

Course Unit Outline
Unit Code
H7110
Unit Name
History of the Early Church
Unit Weighting
9 cpts
Type of Unit
Foundational
Prerequisites, corequisites or exclusions
Nil
Academic Staff
Mario Baghos, DipBuildStud (TAFE 2004) BTh(Hons) (SCD 2010) The faculty register lists all faculty accredited to teach this course unit.
Curriculum Objectives
This course unit is designed to provide students with an overview and general understanding of the early centuries of Christian history.
Learning Outcomes
At the end of this unit students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) demonstrate knowledge of significant events in the early Church in light of their social, cultural and religious context 2) account for contributions of leading figures in the early Church. 3) illustrate the capacity to interpret primary sources from this historical period. 4) exhibit the capacity to utilise the secondary sources relating to this period. 5) demonstrate the importance to the Church's present mission of key events and personalities in the early Church from the available literary sources
Threshold Concept to be Acquired in this Unit
Students need to be able to grasp the concept that history is not just a chronological description of events but involves an interpretive element and a range of methodological approaches. This threshold concept applies to all church history units in the curriculum
Content
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Studying the early Church in context; methodology and historiography. 2. Religious, cultural and social backgrounds of the early Church. 3. The relationship between the early Church and the Roman state; Jewish, pagan and Christian perceptions. 4. Persecution and the phenomenon of martyrdom. 5. Internal tensions within the early Church; orthodoxy and heresy. 6. Aspects of an emerging Christian worldview. 7. The 'triumph of the Church: Constantine, Fathers, councils. 8. The Church in a declining Empire.
Teaching Methods
Lectures, tutorials, student presentations, seminars - in class and/or online
Assessment Profile
Assessment tasks are designed both to help students attain the unit outcomes and to enable teachers to assess student attainment. In this unit, the required assessment tasks <u>will enable students to demonstrate how successfully they can:</u>

1. Demonstrate an ability to engage with primary and secondary sources e.g. by way of reviews or summaries. Outcome 3 and 4.
2. Explore key social, cultural, religious aspects relevant to the history of the early Church, e.g. by way of writing an essay. Outcomes 1 and 2.
3. Interpret key events and personalities in the early Church from the available literary sources, e.g. by way of take-home exam. Outcome 5.

Representative References

1. Barnes, Timothy D. *Constantine and Eusebius*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1981.
2. Brown, Peter. *The Rise of Western Christendom: Triumph and Diversity AD 200-1000*. 2nd edition. Cambridge: Blackwell, 2003.
3. Burrus, Virginia. *Late Ancient Christianity: A People's History of Christianity*, Vol 2. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005.
4. Chadwick, Henry. *The Church in Ancient Society: From Galilee to Gregory the Great*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
5. Ferguson, Everett. *Backgrounds of Early Christianity*. 2nd Edition. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993.
6. Ferguson, Everett, Michael P. McHugh, & Frederick W. Norris, eds. *Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, 2nd edition. New York: Garland Publishing, 1998.
7. Harding, Mark. *Early Christian Life and Thought in Social Context: A Reader*. New York: T&T Clark International, 2003.
8. Horsley, Richard A. *Christian Origins: A People's History of Christianity*, Vol 1. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2005.
9. Kesich, Veselin. *The Church in History*, Vol 1, Part 1: *Formations and Struggles*. ed. by Andrew Louth. Crestwood, New York: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2007.
10. Schott, Jeremy M. *Christianity, Empire, and the Making of Religion in Late Antiquity*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008.