

CHHI 75063/85063/95063  
Special Topics in Church History: Eastern Christianities  
Three (3) Semester Hours, Brite Divinity School, Fort Worth, Texas, Spring 2019

**Instructor:** Bryce E. Rich, [b.e.rich@tcu.edu](mailto:b.e.rich@tcu.edu), (817) 257-4824

**Prerequisites:** M.Div. students - Introduction to Christian Theology  
D.Min. and Ph.D. students - none

**Description of Content:** In this course we will explore the development of several Eastern Christian traditions: Eastern Orthodoxy, Oriental Orthodoxy, and the Church of the East. We will follow the historical path of the first seven Ecumenical Councils and subsequent controversies particular to the Eastern Orthodox world. We will pay particular attention to the liturgies, prayers, iconography, and spiritual practices of these traditions, with an eye turned to the historiography produced by these communities in their attempts at self-presentation.

**Course Objectives:**

Students will:

- Explore the controversies that gave rise to the first seven ecumenical councils and articulate what was at stake for the parties involved.
- Gain an awareness of the various cultural contexts that shape Eastern Christian practices and doctrines.
- Cultivate an appreciation for the ways in which liturgical and ascetic practices shape practitioners within a community.

**Class Procedures:**

- Lectures
- Group discussions
- Student presentations
- Visits to Eastern Christian church communities

**Requirements:**

- Regular attendance
- Brief weekly post to class Midterm assignment (2,250-3,000 on a visit to an Eastern Christian community)
- Final paper (2,250-3,000 words for masters students; 3,500-4,500 words for doctoral students)

**Texts:**

1. Required: Farley, Lawrence. *Let Us Attend: A Journey through the Orthodox Liturgy*. Chesterton, Indiana: Conciliar Press, 2007.  
ISBN: 978-1888212877, \$12.95
2. Required: Louth, Andrew. *Introducing Eastern Orthodox Theology*. Downers Grove, Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 2013.  
ISBN: 978-0830840458, \$20.00
3. Required: *Prayers from the East: Traditions of Eastern Christianity*. Edited by Richard Marsh. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Fortress Press, 2004.  
ISBN: 978-0800636555, \$16.00
4. Required: St. Theodore the Studite. *On the Holy Icons*. Translated by Catharine P. Roth. Yonkers, New York: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1981.  
ISBN: 978-0913836767, \$15.00
5. Recommended: *The Blackwell Companion to Eastern Christianity*. Edited by Ken Parry. Malden, Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.  
ISBN: 978-1444333619, \$56.96
6. Recommended: McGuckin, John Anthony. *The Orthodox Church: An Introduction to its History, Doctrine, and Spiritual Culture*. Malden, Massachusetts: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.  
ISBN: 978-1444337310, \$42.99
7. Articles and chapters available as PDFs on the course website

#### **Grading Procedures:**

- Regular attendance/participation (20%)
- Weekly post to class site (30%)
- Midterm assignment, including site visit (20%)
- Final paper (30%)