1. Course Description

1.1 Catalog Description: This course will introduce students to the history and theological development of the early Church from the post-apostolic period through the end of the patristic period. Throughout the course students will be introduced to and explore the teachings and circumstances of the primary figures in the theological period and selections of their writings.

1.2 Importance of the Course: The Catholic Church teaches that genuine renewal of the Church follows the vibrant encounter with the Fathers and to that end the course will seek to cultivate the study of the Fathers “seriously and lovingly,” as the privileged witnesses to the living tradition of the Church.¹

1.3 Goals: The course proposes (1) To survey the lives, teachings and selections from the writings of the major Church Fathers; (2) To introduce the varying styles of theological exposition used by the Fathers; (3) To develop an understanding of the development of major doctrines concerning the Trinity, Christ and the Church through the Fathers; (4) To introduce students to the models of Scriptural interpretation utilized by the Fathers; (5) To develop an adequate understanding of the Fathers’ theology and theological method for students to incorporate in their theological studies.

2. Topical Outline

2.1 The First Three Centuries

2.1.1 The Geography of Christianity and the Christian Literature up to the Year 313
2.1.2 The Apostolic Fathers
2.1.3 The Greek Apologists
2.1.4 The Acts of the Martyrs
2.1.5 The Heretical and Anti-Heretical Literature of the Second Century
2.1.6 The Apocryphal Literature of the New Testament
2.1.7 The School of Alexandria in the Third Century: Clement and Origen
2.1.8 The Writers of Rome and Africa in the Third Century
2.1.9 Other Authors of the Third Century
2.1.10 Doctrinal Content of the Works of the Fathers of the Third Century

2.2 From Nicaea (325) to Chalcedon (451)
2.2.1 General Panorama of the Years 300 to 450
2.2.2 The First Period of the Long Fights against Arianism
2.2.3 The Three Great Fathers of Cappadocia
2.2.4 Cyril of Jerusalem and Apollinarius of Laodicea
2.2.5 The Antiochians
2.2.6 The Fight against Nestorius
2.2.7 The Great Fathers of the West
2.2.8 Other Fathers of the East and West
2.2.9 Doctrinal Content of the Works of the Fathers of the Golden Age

2.3 The Time between the Barbarians and Islam
2.3.1 Panorama of Years 450 to 750
2.3.2 The Fathers after the Council of Chalcedon

2.4 Concluding Synthesis and Overview of the Early Church Fathers

3. Required Textbooks (*) and Selected Bibliography


4. **Format of Presentation:** This course will be a mixture of lecture, class discussion, and study review questions.

5. **Required Workload:**
   - **5.1** Students are expected to complete all the assigned reading and answer the study review questions.
   - **5.2** There will be a Midterm and Final exam (written outside class time).
   - **5.3** A final synthesis project, due May 08.
   
   Suppose you were invited to give an hour presentation to an RCIA group or parish adult education group summarizing the study of Early Church Fathers - Patristics entitled “Why study the Early Church Fathers? Make detailed reference to the great heresies and to the great Councils in which the Fathers of the Church intervined”  What important points would you explore? Prepare an outline for your PowerPoint presentation. Attach a brief explanation or note for each point in your outline. **Finally, compose five questions you think the group might ask of you, and tell me, clearly and succinctly, how you would answer them.** Please submit the whole assignment as a single file.
6. Grading: Two exams – Midterm & Final, each 30%; Final project 35%; Attendance, quizzes and participation, 5%.

7. Academic Standards

7.1 Academic Honesty: All the work you do in this course is expected to be your own. Absolutely no cheating or plagiarism (using someone else’s words or ideas without proper attribution) will be tolerated. Any cases of cheating or plagiarism will be handled according to university policy and reported to the University’s Academic Misconduct Committee. They will also be reported to appropriate ecclesiastical authorities where applicable.

As stated in the Norms of Conduct for the University of St. Thomas, academic misconduct includes: (a) cheating (using unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise), plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidation, and any and all other actions that improperly affect the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement; (b) assisting others in any such act; (c) attempting to engage in such acts.

Plagiarism is using the work of another person and claiming it as your own. The most common types of plagiarism include:

- Using a paper or portion of a paper prepared by someone else;
- Quoting someone else’s language or words without proper quotation or citation; and
- Paraphrasing someone else’s ideas, framework, or insights without giving credit to the original author in a citation.

Students are very strongly urged to consult the following websites for additional information on plagiarism and how to avoid it:

http://owl.english.purdue.edu/handouts/research/r_plagiar.html
http://www.bc.edu/schools/cas/polisci/integrity/quiz/

Academic misconduct in any form is unacceptable and suspected violations will be pursed aggressively.

7.2 Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend every meeting. Any absences without substantive reason (in the judgment of the instructor) will adversely affect your final grade. Regardless of the reasons for absence, students are responsible for the whole content of the course.

7.3 Disability Services: Any student with a disability requiring accommodations in this course is encouraged to contact Counseling and Disability Services in Crooker Center. Their offices can be reached at (713) 525-2169 or 6953.

8. Office Hours: Email is the preferred way of reaching the instructor. You may also phone my office during regular business hours. If you would like to have a conversation outside of business hours, please email to arrange an appointment. My email address and phone number are given at the top of the syllabus.

9. Submission of Work:

9.1 Work should be submitted electronically in an email attachment as a Microsoft Word or Rich Text file, to andersjb@stthom.edu.

9.2 Format: Please identify each and every assignment you send with this label: “CG5312A2018.Lastname,firstinitial.Assignmentname.”
This is how my Final Project should appear:


9.3 Use this label format in three places:
   a. In the topic of the email;
   b. As the name of the file;
   c. In the header on page one (1) of the paper, placed in the top left hand corner.

9.4 Rationale for the format: This format will organize each student’s work under his/her own name in my files, and facilitate my retrieval of each document without having to re-label it.

10. Calendar of Classes and Assigned Readings: Please note that the four parts of the course have been divided into sections with readings assigned and recommend for each part.

Section 1: The First Three Centuries
January 16 - Getting into the Church Fathers
Required Reading
The Fathers of the Church by Mike Aquilina (henceforth Aquilina) – The World of the Fathers, pp.17-54.

January 23 – The Apostolic Fathers: The Gospel’s First Echo
Required Reading
Aquilina, pp. 55-67 – St. Clement of Rome; St. Ignatius of Antioch
Payton, pp. 33-43

January 30 – Late First Century Continued
Required Reading
Aquilina, pp.68-80 – St. Polycarp of Smyrna; Hermas
Payton, pp. 44-58 – Polycarp; The Didache; The Letter of Barnabas; The Shepherd of Hermas; The Letter of Diognetus; Papias
The Westminster Handbook of Patristic Theology by John Anthony McGuckin (henceforth McGuckin) – Thematic Guide to Late First Century – Docetism; Gnosticism; Apostolic Fathers; Didache; Clement of Rome, Polycarp

Aquilina, pp. 81-107 – St. Aristides of Athens; St. Justin Martyr; St. Melito of Sardis; St. Theophilus of Antioch; St. Athenagoras of Athens; St. Irenaeus of Lyons
Payton, pp. 58-84 – Justin Martyr; Athenagoras, Theophilus of Antioch, Melito of Sardis; Irenaeus
McGuckin – Thematic Guide to Second Century continued

February 13 – the Ante-Nicene Fathers Part Two
Aquilina, pp. 108-128 – Tertullian; St. Hippolytus of Rome; St. Cyprian of Carthage; St. Clement of Alexandria
Payton, pp. 107-117 – Hippolytus: Novatian; Minucius Felix; Clement of Alexandria
McGuckin – Thematic Guide to Second Century continued
Aquilina, pp.127-146 – Origen; St. Dionysius the Great; St. Methodius of Olympus;
Lactantius Payton, pp. 118 -162 – Origen; Tertullian; Cyprian; Lactantius
McGuckin - Thematic Guide to Third Century

Midterm Exam – Outside Class – Brief Answer Questions
Section 2: From Nicaea (325) to Chalcedon (451)
February 27 – The Fourth Century; The Golden Age of Doctrine
Aquilina, pp. 147-166 –Eusebius of Caesarea; St. Athanasius; St. Aphrahat the Sage; St. Ephrem of Syria
Payton, pp. 163-245 – Eusebius of Caesarea; The Desert Fathers and Mothers; Psuedo-Macarius; Athanasius
McGuckin – Thematic Guide to Fourth Century

March 06 – The Post-Nicene Fathers - Part One
Aquilina, pp. 167- 190 - St. Basil the Great; St. Gregory of Nazianzus, St. Gregory of Nyssa; St. Asterius of Amasea; St. Cyril of Jerusalem
Payton, pp. 226-297 – Cyril of Jerusalem; Basil of Caesarea; Gregory Nazianzen; Gregory of Nyssa
McGukin – Thematic Guide to Fourth Century continued

March 13 – Spring Break

March 20 – The Post Nicene Fathers Part Two
Aquilina, pp. 191-242 – St. Pacian of Barcelona; St. Ambrose of Milan, St. Epiphanius of Salamis; St. John Chrysostom; St. John Cassian; Theodore of Mopsuestia; St. Jerome
Payton, pp. 298-355 – John Chrysostom; Cyril of Alexandria; Hilary of Poitiers; Ambrose; Ruinus; Jerome
McGukin – Thematic Guide to Fourth Century continued

March 27 – Easter Break

April 03 – The Latin Fathers Part One: The Church and the Changing World
Aquilina, pp. 242-270 – St. Chromatius of Aquileia; St. Augustine of Hippo; Prudentius; St. Paulines of Nola; St. Vincent of Lerins; St. Leo the Great
Payton, pp. 356-411 – Augustine of Hippo, John Cassian; Vincent of Lerins; Prosper of Aquitaine; Leo the Great
McGuckin – Thematic Guide to Fifth Century

April 10 – The Latin Fathers Part Two
Aquilina, pp. 274-294 – St. Peter Chrysologus; St. Jacob of Serygh; St. Romanus the Singer; St. Benedict of Nursia; St. Venantius of Fortunatus; St. Gregory the Great
Payton, pp.411-420 – Julianus Pomerius; Gregory the Great
McGuckin – Thematic Guide to Sixth Century
April 17 – Other Fathers of East and West and Three Mothers of the Church
Aquilina, pp. 293-322 – Dionysius the (Psuedo-) Areopagite; St. Maximus the Confessor; St. Isidore of Seville; St. John of Damascus
Payton, pp. 429-465 – Pseudo-Dionysius, Maximus the Confessor, John of Damascus
McGuckin – Thematic Arrangement of Theological Ideas – Christology; Trinity; Heretical or Dissident Movements

April 24 – The Doctrinal Content of the Works of the Fathers
McGukin – Thematic Arrangement of Theological Ideas – Salvation Theory; Scripture; Ecclesiology; Sacraments

May 01 – Concluding Synthesis and Overview of the Early Church Fathers
McGukin – Thematic Arrangements of Theological Ideas – Asceticism; Spirituality; Anthropology; Eschatology; Philosophy: Social Ethics

Overview of the Early Church Fathers Course
Part 1; The First Three Centuries
   The Geography of Christianity and the Christian Literature up to the Year 311
   The Apostolic Fathers
   The Greek Apologists
   The Acts of the Martyrs
   The Heretical and Anti-Heretical Literature of the Second Century
   The Apocryphal Literature of the New Testament
   The School of Alexandria in the Third Century: Clement and Origen
   The Writers of Rome and Africa in the Third Century
   Other Authors of the Third Century
   Doctrinal Content of the Works of the Fathers of the Third Century

Part 2: From Nicaea (325) to Chalcedon (451)
   General Panorama of the Years 300 to 450
   The First Period of the Long Fights against Arianism
   The Three Great Fathers of Cappadocia
   Cyril of Jerusalem and Apollinarius of Laodicea
   The Antiochians
   The Fight against Nestorius
   The Great Fathers of the West
   Other Fathers of the East and West
   Doctrinal Content of the Works of the Fathers of the Golden Age

Part 3: The Time between the Barbarians and Islam
Final Exam – Outside Class – Brief Answer Questions due May 08.

Final Syntesis Project due May 08.