

RELIGION 840:312  
MODERN GREEK STUDIES 489:312  
GREEK CHRISTIANITY  
SPRING 2015

Point your browser to [sakai.rutgers.edu](http://sakai.rutgers.edu) for copies of all course documents, announcements, and a variety of other useful information.

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Greek Orthodoxy—the usual title by which we know the Greek Christian churches today—is itself a complicated phrase. Christianity's earliest texts are available to us almost entirely in Greek, so in one sense all varieties of the Christian religion are “Greek”. And all varieties of Christians consider themselves to have the right (Greek: *orthos*) teaching (*doxa*)—that is, consider themselves orthodox. So what is universally Christian about Greek Orthodoxy? And what is unique about its Greek-ness and doctrine? In this course, we will study the history of some of the central features of Greek Orthodox Christianity: its doctrine, organization, history, and worship. Some of these features are common to all Christianities: the distinction between “orthodoxy” and “heresy”, for example. Others are unique: the precise way that Greek Orthodox Christians revere icons, for example. It is my hope that students will take away from this course both a deeper understanding of Christianity in general and a historically-informed sense of how its various forms have developed, sometimes in opposition to one another.

**YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR EVERYTHING IN THIS SYLLABUS, REGARDLESS OF WHETHER THE PROFESSOR REMINDS YOU OF A SPECIFIC PROVISION OR NOT!!!!!! READ IT AND RE-READ IT!!!!!!**

The following pages contain ESSENTIAL practical information. They are, so to speak, your Bible, your fundamental guide to passing the course. If you lose or misplace this syllabus, it is available on the Sakai site and on the Religion Department website ([religion.rutgers.edu](http://religion.rutgers.edu)). **Please go through this syllabus as soon as possible and note all assignments on your calendar!!!!!!** While the professor will try to remind you about such assignments, the professor is herself absentminded about such things and relies on a DETAILED, WRITTEN calendar. She recommends that you do the same.

The **goals** of this class are as follows:

1. Content: Students will learn the roots of Christian teaching and worship in the early Christian and conciliar period. They will then know the place of Greek Orthodoxy within the many types of Christianity, both historically and today. That is, they will learn both when Greek Orthodoxy became an identifiable entity and what distinguishes it from others kinds of Christianity (Roman Catholic, Protestant, Oriental Orthodox).
2. Content: Students will learn the basic structure of Greek Orthodox teaching (doctrine), institutions, and ritual (liturgy) and be able to place that knowledge in the context of scholarly approaches to religion.
3. Approach: Students will become familiar with the ways that secular scholars of religion approach questions of theology and religious evolution; they will learn some of the terminology scholars use to describe religious movements and the religious convictions of individuals; they will become familiar with some scholarly approaches to ritual; they will learn what kinds of proof are acceptable in scholarly circles and why.
4. Evidence: We will approach Greek Orthodoxy mostly through primary texts, with some reading in secondary materials to help with context. Considerable emphasis will be placed on discussion of those texts. Students will learn how to read theological, polemical, confessional, and devotional texts in a scholarly setting. They will learn the considerable care and deliberate speed with which such texts must be read.
5. Evidence: we will watch films of Greek Orthodox rituals and discuss what we observe there. Students will learn to observe the context, nuances, and other features of ritual with the same care they would use when reading a text.

**Assessment** of students' progress in these areas will be measured in three ways:

1. Students' ability to read primary texts and observe rituals carefully will be assessed on the basis of student contributions to in-class discussions.  
**Participation is therefore a crucial component of this course. At the end of this syllabus is a description of the criteria used for judging participation—please read them carefully.**
2. Students' ability to analyze primary texts and rituals using the context provided by the secondary texts, as well as their ability to apply scholarly methods to understanding both texts and rituals, will be assessed through written work: specifically, three papers, due as detailed on the calendar below.
3. On a completely practical level, whether or not students have completed the assigned readings and mastered the chronology of the period will be assessed on the basis of how specifically and appropriately they use references to readings and chronological sequence of events both in discussion and in written assignments.

**Grading:** 3 papers @ 25% each = 75%; participation 25%.

**Required Readings will be online EITHER on Sakai OR at other websites, which will be detailed in the assignments below.**

**Some readings will be from the Bible.** If you already own a Bible, you may use that one. If you do not own a Bible, or want to purchase a new one, I recommend *The HarperCollins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version, with Apocrypha/deuterocanonical Books*.

If you do not own and do not want to purchase a Bible, you can read the assigned texts online at [www.biblegateway.com](http://www.biblegateway.com)

### **Attendance and Promptness:**

Students are required to attend lectures and discussions. Aware, however, that illnesses, family crises, and such can make even the most diligent student miss class, the professor allows 3 absences without penalty. The 3 absences are not recommended, should be used only when you NEED to, and are NOT negotiable. Do not use up three absences just because you have them and then expect a fourth absence when you are ill or have an emergency to be excused. For **every absence beyond three**, your grade will drop 1/3 of a grade-point (e.g., from A to B+, from B+ to B, from B to C+, and so on).

If you arrive after the roll has been called, you must talk to me after class is over. You are allowed to be *moderately* late up to three times during the semester without penalty. Your **fourth late arrival will be treated as an absence**, as will any subsequent late arrivals. Please note that I will not make exceptions for late arrivals caused by campus bus schedules or parking problems. If you arrive more than 40 minutes after the class begins you are welcome to attend but you will be marked down as absent rather than late for that class.

**IF, BECAUSE OF OTHER COMMITMENTS, YOU CANNOT MAKE IT TO CLASS ON TIME, YOU SHOULD DROP THE COURSE.**

**Reading and video-watching assignments.**

**All assignments should be completed BEFORE class on the day for which they are assigned.**

**January 22:** First class meeting.  
No assignment.

**January 26:** What is Greek Orthodoxy? How does it relate to other types of Christianity?

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai. If you have problems getting onto the website, let Professor Kolbaba know and she will email the discussion questions and readings to you—**this week only. Please resolve problems you are having with Sakai ASAP.**
- In the Bible, read the Gospel According to John, chapters 1-10.
- Read Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church. New edition* (London: Penguin Books, 1993), pp. 1-8. On Sakai.

**January 29:** What is Greek Orthodoxy? What are its basic teachings?

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- In the Bible, read the Gospel According to John, chapters 11-21.

**February 2:** Basic teachings of Greek Orthodoxy, part 2.

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Read proto-orthodox statements of faith on Sakai—statements by Ignatius of Antioch and Irenaeus of Lyon.
- In the Bible, read The Letter to the Hebrews.

**February 5:** Some 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup>-century developments in Greek Orthodox teaching: Mary and other saints.

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Read *The Infancy Gospel of James* on Sakai.

**February 9: Professor hands out first paper topic. (Draft due for peer editing on Feb. 19<sup>th</sup>, paper due on Feb. 23<sup>rd</sup>.)**

Saints, persecutions, martyrs, and more saints

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Read “The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicity” on Sakai

**February 12:** 4<sup>th</sup>-century theological developments and controversies

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Read Richard Price and Michael Gaddis, *The Acts of the Council of Chalcedon, vol. 1* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2005), pp. 4-9, on Sakai.
- Read selections from Athanasios's speeches against the Arians, on Sakai.
- Read "The Muratorian Fragment," on Sakai.
- Read Athanasius on the canon from his 39<sup>th</sup> Festal Letter, on Sakai.

**February 16:** 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup>-century theological developments and controversies: one or two natures in Christ

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Read Price and Gaddis, *Acts of Chalcedon*, 1: 9-56, on Sakai.
- Read "Letters of Cyril of Alexandria and Nestorius of Constantinople," Coakley and Sterk, pp. 165-174, on Sakai.
- Read "Definition of Faith of the Council of Chalcedon," Coakley and Sterk, pp. 175-176, on Sakai.

**February 19: Peer review of paper drafts.**

**YOU MUST BRING TWO COPIES OF YOUR DRAFT TO CLASS.**

**February 23: First Paper Due on Sakai by 10 a.m.—Click on Assignments 2 and follow the instructions.**

**Remember that you must also hand in your Peer Review Worksheet to the Professor!**

Beginning a unit on church authority, government, organization, and history. The Apostles.

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- In the Bible, read *The Acts of the Apostles*, chapters 1-14.

**February 26:** The Gentile Churches

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- In the Bible, read *The Acts of the Apostles*, chapters 15-28.
- In the Bible, read *The Letter to the Galatians*.

**March 2:** Apostolic Succession and Synods

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Read selections from Irenaeus of Lyon, *Against Heresies*, on Sakai.
- Read "Reading about Authority", on Sakai.

**March 5: Professor will hand out second paper topic. (Draft due for peer review, March 26; paper due March 30.)**

Imperialization and Orthodoxy—The Triumph (?) of the Church

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Read selections from Eusebius of Caesarea, on Sakai.
- Read Emperor Justinian I's (527-565) statement about the roles of the empire and the church, on Sakai.
- Read Ware, *Orthodox Church*, from p. 40, paragraph beginning "At the heart" to p. 42, on Sakai.

**March 9: Emperors and Orthodoxy in the age of iconoclasm**

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Read selections from John of Damascus, *On the Divine Images*, Coakley and Sterk pp. 289-297, on Sakai.

**March 12: Other institutions of the church: patriarch, synod, pastoral clergy**

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Read J.M. Hussey, *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire*, pp. 297-335, on Sakai.

**March 16 and 19: Spring Break**

**March 23: Other institutions of the church: monasteries.**

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Read J.M. Hussey, *The Orthodox Church in the Byzantine Empire*, pp. 335-349, on Sakai.
- Read Ware, *Orthodox Church*, p. 37, paragraph beginning "Monasticism" to p. 40, paragraph ending "formerly he fled", on Sakai.

**March 26: Peer review session.**

**YOU MUST BRING TWO COPIES OF YOUR DRAFT TO CLASS!!!**

**March 30: Second Paper Due on Sakai by 10 a.m.—Click on Assignments 2 and follow the instructions.**

**Remember that you must also hand in your Peer Review Worksheet to the Professor!**

Other institutions of the church: monasteries, cont.

**April 2: Other institutions of the church: hospitals.**

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Read Timothy Miller, *The Birth of the Hospital*, "Epilogue", pp. 207-217, on Sakai.

**April 6:** Starting a unit on worship and practice. Baptism and Eucharist in the early church.

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- In the Bible, read The Gospel According to Matthew 26: 26-30; 28:16-20.
- In the Bible, review The Acts of the Apostles 8:26-39.
- In the Bible, read 1 Corinthians 11:17-34.
- Read *Didache* (an early second-century source) on baptism and Eucharist, chapters 7, 9, and 10, Coakley and Sterk pp. 14-15, on Sakai.

**As we begin to study worship and practice, it is crucial that we observe some rituals of the churches. While it is a poor substitute for actually attending a service, we will use videos for this purpose. You need to be sure to allow yourself time to watch the videos!!!!!! Approximate times are noted for each. The first and longest one takes a bit more than an hour.**

**ALSO, in this unit the discussion questions may be particularly helpful. They give you some ideas of things to look for. FEEL FREE, however, to also make your own observations. WATCH CAREFULLY. Note anything you find interesting, intriguing, questionable, beautiful, or notable in some other way.**

**April 9:** The development of a priesthood; sacralization and the division of clergy from laity.

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Find AND PRINT OUT the text of the Liturgy of St John Chrysostom in English: [http://www.goarch.org/chapel/liturgical\\_texts/liturgy\\_hche](http://www.goarch.org/chapel/liturgical_texts/liturgy_hche)
- There is no additional reading this week, but you need to watch *the first 34 minutes and 51 seconds* of the following video of a Greek Orthodox liturgy. Try to follow along on the text of the liturgy that you printed out (above). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIJEub5YFE> (34:51).

**April 13:** The sacraments and their setting: baptism and Eucharist

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Ware, *Orthodox Church*, pp. 264-288, on Sakai.
- Read the following account (by a believer) of the form and meaning of a Greek Orthodox Church: [http://stanthonysorthodox.org/inside\\_orthodox\\_church.php](http://stanthonysorthodox.org/inside_orthodox_church.php)

**April 16: Professor hands out third paper assignment. (No peer review this time; paper due May 6.)**

Sacraments, continued.

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Watch the rest of this video (you should have watched the first 34:51 for class on April 9): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nIJIeub5YFE> (34:51-1:08; total about 34).

**April 20: Sacraments, part 3**

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Ware, *Orthodox Church*, pp. 288-306, on Sakai.
- Watch from 9:00 to the end of the following video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wBkm2-0TyCk> (about 50 minutes)

**April 23: Sacraments, part 4**

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Watch from 20:00 to 38:00 of the following video (18 minutes) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m8FNN-OqfwI>

**April 27: Icons and other practices**

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- Ware, *Orthodox Church*, pp. 206, paragraph on icons, on Sakai.
- Watch the first 1:40 of this video: <http://request.org.uk/life/church-life/orthodox-church/2013/07/09/the-eastern-orthodox-church/>
- And watch all of this one: <http://request.org.uk/life/church-life/orthodox-church/2013/07/09/the-eastern-orthodox-church/> (3:27)

**April 30:**

Other practices, continued.

- Read and think about DISCUSSION questions on Sakai.
- There may be additional readings assigned—be sure to check Sakai.

**May 4:** It depends on how far behind we are by this point....

**May 6, 5 p.m. Paper #3 due on Sakai—Click on Assignments 2 and follow the instructions.**

**Extra credit assignment:** BEFORE March 23, attend Divine Liturgy at a Greek Orthodox Church (unless you already attend a Greek Orthodox Church regularly—in which case see below). Write up a BRIEF—no more than 2 pages—account of your impressions. This account may include some of the following elements (just hints to get you started): How was the ceremony like and unlike religious ceremonies with which you are more familiar? If you're a Christian, how did the service compare to services in

your church? If you follow some other faith, was there anything familiar? How did the clergy and people interact (if they did)? Did the people behave as you expect people to behave in a religious setting? What did you think of the decoration of the church? Did you find any parts of it puzzling? Familiar? Foreign? Or feel free to simply tell me what struck you the most.

For those who want to attend a Greek Orthodox service, the most convenient place for most Rutgers students to go is St. George's Greek Orthodox Church on River Road in Piscataway. Check out service times and other details at <http://www.stgeorgepiscataway.org/>

If you attend a Greek Orthodox Church regularly, complete the assignment EXCEPT attend Sunday service at a Christian Church that comes out of the western European tradition—that is, a Roman Catholic or Protestant Church, rather than a different kind of Orthodox Church. I'll be happy to give you some suggestions if you e-mail me or ask me after class.

If you complete this assignment and hand it in by noon on March 30, I will raise your grade on the paper that got the lowest grade by 2/3 of a grade (using a grade-scale with pluses AND minuses; so, for example, a C- becomes a C+, a C a B-, a C+ a B, a B- a B+, and so on).

This is pretty significant extra credit because **I really want you to observe what is unique about an Orthodox service.**

Standards for Grading Student Participation in  
Seminar Courses and Class Discussions

**A:**

A student who receives a **A** for participation in discussion typically comes to every class with questions about the readings in mind. An **A** discussant engages others about ideas, respects the opinions of others, and consistently elevates the level of discussion.

**B:**

A student who receives a **B** for participation in discussion typically does not always come to class with questions about the readings in mind. A **B** discussant waits passively for others to raise interesting issues. Some discussants in this category, while courteous and articulate, do not adequately listen to other participants or relate their comments to the direction of the conversation.

**C:**

A student who receives a **C** for participation attends regularly but typically is an infrequent or unwilling participant, or an obstreperous one.

**D:**

A student who fails to attend regularly and prepare adequately for discussion risks the grade of **D**

**Or even F**

[These standards are adapted only slightly from those officially adopted by the Princeton University Department of History in 1998. They were authored primarily by Andrew Isenberg (thanks, Drew).]