



## Course Syllabus

**TRH2414 – Modern History of the Orthodox Churches (1204 to Present)**

**Trinity College**

**Toronto School of Theology**

**January to April (Winter/Spring) 2017**

### ***Instructor Information***

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Instructor: Dr Daniel G Opperwall  
Office Location: Larkin Building, Office 317  
Email: daniel.opperwall@utoronto.ca  
Office Hours: Thursday 18:00-19:00; phone or online by appointment

### ***Course Identification***

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Course Number: TRH 2414 XX  
Course Name: Modern History of the Orthodox Churches (1204 to Present)  
Course Location: Larkin Building, Room \_\_\_\_  
Class Times: Thursday 19:00-22:00  
Prerequisites: None

### ***Course Description***

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This course will examine the history of the Orthodox Christian churches (including “Eastern,” Assyrian and Oriental Orthodox) from 1204 to the present. Key topics will include Orthodox relations with Roman Catholic and Protestant communities, with Islam, and with Communism, as well as hesychasm, liturgical reform, missions, Orthodox ethnicism, the Orthodox “diaspora,” and the growth of Orthodoxy as a Western phenomenon. Throughout the course, emphasis will be placed on engaging with primary sources. In addition, we will pay special attention to the nature of Church History as a discipline, what it means to study Christianity during an often difficult time, and the pastoral mission of Church historians.

The course will be assessed on the basis of participation in class discussions (through forums/blogs in the online version), short examinations on factual data (names, dates, etc), and two written assignments demonstrating students' ability to use primary sources in the study of history.

## ***Expanded Course Description***

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While the Great Schism between the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches is usually said to begin in 1054, in many respects the sack of Constantinople 150 years later marks the beginning of the modern history of the Orthodox Church. Though a few more attempts at East-West reunion would be made through the 15<sup>th</sup> Century, the experience of the crusades would prove decisive in keeping Eastern and Western Christians apart until the present day.

Not long after this sealing of the Great Schism, the Church in the East would undergo the traumatic and formative experience of the collapse of the Byzantine Empire. Once the state religion of the Roman people, the Orthodox Church would now be forced to redefine itself as a religious minority within the Islamic world on the one hand, and as the religion of the increasingly powerful Slavic kingdoms (especially in Russia) on the other.

As the centuries rolled forward, the Orthodox churches would find themselves increasingly bound with specific ethnic identities--Greek, Russian, Coptic, Armenian and the like. Yet, simultaneously, substantial contributions to Orthodox theology, praxis, and liturgical art helped these same churches to graft a unifying cross-national identity and attendant political structure. While the West underwent the challenges of the Reformation, the birth of the early modern world witnessed an Orthodox Church in some ways more diverse and divided than ever, yet in other ways increasingly united.

As the 20<sup>th</sup> Century dawned, most of the Orthodox world would be shaken by the militant atheism of Communist regimes across Eastern Europe and the increasing hostility of Islamic states in the Middle East. The Church witnessed a massive resurgence in bloodshed and martyrdom, but also engaged actively (and even willingly) in the fraught politics of atheist regimes. Owing in large part to political pressures at home, huge numbers of Orthodox Christians departed for Western Europe, North America and Australia, bringing their faith with them. Orthodoxy in the "diaspora" was born, and many Orthodox communities in the West, such as the Russian community in Paris, quickly grew to become focal-points of intellectual and political activity. Before long the ethnic walls of these Orthodox communities proved permeable. Western converts, and new generations of Orthodox born in the West, began to craft a uniquely Western Orthodox identity, one often marked by contradictory forces of resistance to other Western forms of Christianity combined with interest in ecumenical dialogue.

The Orthodox churches today are a group of dynamic communities building new, yet consciously traditional identities in the West as well as in traditionally Orthodox countries now free from Communism, while still struggling for the same goals in places of continuing repression such as Egypt and Syria. Freedom, identity, survival, and the encounter with modern Catholic and Protestant thought will mark the terms of Orthodoxy's engagement with the rest of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

In this course we will explore the story of modern Orthodoxy, and the thinkers, bishops, priests, laypeople, and monastics who have made it what it is, and who will define its future in an ever-changing world. Who are the Orthodox, where have they been in recent centuries, what makes them unique today, and what will define them tomorrow? Join us as we ask these questions through the most engaging primary sources, the best in modern secondary scholarship, and plenty of good conversation.

## Course Resources

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### Required Course Readings

Angold, Michael (ed.) Eastern Christianity. *The Cambridge History of Christianity* 5. Cambridge: Cambridge, 2006.

Casiday, Augustine (ed.) *The Orthodox Christian World*. London: Routledge, 2012.

Chadwick, Owen. *The Christian Church in the Cold War*. Penguin History of the Church 7. London: Penguin, 1993.

Papadakis, Aristeides and John Meyendorff. *The Christian East and the Rise of the Papacy: The Church AD 1071-1453*. The Church in History IV. Crestwood: St Vladimir's, 1994.

### Required Course Readings

*Selected primary source readings will be provided through the course website.*

### Course Portal

This course will make extensive use of the University of Toronto's Learning Portal also known as 'Blackboard'. The online version will be delivered entirely through Portal.

To access the portal, go to the UofT portal login page at <https://portal.utoronto.ca> and log in using your UTORid and password. Once you have logged in to the portal using your UTORid and password, look for the **My Courses** module, where you'll find the link to the website for all your Blackboard-based courses. (Your course registration with ROSI gives you access to the course website at Blackboard.) Note also the information at <http://www.portalinfo.utoronto.ca/content/information-students>.

Please ensure that you are familiar with how to access the system and navigate through it. The portal will be used in the following ways:

- Keeping an updated version of the course syllabus and calendar
- Providing course readings, bibliographies and other handouts
- Sharing additional online resources
- Communicating class notices and updates
- Issuing assignment guidelines and deadlines
- Accepting assignment submissions
- Providing feedback and grades for all assignments and other course requirements
- Administering and grading quizzes and exams

In addition, for the online section, the portal will be used in the following ways:

- Delivering weekly course lectures and seminars

- Enabling student participation and interaction in the blogs, discussion forums and other online communications (see course requirements and evaluation below)

Auditors who do not have a UTORid should speak to the instructor to receive guest access to the course portal.

As in the classroom, online communication must be carried out respectfully and civilly at all times. Writing within the online media of blogs, discussion forums is not an excuse for laziness, lack of proper reflection or uncivility. Arguments must be carefully crafted, respectfully presented and grounded in source texts and solid reflection. Students who fail to adhere to these guidelines will not succeed in this course.

## ***Course Learning Objectives***

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Students successfully completing this course will be able to:

- Identify key figures, events and dates in Church history from the period. (Lectures, text-book readings, information quizzes and exams).
- Maintain familiarity with key primary source materials from the period and their authorship. (Lectures, primary source readings, information quizzes and exams).
- Communicate more effectively, verbally and in writing, about Church history by making logical arguments about primary materials, engaging relevant secondary sources, and meeting academic standards for writing and annotation. (Primary source readings, writing assignments, directive feedback thereon, class/online discussion).
- Approach critically their own historiographical assumptions, and those of various secondary authors. (Lectures, class/online discussion, text-book readings)
- Engage thoughtfully with the question of how Church history should and/or does affect contemporary religious communities, parishes, and churches so as to more effectively guide their congregations and communities through discussion about Christianity's past. (Class/online discussion).

Course Outcomes: Knowledge of the Area of Concentration	Course Elements	Programme Outcomes
<i>Students successfully completing this course will be able to:</i>	<i>This outcome will be achieved through these course elements:</i>	<i>This course outcome corresponds to these aspects of the Basic Degree Learning Outcomes</i>
Identify key figures, events and dates in Church history from the period.	Lectures, text-book readings, information quizzes and exams	Religious heritage Cultural context
Maintain familiarity with key primary source materials from the period and their authorship.	Lectures, primary source readings, information quizzes and exams	Religious heritage Cultural context
Communicate more effectively, verbally and in writing, about Church history by making logical arguments about primary materials, engaging relevant secondary sources, and meeting academic standards for writing and annotation.	Primary source readings, writing assignments, directive feedback thereon, class/online discussion	Religious heritage Cultural context Formation of Character Leadership
Approach critically their own historiographical assumptions, and those of various secondary authors.	Lectures, class/online discussion, text-book readings	Cultural context Formation of Character
Engage thoughtfully with the question of how Church history should and/or does affect contemporary religious communities, parishes, and churches so as to more effectively guide their congregations and communities through discussion about Christianity's past.	Class/online discussion	Cultural Context Formation of Character Leadership

## ***Evaluation***

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### **Requirements – Classroom Section**

**The final grade for the course will be based on the following areas:**

- **Short response.** Once during the term, each credit student will compose a short response to the primary source passage or passages for the week. This will not exceed 1000 words [strict] and will not involve research. The instructor will provide a series of critical questions for each primary source designed to help students get started on the essay. Students will present their short response to the class at the beginning of discussion for that week, either in summary or by reading it aloud (whichever is more comfortable), and will assist in leading the following discussion along with the instructor. 15%
- **Final paper.** By the end of exam week, students will turn in a final paper. This will (typically) expand upon their discussion in the short response (changes in topic are allowed if the instructor has been consulted in advance). The paper will not exceed 3000 words [strict]. The final paper should focus on assessment of the primary source material, but will be expected to delve further into the primary sources in question (thus, reading beyond the passage reviewed for class) and to incorporate academic research (secondary sources). The final paper should be synthetic and argumentative. 30%
- **Quizzes** 3 short quizzes during the term, completed online, involving brief multiple choice, fill-in, and short answer. Students will take the quizzes online; timed; open resource but no collaboration with other students while in progress. The quizzes will be available for a full week leading up to the time that they are due (listed in the course calendar below). Quizzes can only be taken once. 15%
- **Final Exam** Brief multiple choice, brief matching, short answer on a primary source passage, essay. Taken online; timed; open resource but no collaboration with other students while in progress. The exam will be available online throughout exam week, but is only taken once. 20%
- **Participation** The course will involve a substantial discussion component each week. Students will be evaluated on preparedness for this discussion. Students will assist in leading one session of discussion as well, as noted above. 20%

### **Requirements – Online Section**

**The final grade for the course will be based on the following areas:**

- **Short response.** Once during the term, each credit student will compose a short response to the primary source passage or passages for the week. This will not exceed 1000 words [strict] and will not involve research. The instructor will provide a series of critical questions for each primary source designed to help students get started on the essay. After submitting the formal written assignment, online students will present their conclusions to the class by composing a blog entry using the Blackboard/Portal system. Web forum discussion for that week will begin with reflections on the blog post. 15%

- **Final paper.** By the end of exam week, students will turn in a final paper. This will (typically) expand upon their discussion in the short response (changes in topic are allowed if the instructor has been consulted in advance). The paper will not exceed 3000 words [strict]. The final paper should focus on assessment of the primary source material, but will be expected to delve further into the primary sources in question (thus, reading beyond the passage reviewed for class) and to incorporate academic research (secondary sources). The final paper should be synthetic and argumentative. 30%
- **Quizzes** 3 short quizzes during the term, completed online, involving brief multiple choice, fill-in, and short answer. Students will take the quizzes online; timed; open resource but no collaboration with other students while in progress. The quizzes will be available for a full week leading up to the time that they are due (listed in the course calendar below). Quizzes can only be taken once. 15%
- **Final Exam** Brief multiple choice, brief matching, short answer on a primary source passage, essay. Taken online; timed; open resource but no collaboration with other students while in progress. The exam will be available online throughout exam week, but is only taken once. 20%
- **Participation** The online course will involve a substantial discussion component each week using a weekly discussion forum. Students will be expected to post in the forum several times every week. They will be evaluated on the preparedness for this discussion, and on their ability to engage in polite, constructive Christian dialogue in a web-based setting (especially by reading others' comments generously, and crafting engaged critical responses). Students will post one blog entry during the term (as discussed above) to facilitate that week's discussions. 20%

## Grading System

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalents	Grade Point	Grasp of Subject Matter	Other qualities expected of students
<b>A RANGE: Excellent: Student shows original thinking, analytic and synthetic ability, critical evaluations, and broad knowledge base.</b>				
<b>A+</b>	90-100	4.0	Profound and Creative	Strong evidence of original thought, of analytic and synthetic ability; sound and penetrating critical evaluations which identify assumptions of those they study as well as their own; mastery of an extensive knowledge base
<b>A</b>	85-89	4.0	Outstanding	
<b>A-</b>	80-84	3.7	Excellent	Clear evidence of original thinking, of analytic and synthetic ability; sound critical evaluations; broad knowledge base
<b>B RANGE: Good: Student shows critical capacity and analytic ability, understanding of relevant issues, familiarity with the literature.</b>				
<b>B+</b>	77-79	3.3	Very Good	Good critical capacity and analytic ability; reasonable understanding of relevant issues; good familiarity with the literature
<b>B</b>	73-76	3.0	Good	
<b>B-</b>	70-72	2.7	Satisfactory at a post-baccalaureate level.	Adequate critical capacity and analytic ability; some understanding of relevant issues; some familiarity with the literature
<b>FZ</b>	0-69	0	Failure	Failure to meet the above criteria

## Policy on Late Assignments

Late work will not be accepted unless arrangements have been made in advance. If circumstances (such as medical or compassionate difficulties) require that work be turned in late, contact the instructor at the earliest possible juncture to agree on a new time-line and other details.

The absolute deadline for the course is the examination day scheduled for the course. Students who for exceptional reasons (for instance, a death in the family or a serious illness) are unable to complete work by this date may request an extension (SDF = 'standing deferred') beyond the term. An SDF must be requested from the registrar's office in the student's college of registration no later than the last day of classes in which the course is taken. The SDF, when approved, will have a mutually agreed upon deadline that does not extend beyond the conclusion of the following term. If a student has not completed work but has not been granted an SDF, a final mark will be submitted calculating a zero for work not submitted.

## Course Grades



Consistently with the policy of the University of Toronto, course grades submitted by an instructor are reviewed by a committee of the instructor's college before being posted. Course grades may be adjusted where they do not comply with University grading policy (<http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/grading.htm>) or college grading policy.

## **Policies**

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**Accessibility.** Students with a disability or health consideration are entitled to accommodation. Students must register at the University of Toronto's Accessibility Services offices; information is available at <http://www.accessibility.utoronto.ca/>. The sooner a student seeks accommodation, the quicker we can assist.

**Plagiarism.** Students submitting written material in courses are expected to provide full documentation for sources of both words and ideas in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations should be placed within quotation marks. (If small changes are made in the quotation, they should be indicated by appropriate punctuation such as brackets and ellipses, but the quotation still counts as a direct quotation.) Failure to document borrowed material constitutes plagiarism, which is a serious breach of academic, professional, and Christian ethics. An instructor who discovers evidence of student plagiarism is not permitted to deal with the situation individually but is required to report it to his or her head of college or delegate according to the TST *Basic Degree Handbook* (linked from <http://www.tst.edu/content/handbooks>) and the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/AssetFactory.aspx?did=4871>. A student who plagiarizes in this course. Students will be assumed to have read the document "Avoidance of plagiarism in theological writing" published by the Graham Library of Trinity and Wycliffe Colleges ([http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library\\_Archives/Theological\\_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm](http://www.trinity.utoronto.ca/Library_Archives/Theological_Resources/Tools/Guides/plag.htm)).

**Other academic offences.** TST students come under the jurisdiction of the University of Toronto *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm>).

**Back-up copies.** Please make back-up copies of essays before handing them in.

**Obligation to check email.** At times, the course instructor may decide to send out important course information by email. To that end, all credit students are required to have a valid utoronto email address. Students must have set up a utoronto email address which is entered in the ROSI system. Information is available at [www.utorid.utoronto.ca](http://www.utorid.utoronto.ca). The course instructor will not be able to help you with this. 416-978-HELP and the Help Desk at the Information Commons can answer questions you may have about your UTORid and password. *Students should check utoronto email regularly* for messages about the course. **Forwarding** your utoronto.ca email to a Hotmail, Gmail, Yahoo or other type of email account is not advisable. In some cases, messages from utoronto.ca addresses sent to Hotmail, Gmail or Yahoo accounts are filtered as junk mail, which means that emails from your course instructor may end up in your spam or junk mail folder.

**Email communication with the course instructor.** The instructor aims to respond to email communications from students in a timely manner. *All email communications from students should be sent from a utoronto email address.* Email communications from other email addresses are not secure, and also the instructor cannot readily identify them as being legitimate emails from students. The instructor is not obliged to respond to email from non-utoronto addresses.

## ***Course Schedule***

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### **Week 1 – Introduction**

- Introduction to the course
- Essential background information--a brief history of Orthodox Christianity before 1204

### **Week 2 – The Church and the Decline of the Empire (13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> Centuries)**

- Rise of the Ottomans
- A Church without a Christian Emperor?

### **Week 3 – Reunion with Rome/Division with Rome (13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> Centuries)**

- Successful attempts at reunion of East and West
- The collapse of reunion--schism reborn

### **Week 4 – Hesychasm and the politics of monasticism (14<sup>th</sup> Century)**

- Palamas and his allies
- The role of monasteries in the late Middle Ages
- Relations with Islam

### **Week 5 – The Rise of Russia (15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Centuries)**

- Maturation of Slavic Christianity
- Shifting of political power to Russia
- The role of the traditional patriarchates in captivity

### **Week 6 – Non-Chalcedonian and Assyrian Communities (15<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Centuries)**

- Between Islam and Chalcedon: Defining and building communities (Coptic, Ethiopian, Armenian, Syriac)
- Indian Christianity rediscovered--mission, reunion, identity
- The Assyrian Church of the East

### **Week 7 – Orthodoxy and the Reformation**

- Relations with Protestant groups
- Reform in the Orthodox Churches: Kolyvades, Nikonian and other liturgical reforms

### **Week 8 – Early modern Orthodoxy (18<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> Centuries)**

- Growing connections with the West
- The rise of ethnic nationalism

### **Week 9 – Orthodoxy and Communism (20<sup>th</sup> Century)**

- The churches behind the iron curtain
- The birth of "diaspora."
- The fall of the Ottoman Empire
- Orthodoxy and the Second World War

**Week 10 – Modern Orthodoxy 1**

- Character and recent history of non-Chalcedonian communities (Coptic, Ethiopian, Armenian, Indian, Syriac)
- Character and recent history of Assyrian communities

**Week 11 – Modern Orthodoxy 2**

- Character and recent history of Arabic Orthodoxy
- Character and recent history of Greek Orthodoxy
- Character and recent history of Slavic Orthodoxy

**Week 12 – Modern Orthodoxy 3**

- Orthodoxy in the West: Diaspora
- Orthodoxy in the West: Missions and conversion
- Orthodoxy in the West: Relations with other faiths
- Orthodoxy as a Western Church
- Orthodoxy and globalization

**Please note that this syllabus is subject to change in accordance with the regulations in the TST *Basic Degree Handbook*.**