

HIS 600 NORTH AMERICAN CHURCH HISTORY

**SPRING TERM, 2016
3.0 CREDITS**

INSTRUCTOR: BRIAN THORPE

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Purpose

This course will explore the history of Christian churches in North America. The written histories of the churches will be studied in dialogue with the social context of such histories and the reflections of both church and context in popular culture. There will be a particular emphasis on the experience of those on the margins of power and their often unwritten contributions to the fabric of the Christian movement in North America.

Learning Outcomes

Competencies are approved when a student is able to demonstrate:

- a critical awareness of the history of Christian churches in the North American context**
- a discernment of the historical/social context of the experience of the various churches in particular times and places**
- an awareness of the relationship between church and state, among diverse denominations and with other religious traditions throughout the historical period covered in the course**
- an understanding of the way in which our history informs the contemporary ethos and mission of the Christian church**
- a discernment through the arts (literature, music, art, film) of the way in which the Christian church is perceived in the broader culture at various points in the history of the nations of North America**

Format

The course will meet for three hours (with a fifteen minute break) each week. The first half of the session will consist of presentations (through lectures, film and panel discussions) on a particular theme related to the history of the North American church. The latter half of the session will be devoted to seminar discussion of the theme.

Expectations of the student

- Regular (at least 80%) attendance**
- Active participation in seminar**
- A final paper (3000 – 3500 words) or equivalent project**