appendix I, p. 12, below). Turn in a typed, hard copy of this assignment to the instructor at the beginning of the class for which it is assigned. You are required to do your choice of 17 sentences. Late sentences will not be accepted. (30%)
3. Three short essays (1200-1400 words, Times New Roman 12 pt. font, double-spaced), chosen from the following five questions. (*All students must write essay 1 or 2.*) (50%)

a. Essay 1: *Grace and the Christian Life in the European Reformations*: In her *Life*, Teresa of Ávila likened the soul to a garden, and the soul's virtues to "good plants." "We have, then, as good gardeners," she wrote, "with God's help to make these plants grow, and to water them carefully so that they do not die, but produce flowers, which give out a good smell, to delight this Lord of ours." How does Teresa's image reflect ideas emerging from the Catholic Reform movement about the relation between God's grace and human action? Using as evidence the writings of either Luther or Calvin (on one hand) and either Teresa of Ávila or Ignatius Loyola (on the other), where do you see similarities and differences in Protestant and Catholic accounts of grace and the Christian life? **Due September 25.**

b. Essay 2: *Caste, Culture, and Christian Presence in Asia*: Drawing on primary readings and your textbook, describe and analyze the missionary approach of either Roberto de Nobili in India or Matteo Ricci in China. What opposition came to be expressed to their methods, and why? What defenses of these methods were offered? How did these methods influence the form of the Christian message? How did they impact society and culture? Were these approaches successful? (Discuss the criteria you would use to determine "success.") **Due October 9.**

c. Essay 3: *Conversion in North American Protestantism*: In his *Personal Narrative*, Jonathan Edwards declared, "The sweetest joys of delights I have experienced, have not been those that have arisen from a hope of my own good estate; but in a direct view of the glorious things of the gospel." How does focus on "the glorious things of the gospel," rather than "a hope of my own good estate" reflect the aims of mid-18th-century American revivalism? Compare and contrast Edwards' view of Christian conversion with that of Charles Finney, who represents nineteenth-century developments in American revivalism. **Due October 23.**

d. Essay 4: *African Christianity and Western Culture*: In 1905, William Sheppard reflected on the accomplishments of his ministry in a particular area of Central Africa: "When we landed in Luebo not a soul had ever heard a word of [the Gospel]. All these centuries their fathers had died without knowing anything about the Lord Jesus Christ coming into the world to seek and save the lost. They had never laid their eyes on a book, and had never seen the newspaper. What changes have come since we were sent out here? First, there are three thousand members of the church in Luebo alone. Three thousand! "

Drawing on at least two primary sources (choosing from: Afonso, Equiano, Blyden, and Sheppard), write an essay interpreting and assessing the European and American missionary endeavors in Africa about which you have read. What were the chief obstacles to the spread of Christianity in the African continent? What roles did culture and cultural difference play in either the successful transmission of Christian ideas and practices or in the failure of missionary efforts? Does Sheppard's generally enthusiastic account reflect your own assessment of missionary advances? Why or why not? **Due November 13.**

e. Essay 5: *Christian Faith and Social Transformation*: Pick two of the readings for November 28 and 30 (Cardenal, Godoy, López Trujillo, Cone, Isasi-Díaz, de Gruchy, Tutu, Meiring) and show how the authors' view of the church's role in society reflects and responds to their social and political location. In conversation with these authors, and keeping in view the challenges posed by their contexts, develop your own view of the relationship between Christian faith and social transformation. **Due Friday December 8.**

The papers will observe conventions of academic writing. Citations in your papers should follow the Seminary standard, which is based on these guides:

Turabian, Kate L., Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 8th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

The Chicago Manual of Style. 16th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center (ASC). For help with citation, voice, development of argument, or other aspects of writing, students are encouraged to consult with the ASC early in the semester. *Also, attend carefully* to (1) the Writing Guidelines document (Appendix II, pp. 13-14 of the syllabus) and (2) the Guide to Citing HCE II course site readings (Appendix III, p. 15).

All papers must be saved as a Word document. Please save with the file name following this form: **"Yourlastname HCE essay 1"**—with the essay number corresponding to the information above, and not to

the number of your submission. Submitted papers to the CAMS course site (<http://mail1.lpts.edu/estudent>) before the end of the day on which the paper is due.

4. A final examination: a three-hour, cumulative exam will be given during the exam period. The date and time is scheduled by the Seminary registrar. (20%)

Students may take a group oral exam in place of the written exam if and only if they follow the following procedure:

- a. A group of four students must be formed and reported to the instructor by email no later than October 2.
- b. Four tentative areas for examination must be reported to the instructor no later than October 23, and the tentative plan must be approved by the instructor.
- c. Four exam questions providing focus for examination and conversation must be sent to the instructor no later than December 1, and must be approved by the instructor.

N.B. In order to pass the course, students must complete and submit all assigned work.

Grading:

The Seminary's grading system defines the following grades:

A = superior, B = good, C = satisfactory, D = marginal, F = failure.

Grading for this course will seek to maintain standards commensurate with a graduate level of teaching and learning. Students should understand that assignments that are completed with a level of competence expected of graduate students—in ordinary language, “good” or “very good” work—earn a grade in the range of “B.” “A” work is work that exceeds basic expectations, in which there is a quality of originality in thought and execution that goes beyond the level of basic competence.

Academic Honesty:

All work turned in to the instructor is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Use of another's language or ideas from online resources is included in this policy, and must be attributed to author and source of the work being cited. Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism, and may result in failure of the course. Two occurrences of plagiarism may result in dismissal from the Seminary. Students unfamiliar with issues related to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center. For the Seminary policy, see the Policy for Academic Honesty in the Student Handbook.

Accessibility and Accommodation:

Students requiring accommodations for a documented physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center during the first two weeks of a semester (or before the semester begins) and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

Inclusive Language:

In accordance with seminary policy, students are to use inclusive language in class discussions and in written and oral communication by using language representative of the whole human community in respect to gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, and physical and intellectual capacities. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, when referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors, reflecting the richness of the Bible's images for God. For more information, see <http://www.lpts.edu/academics/academic-resources/guides-policies-and-handbooks/inclusive-and-expansive-language>.

Policy on late work:

All written assignments are due, unless indicated otherwise, by 11:59 pm on the date given in the syllabus. Students who encounter unusual obstacles to getting an assignment in may ask for an extension of the due date. They should contact the instructor to request an extension before the work comes due. They may speak to the instructor directly, but they are required to communicate by email so as to provide a record of the request. Extensions are granted solely at the discretion of the instructor. Assignments submitted late, when no extension has been granted, will be penalized in the grading by one letter grade increment for every day (a B+ paper becomes a B if one day late, a B- if two days, a C+ if three days, etc.). Assignments submitted more than ten days after the due date will not be accepted. *N.B. When submitting late work (whether with an extension or not), always send an email notification to your instructor.*

Use of electronic devices in class:

Do not send or read text messages during class. Cell phones should be turned off. In the event that you have a legitimate need to be accessible during class, you may ask the instructor for an exception to this rule. Laptops should not be used if you cannot trust yourself to restrict your use to note-taking and referring to the assigned primary source readings for the day. You may not access the Internet during class time unless specifically for purposes directly relevant to the course. Audio and/or video recording of lectures/discussions is permissible *only* with the permission of the instructor. Any misuse of electronic devices during class time, including checking of email or social networking sites will negatively affect the course grade.

Attendance Policy:

According to the Seminary catalog, students are expected to attend class meetings regularly. In case of illness or emergency, students are asked to notify the instructor of their planned absence from class, either prior to the session or within 24 hours of the class session. Six or more absences (1/4 of the course) may result in a low or failing grade in the course.

Contacting the instructor:

While students are always welcome to speak to the instructor at any time about questions or issues that arise, the most reliable and efficient means of setting up an opportunity to meet and talk over important matters is through email. Students are strongly encouraged to contact the professor when they feel they need clarification on topics and questions that arise in the class, or when they are confronting significant challenges in their learning.

Schedule of classes and assignments:

Th 9.7 Introduction to the course: Modern Christian history in global perspective

T 9.12 Reforming the church in sixteenth-century Europe

Reading: Hastings, (141-146) 238-257

Reserve:

[Introduction to the readings](#)

Luther, "[Preface to the Letter of Saint Paul to the Romans](#)"

[The Twelve Articles of the Upper Swabian Peasants](#)

Reflection: *What does Luther mean when he states "faith alone makes someone just"? How does the program of the Upper Swabian Peasants relate to this message? Do the two texts understand "faith" in a similar way?*

Th 9.14 Extending Protestant reform
Reading: Hastings, 257-270
Reserve:
[Introduction to the readings](#)
Michael Sattler, [The Schleithem Articles](#)
John Calvin, [Short Treatise on the Holy Supper](#)
[Register of the Consistory of Geneva](#) (excerpts from 1542)
Reflection: *In what ways are the views of Calvin and Sattler (Schleithem Articles) on the Supper/breaking of bread similar and in ways are they different? What do the positions outlined in these texts suggest about their similar or contrasting views of the church?*

T 9.19 Catholic Renewal
Reading: Hastings, 270-281
Reserve:
[Introduction to the readings](#)
Ignatius Loyola, [Spiritual Exercises](#) (selections)
The Council of Trent, "[Decree Concerning Justification](#)," ch. 1-13
Teresa of Ávila, from [The Life of Saint Teresa of Ávila](#)
Reflection: *Ignatius Loyola advises the following: "we ought not to speak of grace at such length and with such emphasis that the poison of doing away with liberty is engendered." What spiritual concern does this reflect, and how is this concern handled in the writing of Ignatius and Teresa, as well as in Trent's decree on justification?*

Th 9.21 Expanding Christendom: conquest and Christian mission in a "New World"
Reading: Hastings, 328-349
Reserve:
Bartolomé de las Casas, [History of the Indies](#) (excerpts)
Philip II (of Spain), [Ordinance](#) (1573)
Luis Lasso de la Vega, "[Virgin of Guadalupe](#)"
Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, [Reply to Sor Filotea](#)
Reflection: *What perspectives on the experience by indigenous Americans of the introduction of European rule and religion are given in the assigned readings (Las Casas, Philip, Lasso de la Vega)?*

***M 9.25 Due Today: Essay 1**

T 9.26 India: religious and cultural encounters, 16th-17th centuries
Reading: Hastings, (147-156) 157-172
Reserve:
[Introduction to the readings](#)
Francis Xavier, "[To the Society at Rome](#)" and "[To Ignatius Loyola](#)"
Roberto de Nobili, [Report on Certain Customs of the Indian Nation and The Dialogue on Eternal Life](#) (excerpts)

Reflection: *Compare the approaches of Francis Xavier and Roberto de Nobili in terms of their assessment of the indigenous religion and culture of the people, in Indian communities, to whom they wish to convey a Christian message. How are their approaches to communication similar and how are they different?*

Th 9.28

Christianity in East Asia, 1500-1800

Reading: Hastings, (369-373), 373-386

Reserve:

Francis Xavier, "[To the Society in Europe](#)"

Matteo Ricci, [History of the Christian Expedition to the Kingdom of China](#) and [The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven](#) (excerpts)

Xu Guangqi, [Memorial in Defense of the Western Teaching](#)

Domingo Navarrete, [An Account of the Empire of China: Historical, Political, Moral and Religious](#)

Pope Clement XI, [Ex illa die](#) (1715)

Reflection: *What did the European-Jesuit mission in China achieve, and did it succeed? Explain.*

T 10.3

Christianity in the Modern West: the advance of Reason

Reading: Hastings 277-280, 458-470

Reserve:

John Locke, [The Reasonableness of Christianity](#) (excerpt)

Immanuel Kant, "[What is Enlightenment?](#)"

Reflection: *In what ways do the proposals advocated by Locke and by Kant resemble the programs for which Protestant reformers of the sixteenth century argued? In what ways are they different?*

Th 10.5

Christianity in the Modern West: the advance of feeling and experience

Reading: Hastings 471-485

Reserve:

Justo Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity 2*: "[The Spiritualist Option](#)" and "[The Pietist Option](#)"

George Fox, [The Journal](#) (excerpt)

Margaret Fell, "[Women's Speaking Justified, Proved, and Allowed of by the Scriptures](#)"

John Wesley, "[A Plain Account of Genuine Christianity](#)"

Friedrich Schleiermacher, [On Religion](#), "[Second Speech: The Nature of Religion](#)" (excerpt)

Reflection: *The primary sources readings come from spiritualist (Quaker/Friends), pietist (Methodist/Wesleyan), and pietist-Reformed religious and theological traditions. Reflect on the themes connecting these traditions, with reference to these texts, as well as any differences you discern.*

***M 10.9 Due Today: Essay 2**

***T 10.10**

Religious diversity in Colonial America

Reading: Hastings 416-428
Reserve:
Jean Brébeuf, "[Instructions for the Fathers Who Shall Be Sent to the Hurons](#)"
Jonathan Edwards, *Personal Narrative* (excerpt)
Nathan Cole, "[Spiritual Travels](#)"

Reflection: *What particular elements of the challenge of "Christianizing a vast continent" (Mullin) are lifted up in these readings? As European traditions were brought to American environments, to what extent were established patterns maintained, and to what extent did Christians "strike out on new paths"? (Provide specific examples.)*

Th 10.12 American Awakenings

Reading: Hastings 428-443
Reserve:
Ralph Waldo Emerson, [Divinity School Address](#) * (optional reading)
Angelina Grimke, "[Appeal to the Christian Women of the South](#)"
Charles G. Finney, "[Conditions of Being Saved](#)"

Reflection: *What can be done? How do these authors, writing in a relatively young republic, reflect attitudes toward the constraint or pressures of custom and tradition, on the one hand, and the possibility of human beings acting to achieve some new state of affairs, on the other?*

RESEARCH AND STUDY WEEK 10.16-10.20

***M 10.23 Due Today: Essay 3**

T 10.24 Colonial North America: Religion and early inventions of race

Reading: Hastings 416-428
Reserve:
Sean P. Harvey, "[Ideas of Race in Early America](#)," 1-23
Justin Roberts, "[Race and the Origins of Plantation Slavery](#)" *
(optional reading)

Reflection: *What key factors— institutions, practices, developments, or events that occurred from the seventeenth to the early nineteenth century—led to the dominance of "race" as a means of categorizing people and interpreting human difference and similarity?*

Th 10.26 TBA

T 10.31 European colonization and the expansion of Christian mission, 18th-19th centuries

Reading: Hastings 172-188, 386-405
Reserve:
Justo Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity* 2: "[Geographic Expansion](#)"
William Carey, *The Obligation of Christians*... and *Memoirs*

Reginald Heber, [“From Greenland’s Icy Mountains”](#)
Krishna Pal, [Account of His Conversion](#)
Ram Mohan Roy, [The Precepts of Jesus and The Missionary
and the Brahman](#)

Reflection: *Explain the attitudes, understandings, dynamics that fueled Western missionary expansion into non-Western areas (such as India/Bengal). How were the missionaries and their message received by the people of these areas?*

Th 11.2 Christianity in Africa during the colonial age

Reading: Hastings (192-200) 200-226

Reserve:

[Introduction to the readings](#)

Afonso I, [Letter to the King of Portugal](#) * (optional reading)

Olaudah Equiano, [The Interesting Narrative of the Life of
Olaudah Equiano](#)

Edward Wilmot Blyden, [“Mohammedanism and the Negro
Race,” “Philip and the Eunuch”](#)

John Augustus Otonba Payne, [Bishop Crowther and
Ecclesiastical Self-Government](#) * (optional reading)

William H. Sheppard, [“Light in Darkest Africa”](#)

Reflection: *How do the primary source readings shed light on the impact European colonialism and the slave trade exerted on the spread of Christianity in Africa?*

T 11.7 Religion, race, and social reform in the West

Reading: Hastings 436-444

Reserve:

Frederick Douglass, [“What, to the Slave, is the Fourth of
July?”](#)

Walter Rauschenbusch, [“The Kingdom of God”](#)

Nannie Helen Burroughs, [“With All Thy Getting”](#) and
[“Declaration of 1776 Is Cause of Harlem Riot”](#)

Reflection: *How do the authors of the primary source readings diagnose the problem that afflicts the society, community, or institution they seek to address? To what remedies do they point?*

Th 11.9 Modern turns in Western Christianity

Reading: Hastings 485-505

Reserve:

F.C. Baur, [Paul: A Contribution to the Critical History of
Primitive Christianity](#)

Ernest Renan, [The Life of Jesus](#)

Charles Hodge, [What is Darwinism?](#)

Reflection: *Using the assigned primary source readings, answer the question, How did the critical spirit of modern scholarship affect academic readings of the Bible and interpretations of the Bible’s relationship to human (scientific, social scientific, historical) knowledge in nineteenth-century Europe and North America?*

***M 11.13 Due Today: Essay 4**

T 11.14 Theological tensions in early 20th-century western Christianity

Reading: Hastings 446-451

Reserve:

Gonzalez, *Story of Christianity 2* "[Protestantism in Europe](#)"

Harry Emerson Fosdick, "[What Christian Liberals Are Driving At](#)"

Gresham Machen, "[What Fundamentalism Stands for Now](#)"

Karl Barth, "[The Strange New World within the Bible](#)"

Reflection: *What are the main issues dividing Machen ("fundamentalist") and Fosdick ("liberal" or "modernist")? What does the perspective of Barth on the nature of the Bible as revelation contribute to this debate?*

Th 11.16 Christians and Jews in Modern Europe

Reading: Reserve:

David Chidester, "[Holocaust](#)" (Print)

Thomas Cotterill, "[Great God of Abraham! Hear Our Prayer](#)"

Dietrich Bonhoeffer, [excerpt from Ethics](#)

[The Barmen Declaration](#)

[Nostra Aetate](#)

Reflection: *What theological perspective and what particular theological claims are brought to bear on the challenge of Christian anti-Semitism by The Barmen Declaration and writings of Bonhoeffer?*

T 11.21 ***NO CLASS MEETING – Reading Day***

THANKSGIVING RECESS 11.23-11.24

T 11.28 Unpacking the colonial legacy: Christians and liberation movements in the mid-20th century

Reading: Hastings 349-367

Reserve:

Ernesto Cardenal, [The Gospel in Solentiname](#)

Carlos Mejía Godoy, "[Misa Campesina Nicaragüense](#)"

Alfonso Cardinal López Trujillo, "[Declaration of Los Andes](#)"

James Cone, "[The White Church and Black Power](#)"

Ada Maria Isasi-Díaz, "[A Mujerista Christological](#)

[Understanding](#)"

Reflection: *What experiences call for a new way of doing and expressing theology in the writings of Cardenal, Cone, and Isasi-Díaz? What concerns about this model animate the writing of López Trujillo?*

Th 11.30 Unpacking the colonial legacy: religion and the postcolonial African experience

Reading: Hastings 226-235

Reserve:

John W. de Gruchy, [“Resistance, Repression and the Transition to Democracy”](#)

Desmond Tutu, [“We Forgive You”](#) and [“Something Has Gone Desperately Wrong”](#)

Pieter Meiring, [“Truth and Reconciliation: The South African Experience”](#)

Reflection: *Is reconciliation possible? How do the primary source writings inform the discussion of whether or not a society and religious groups within it may facilitate recovery and healing following a period of oppression, violence, and abuse?*

T 12.5 Directions in contemporary American Christianity

Reading: Hastings 451-456

Reserve:

Beverly Harrison, [“The Power of Anger in the Work of Love”](#)

Tony Campolo, [“Evangelical Christianity has been Hijacked”](#)

Carter Heyward, [“Coming Out: Journey without Maps”](#)

Kelly Brown Douglas, [“Womanist Theology: What is its Relationship to Black Theology?”](#)

Reflection: *How do the assigned readings illustrate the challenges Christian theologians, communities, and institutions faced in responding faithfully to social and cultural change? What specific proposals did they offer?*

Th 12.7 Encountering the diversity of global religion, Christianities, cultures

Reading: Hastings 188-191, 231-235, 405-412

Reserve:

Arvind P. Nirmal, [“Toward a Christian Dalit Theology”](#)

Raimundo Panikkar, [“Eruption of Truth”](#)

Mercy Amba Oduyoye, [“A Coming Home to Myself: The Childless Woman in the West African Space”](#)

David Yonggi Cho, [“Church Ministry, Taking Steps with the Holy Spirit”](#)

Tariq Ramadan, [“What the West Can Learn From Islam”](#)
([“Manifesto for a new ‘We’.](#) optional reading)

Jonathan Sacks, [“A Covenant of Hope”](#)

Lesslie Newbigin, [“Evangelism in the City”](#)

William Wagner, [“Muslim-Christian Encounters”](#)

Pope Francis, [Laudato si’](#) (selection)

Reflection: *Choose two of the primary source readings and explain how they articulate a challenge and/or opportunity for the living out of faith in the contemporary world.*

***F 12.8 Due Today: Essay 5**

Optional topic: Eastern Christianity in the Modern world

Reading: Hastings 282-324

Reserve:

Sergius Bulgakov, [“The Virgin and the Saints in Orthodoxy”](#)

Kallistos Ware, [“Strange Yet Familiar: My Journey to the Orthodox Faith”](#)

Ellen Barry and Sophia Kishkovsky, [“For Tolstoy and Russia, Still No Happy Ending.”](#) New York Times, January 3, 2011

T 12.12 Final exam (oral)

Group 1: 8:30-10:00 am

Group 2: 10:30-12:00 noon

Group 3: 1:30-3:00 pm

Group 4: 3:30-5:00 pm

W-Th 12.14-15 Final exam (written) (TBS)

Appendix I

Charles L. Cohen on the 50-word assignment

A single-sentence exercise with a finite word limit counters students' proclivity for aerating their prose with superfluties. Given at most fifty words, students must distill their arguments' fundamentals and phrase them concisely, for, as my syllabus warns, the fifty-first word and its successors face a terrible fate. (I have been known to cut out extraneous verbiage and turn the tattered remnant into a paper airplane—a practice proved sound pedagogically if not aerodynamically.)

Fifty words might appear too many—the contests cereal companies run, after all, ask for only twenty five—but I prefer giving students sufficient rope. For one thing, the fifty-word limit allows them to cope with the assignment, which often requires complicated responses. For another, it weans them from dependency on simple declarative sentences and challenges them to experiment with multiple clauses. Some can handle compound-complex sentences, but most require—and appreciate—tutelage in them. Nor are fifty words too few; no student has ever complained about an inability to pare down the verbiage. Had Goldilocks stumbled into my section instead of the Three Bears' den, she would have found the word limit “just right.”

Consider, for example, the assignment that I recently gave students in History/Religious Studies 451, entitled “Constructing a hypothesis”: “Using the maps in the front of the packet, compare the distribution of churches within Anglo-America east of the Mississippi River in 1750 with the distribution in 1850 and, in one sentence NOT EXCEEDING 50 words (need I say more?), hypothesize the reasons for the difference.” To complete the exercise, students must examine a series of maps, aggregate data presented graphically and convert it into written form, analyze that data and develop a hypothesis to explain patterns they may have found. They must attend carefully to the material (not the least of the minor assignment's benefits is its capacity to monitor students' preparation), read the maps against each other, and offer a succinct but accurate conclusion, thereby rehearsing several critical skills simultaneously.

The quality of the responses varied, as one might expect, but the best submission hit the mark exactly, intellectually and, at fifty words, quantitatively: ‘The maps show a relative decline in Anglican and Congregational Churches in relation to the growth of other churches between 1750 and 1850, which reflects the shift towards the disestablishment of state churches and the demand for a constitutional guaranty of religious freedom that occurred during the American Revolutionary Settlement.’ Even more impressive, English is not the writer's native language.

Appendix II

History of Christian Experience II Guidelines for Writing Your Essays

What am I writing?

You are asked to write a short paper (1200-1400 words, twelve point Times New Roman font, double spaced) on the topic defined in your syllabus. You are given a question or series of questions to prompt your engagement with a particular assigned text or texts. You should be sure that the paper you write clearly responds to these essay prompts. The focus of your essays should ordinarily be the assigned primary texts (texts by historical authors). You are not expected to use resources beyond those given in the course to write your paper.

Why am I writing this?

We are asking you to write essays so that you exercise and develop a number of skills that are useful to you for the work of theological education and for your continuing theological and ethical growth. Among these skills are the ability to:

- read and comprehend theological texts;
- engage texts and other evidence pertinent to the history of Christianity in their historical contexts;
- express yourself clearly and sustain a cogent argument or a fluid exposition;
- develop a distinctive, thoughtful, and responsible theological voice through engagement with a variety of historical and contemporary perspectives.

What does it mean to say that this paper should “observe the conventions of academic writing”?

It means, first, that this is a formal writing project, and thus your form of expression will be different from informal conversation or what is sometimes called a “reflection paper.” Writing this paper, then, will involve attention to the craft of writing: introducing the topic, clearly stating and developing themes or ideas, carefully guiding your reader through the subjects to be explored and/or the process of your thinking, supplying evidence to support your interpretations, underlining the key point or points made in your paper in a conclusion. It means also that you will need to demonstrate that you can correctly cite sources you have used for your paper.

Do I always need to formally cite the sources I am using?

Yes, always. You must use a form approved in the *Chicago Manual of Style*. There are several options. But you must use one; and you need to cite your sources in every paper, consistently and correctly. (For primary sources posted on the HCE II course site, please refer to the document “Citing Readings Posted on the HCE II course site,” Appendix III in the syllabus.)

But only when I am quoting directly from the source, right?

Wrong. Your restatement of the original ideas of an author, or paraphrase of another’s exposition, need to be clearly indicated. And every assigned essay in this course focuses on the interpretation of one or more sources. These need to be formally cited. For help with these matters, including a refresher course in paraphrasing and methods of citation, seek help from the Academic Resource Center (ASC).

If I am not writing a reflection paper, does that mean that personal reflections or observations are not acceptable?

Not necessarily. You may have a personal connection to the subject matter, and it may be that some observations drawn from your experience may be useful in highlighting some aspect of what you are examining. But here you need to exercise care. If you are an accomplished or experienced writer, you may be able to introduce a personal experience in a way that doesn’t end up making your paper “all about you”—a subjective journey into how you feel about what you have read without careful, critical analysis of the ideas and experiences of others and of times and places that may be distant from your own. If you are less confident about avoiding that trap, then you are advised to avoid or limit personal references. But this does not mean that your point of view is absent from these papers (see the next paragraph).

Can I write a successful essay if I just paraphrase an argument I have found in our textbook?

No. Your textbook, along with other secondary sources, is frequently helpful to you as a way of setting in context a primary text, author, or a particular movement; and there are occasions when reliance on your textbook is necessary. But the interpretation you are asked to supply in your paper should be your own. It is important to acknowledge dependence on the thoughts and interpretations of others, and your own interpretation may appropriately be in

conversation with these, but your goal should be to develop your own skills of critical reflection and your own theological-ethical voice.

For whom am I writing?

Although your paper will be read and evaluated by your instructor, you should imagine yourself writing for an educated reader who does not have all of the inside knowledge you have gained from sitting in class. So references such as, “As we discussed last week” or “The article you made me read” are best avoided. Imagine yourself using this paper in a few years, perhaps to refresh your memory about the content of a theological debate or a challenging historical circumstance when the memory of the class’s day-to-day content has faded, or to pass along to a friend or parishioner who has expressed interest in the topic. Use a voice that would seem appropriate for this use.

Do I really have to use inclusive language?

Yes. See the guidelines in the syllabus.

Why?

First, because it is the policy of Louisville Seminary, but also because it helps to build an ethos that includes and is responsible to more persons and experiences and that resists dynamics of domination and exclusion. These last reasons reflect a particular moral stance, and one not everyone may share. But the global orientation of this course tends to move us in this direction, and we encourage you to try out practices that may be conducive to this movement.

How do I submit the essay?

First, save your essay as a Word document with a title following this form: **Yourlastname HCE essay 1**. The essay number always corresponds to the number given in the syllabus; it does not indicate the number of your submission. Then submit the file to the CAMS course site, before the end of the day on which the paper is due.

How will my essay be evaluated?

Your instructor will read your essay and return it with comments and a letter grade. The grading policy of Louisville Seminary will be followed. Evaluation will focus on the student’s progress toward developing the skills listed above (*Why am I writing this?*) and will assess the relative degree of success in meeting the following aspirational goals:

- Correct formatting: the essay should have a title (on page one; no title page); it should be formatted according to the supplied directions, submitted in the form required, and should be the required length.
- Strong writing: the essay should observe correct grammatical forms, correct use of punctuation, and avoid syntactical and other errors of writing; the writing should be clear and comprehensible, employing a structure that aids in communication, and should utilize effective transitions; sources should be clearly and correctly cited, following approved methods and forms.
- Addressing the topic as a historical theologian: the essay should successfully address the essay prompt; it should focus on the identified theological, historical, and ethical issues and discuss these issues with attention to appropriate elements of context: time, place, culture, social and/or political location.
- Concentrating on primary sources: the essay should focus on the text/s identified as a primary source for the engagement of the essay topic and should avoid unnecessary distractions or detours.
- Achieving clarity of theological or ethical understanding: the essay should focus on a theological or ethical issue, give adequate voice to the theological or ethical position of the author or authors central to the essay topic, and show that the student understands the issues and can interpret the pertinent ideas thoughtfully with attention to their coherence and their ramifications.
- Growth in one’s capacity for theological engagement: the essay should demonstrate the student’s developing capacity for theological interpretation and assessment, supplying a framework for theological engagement that is supported by evidence and argument, and displaying the student’s own emerging, distinctive theological and ethical voice.

If I need help with any of this, what do you recommend?

Speak with your instructor for guidance on the substantive—theological and historical—aspects of the writing assignments. For the formal aspects—the writing—you may benefit from contacting the Seminary’s Academic Support Center. It is a good idea to work with the staff at the ASC early on as you are preparing to write your essays. If you begin working with the ASC at a point in the semester after you have already submitted essays and have had them returned to you, always share with the ASC tutors the returned work, with instructor comments, so that they are better equipped to assess particular challenges and help you in addressing them.

Appendix III

Citing readings posted on the HCE II course site

Readings posted on the course site for HCE II (<https://historyofchristianexperienceii.wordpress.com/>) or accessible through hyperlinks on your syllabus are (mostly) of three types:

1. First are the texts that are actually posted on the course site. For an example see: <https://historyofchristianexperienceii.wordpress.com/2016/08/13/st-francis-xavier-letter-on-japan-to-the-society-of-jesus-in-europe-1552/>.
2. Then there are documents, accessible through links on the site and hyperlinks on your syllabus but not part of the course site content, that have been created by scanning a printed text. Usually this is a selection from a published book, such as this reading: Bartolomé de las Casas, *History of the Indies*.
3. In addition, there are documents that have been created by your professor—an edited version of a text (most of these are from works that are in the public domain). The source from which the text is taken is indicated, often after a brief introduction or in a footnote at the bottom of the first page of the reading. These documents are alternative format versions of the texts posted on the web site (number 1, above). See Francis Xavier, “[To the Society in Europe](#)” for an example.

When you cite these readings, your method of citation will vary.

1. For the first type of reading, your citation will follow the form given in *The Chicago Manual of Style* for citing content on a web site. So, a bibliographic entry for a reading of this type would have the following form:
Xavier, Francis. “Letter on Japan, to the Society of Jesus in Europe (1552).” History of Christian Experience II Course Site.
<https://historyofchristianexperienceii.wordpress.com/2016/08/13/st-francis-xavier-letter-on-japan-to-the-society-of-jesus-in-europe-1552/> (accessed September 7, 2017).
2. For the second type, you should be able to get all the necessary information from the document itself (author, title, place of publication, publisher, date, page numbers). If that information is not in the text, then a mistake has been made in the scanning process and a helpful word to alert your instructor and/or library personnel would be appreciated. Standard methods of citation (as given in *The Chicago Manual of Style*) can and should be used.
3. For the third type of reading it is appropriate to use a slightly different form of citation, since you are not accessing a published source directly, but using a version of the text that has been selected for this particular course. In order to convey the source you are utilizing with greater transparency, then, the following citation form should be used:

Footnote entry

First and Last name of author, “Title of the Work,” in *History of Christian Experience II Course Readings*, ed. Professor of the Course (Louisville, Ky.: Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Fall 2017), page number(s).

Example:

Francis Xavier, “To the Society in Europe,” in *History of Christian Experience II Course Readings*, ed. Christopher Elwood (Louisville, Ky.: Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Fall 2017), 1-3.

Bibliographical entry

Last name, First name of author. “Title of the Work.” *History of Christian Experience II Course Readings*. Ed. Professor of the Course. Louisville, Ky.: Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Fall 2017, page number(s).

Example:

Xavier, Francis. “To the Society in Europe.” *History of Christian Experience II Course Readings*. Ed. Christopher Elwood. Louisville, Ky.: Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Fall 2017, 1-3.