

“The mission of Tyndale Seminary is to provide Christ-centred graduate theological education for leaders in the church and society whose lives are marked by intellectual maturity, spiritual vigour and moral integrity, and whose witness will faithfully engage culture with the Gospel.”

Course	CHURCH IN THE MAKING: PATRISTIC CHRISTIANITY HIST 0611 1S
Date and Time	JUNE 3 – 28 MONDAYS (June 3, 10, 17, 24), 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM or 6:30 – 8:30 PM ¹ SYNCHRONOUS ONLINE
Instructor	DR. ASHOOR YOUSIF, PhD Telephone/voice mail: (416) 226-6620 Ext. 2228 Email: ayousif@tyndale.ca
Class Information	The course will be a LIVESTREAM ONLINE meeting. Office Hours are held by appointment.
Course Material	Access course material at classes.tyndale.ca or other services at Tyndale One . Course emails will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account only.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Patristic era (2nd-7th centuries) was a monumental period in defining and shaping Christianity theologically and ecclesiastically. This course will survey this period through examining key Christian men and women, who represent crucial historical events and themes, produced rich literary heritage, played defining roles in church affairs, and impacted Christianity in major ways in late antiquity. The selective examples will be considered from different historical contexts and ecclesiastical traditions.

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Acquire a comprehensive knowledge of the global history of Patristic Christianity during

¹ The meeting’s date and time will be determined by the class at the beginning of the course.

Late Antiquity.

2. Evaluate critically and reflectively the events, people, themes, and issues encountered in the course.
3. Synthesize and relate the historical insights with contemporary realities.
4. Analyze critically and comparatively primary and secondary sources.
5. Conduct independent research and communicate complex content in clear academic writing.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED READING

Aquilina, Mike. *The Fathers of the Church: An Introduction to the First Christian Teachers*. 3rd Edition. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2013. **(Reading A1)**

_____. *The Witness of Early Christian Women: Mothers of the Church*. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2014. **(Reading A2)**

Brock, Sebastian. *A Brief Outline of Syriac Literature*. Kerala, India: SEERI, 2009. **(Reading B)²**

B. SUPPLEMENTARY / RECOMMENDED READING AND TOOLS

Tyndale recommends www.stepbible.org – a free and reputable online resource developed by Tyndale House (Cambridge, England) – for word searches of original-language texts, as well as for topical searches, interlinear texts, dictionaries, etc. Refer to the library for other [online resources for Biblical Studies](#).

C. INTERACTIVE LIVESTREAM AND/OR HYBRID COURSE REQUIREMENTS

- Livestream attendance for the entire duration of the class at announced times
- Headphones (preferred), built-in microphone, and web-camera
- Well-lit and quiet room
- Stable high-speed internet connection, preferably using an Ethernet cable over Wi-Fi
- Full name displayed on Zoom and Microsoft Teams for attendance purposes*
- A commitment to having the camera on to foster community building*

*exceptions with permission from professor

² A copy of the assigned pages will be provided.

D. GUIDELINES FOR INTERACTIONS

Tyndale University prides itself in being a trans-denominational community. We anticipate our students to have varied viewpoints which will enrich the discussions in our learning community. Therefore, we ask our students to be charitable and respectful in their interactions with each other, and to remain focused on the topic of discussion, out of respect to others who have committed to being a part of this learning community. Please refer to “Guidelines for Interactions” on your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca.

E. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. **Biographical Paper: 1500-2000 Words,³ 25%. Due on Sunday, June 14th (11:59 pm).**

The student will write one biographical paper on key figure(s) from the Patristic era, briefly highlighting their biographical information and key events, themes and contributions related to them. This assignment is designed to give the student direct exposure to key figures from the historical context (place and time) being investigated in this course, and it may serve as foundational research for the final research paper (Assignment #4).

In the paper, the student should invest most of the space in addressing ONE key theme, event, or contribution related to the figure(s), providing an argument (thesis), and ending with a reflective conclusion on the historical legacy and value of the figure(s) to the contemporary church in our times.

2. **Critical Analysis Paper (Primary Source): 1500-2000 Words,⁴ 25%. Due on Sunday, June 21st (11:59 pm).**

The student will write one critical analysis on a primary source related to one of the themes, events, or key figures from the Patristic era. This assignment is designed to give students a chance to engage one of the key texts from the historical context (place and time being investigated in this course). The paper should have a historical argument (a thesis), an analysis of the text to support the thesis, and a reflective conclusion on the value of the source to the contemporary church in our times. No additional/external research is permitted beyond the primary source itself. This assignment could/should serve as part of the research for the final research paper (Assignment #4).

In the paper, the student will provide a summary of the source’s content in the introduction paragraph and highlight the thesis statement. Then, the body of the paper

³ 1500 for MDiv and MTS students and 2000 Words for ThM and MA students.

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should support the thesis statement through evidence from the text. It should offer an analysis of the source's possible historical objectives and insights in the body of the paper. Finally, the student should/could share a reaction to and/or reflection on its message in the conclusion paragraph.

This assignment involves a "close reading" of the text as a historian. Look for the author's main ideas and themes, which should offer clues and information regarding his/her world (e.g. his/her theological, spiritual, and/or ecclesiastical realities). All this information should shape your analysis and reaction and will provide the foundation for an argument (a thesis) on the source context. Importantly, show how your argument is drawn from the primary source you read by carefully documenting it (i.e. citation).

3. Research Paper Proposal: 500 Words + Bibliography, 5%. Due on Sunday, June 7th (11:59 pm).

The student will write a one-paragraph proposal for their research paper. The paragraph should introduce (1) the topic/theme, (2) an organizing question and/or a thesis statement, and (3) a draft outline of the research paper. The proposal should also have a bibliography of the possible sources (5-10 sources).

4. Research Paper: 3500-4500 Words,⁵ 45%. Due on Sunday, June 28th (11:59 pm).

The student will write an argumentative research paper with a thesis that directly engages with one of the issues, themes, or events related to the period under examination in which the student will deal with key figures from the period and use both primary and secondary sources. The paper could be built on the previous assignments (Assignments #1 and #2) by using them as foundational research to develop this paper.

In the paper, students will need to demonstrate deep familiarity with the specifics and details of the issues, themes, or events you selected, as well as demonstrate an ability to place the topic within the larger context of the Christian history of the period. The paper should not simply report, summarize, or review materials, but demonstrate thoughtful analysis and reflection and embody an argument (thesis), which will be a summary of the paper, early in the introduction. Thus, this is an argumentative research paper. The body of the paper should support the thesis through in-depth analysis and evidence. The paper should show how the argument is drawn from primary and secondary sources used by carefully documenting the sources (i.e. citation and bibliography). Finally, in the conclusion, the paper should/could engage with the implications of the research's findings on the contemporary reality of Christianity (e.g., lessons, applications,

⁵ 3500 for MDiv and MTS students and 4500 Words for ThM and MA students.

outcomes).

Turnitin Text-Matching Software

Tyndale has a subscription to text-matching software called Turnitin. This software is used to ensure the originality of academic writing and to check that all of the sources used have been cited correctly. The instructor for this course will be using this software for the assignments that are submitted through your course resource page at classes.tyndale.ca. When you submit your assignment, you will see a summary of your submission, which includes the file(s) that you submitted as well as a similarity report generated by Turnitin.

Below are some useful resources:

- [Student](#) Guides for Turnitin via classes.tyndale.ca course resource page
- Interpreting Similarity ([Guide](#), [Video](#), [Spectrum](#))

F. EQUITY OF ACCESS

Students with permanent or temporary disabilities who need academic accommodations must [contact](#) the [Accessibility Services](#) at the [Centre for Academic Excellence](#) to [register](#) and discuss their specific needs. *New students* must self-identify and register with the Accessibility Office at the beginning of the semester or as early as possible to access appropriate services. *Current students* must renew their plans as early as possible to have active accommodations in place.

G. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments:

Bibliographical Paper	25 %
Critical Analysis Paper	25 %
Research Paper Proposal	5 %
Research Paper	45 %
Total Grade	100 %

H. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

Submission Method and Late Submission

Submission: Papers to be submitted electronically in .doc or .docx format via Moodle.

Late Submission Penalties:

- Late assignments will be penalized 1% (1 point) per day.

Citing References

In all assigned work, proper style guidelines must be used and followed exactly; failure to do so will render the submitted assignment unacceptable.

For proper citation style, consult the [tip sheet, “Documenting Chicago Style”](#) (Tyndale e-resource) or the full edition of the [Chicago Manual of Style Online](#), especially ch. 14. For citing scripture texts, refer to sections 10.44 to 10.48 and 14.238 to 14.241 from the *Chicago Manual of Style* or reference the [tip sheet, “How to Cite Sources in Theology”](#).

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity, and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism (including improper use of artificial intelligence programs). Tyndale University takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty. Please refer to the [Academic Integrity website](#) for further details.

Students are encouraged to consult [Writing Services](#). Citation and other [tip sheets](#).

Students should also consult the current [Academic Calendar](#) for academic policies on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System.

Research Ethics

All course-based assignments involving human participants requires ethical review and may require approval by the [Tyndale Research Ethics Board \(REB\)](#). Check with the Seminary Dean’s Office (aa@tyndale.ca) before proceeding.

I. COURSE EVALUATION

Tyndale Seminary values quality in the courses it offers its students. End-of-course evaluations provide valuable student feedback and are one of the ways that Tyndale Seminary works towards maintaining and improving the quality of courses and the student’s learning experience. Student involvement in this process is critical to enhance the general quality of teaching and learning.

Before the end of the course, students will receive a MyTyndale email with a link to the online course evaluation. The link can also be found in the left column on the course page. The evaluation period is 2 weeks; after the evaluation period has ended, it cannot be reopened.

Course Evaluation results will not be disclosed to the instructor before final grades in the course have been submitted and processed. Student names will be kept confidential and the instructor will only see the aggregated results of the class.

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

A. COURSE MEETING SCHEDULE AND REQUIRED READINGS

Historical Era of the Week	Dates	Readings
Apostolic Period (Mid 1 st to Early 2 nd Centuries)	June 3	A1 – pp. 17-79 A2 – pp. 13-59
Persecution Period (Mid 2 nd to Early 4 th Centuries)	June 10	A1 – pp. 81-146 A2 – pp. 60-87 B – pp. 7-13
Imperial Church Period (Early 4 th to Early 5 th Centuries)	June 17	A1 – pp. 147-262 A2 – pp. 89-158 B – pp. 13-24
Late Antiquity Period (Mid 5 th to Late 7 th Centuries) and Early Middle Ages Period (Mid 7 th to Late 8 th Centuries)	June 24	A1 – pp. 263-312 B – pp. 24-53

B. COURSE THEMES

Themes	Sub-Themes (Examples)
Scripture	Canonization, Apocrypha, and Hermeneutics
Theology	Doctrines-Dogmas, Apologetics, and Heterodoxy-Orthodoxy
Church	Governance-Authority, Worship-Sacraments, and Discipleship
Mission	History, Contextualization, and Interreligious Relations
Spirituality	Asceticism, Monasticism, and Mysticism
Issues	Discrimination, Persecution, and Martyrdom
Society	Culture, Ethics, and Politics
Heritage	Literature, Art, and Music

V. ONLINE PRIMARY SOURCE READINGS

The primary readings can be found as PDF files on the course web page at classes.tyndale.ca under “Readings”.

Note: (Tyndale Library supports this course with [e-journals](#), [e-books](#), and the [mail delivery of books](#) and circulating materials. See the [Library FAQ page](#).)

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Akin, Jimmy, *The Fathers Know Best: Your Essential Guide to the Teachings of the Early Church*. San Diego, CA: Catholic Answers Press, 2010.

Aquilina, Mike. *The Fathers of the Church: An Introduction to the First Christian Teachers*. 3rd Edition. Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 2013.

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Brock, Sebastian. *A Brief Outline of Syriac Literature*. Kerala, India: SEERI, 2009.

Cohick, Lynn H. and Amy Brown Hughes. *Christian Women in the Patristic World: Their Influence, Authority, and Legacy in the Second through Fifth Centuries*. Grand Rapids, MI: 2017.

Drobner, Hubertus R. *The Fathers of the Church: A Comprehensive Introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2016.

Haykin, Michael A. G. *Rediscovering the Church Fathers: Who They Were and How They Shaped the Church*. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2011.

Pope Benedict XVI. *Church Fathers: From Clement of Rome to Augustine*. San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press, 2008.

Wiles, Maurice. *The Christian Fathers: Study Edition*. London, UK: SCM Press LTD, 1977