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Course title:	History of Christianity
Track:	B-Track
Language of instruction:	English
Contact hours:	48 (6 per day)
ECTS-Credits:	4

Course description

This course will give an overview of the history of Christianity, which grew to be the world's largest religion with currently more than 2.4 billion followers. In the first three sessions of the course we will investigate the foundations of Christianity, in the following two sessions we will discuss developments of Christianity in the Middle Ages and during the Reformation Era. The last three sessions of the course will focus on modern developments of Christianity - from Enlightenment until today.

We will start with the roots of Christianity in Judaism and, in this context, discover the person of Jesus Christ. The historical setting of an emerging Christian faith in the Roman Empire and in ancient culture will also lead us to the following central questions: What are/were Christian theology and doctrines about and to which degree can they be seen as something novel or new. The fall of the Roman Empire marks the beginning of a great transformation of Christianity concerning its geographical expansion but also its strong connection with political leaders, which characterized the Middle Ages. These developments form the historical setting for the era of Reformation, the critique and theses of the Reformers, and the formation of a new confession, namely Protestantism.

During the last three sessions, we will look at modernity: We will discuss the question of how the Christian churches reacted to the dictatorships of the 20th century and investigate the role of the church during the time of National Socialism and in socialist East Germany (GDR). Lastly, we will also look closely at Christianity today.

Student profile

This course is open to students from all disciplines and levels of study.

Prerequisites

None.

Course requirements

All students will be expected to participate actively in class meetings and excursions, to have completed all the readings and to present two short reports on specific topics in the class sessions or excursions. In the last meeting students will hold a presentation on a topic of their own choice related to the course theme.

Grading

Participation: 30%
 Short reports: 40%
 Presentation: 30%

Reading

A course reader will be provided.

Course schedule

Date	Program*
Tuesday, July 24, 2018	<p>The beginning of a history of Christianity The historical person of Jesus Christ, ancient Christianity and the Apostolic age.</p> <p><i>Excursion: Jewish Synagoge Berlin (Oranienburger Str.)</i></p>
Friday, July 27, 2018	<p>The beginning of a Christian theology The conflicts, theological discussions and developments of the 2nd and 3rd century</p>
Tuesday, July 31, 2018	<p>Consolidation of Christianity The funding of the institutional church, the monasticism and Constantine the Great</p>
Friday, August 3, 2018	<p>Christianity in the Middle Ages Transformations of Rome and the church after 476, rivalry and liaison between church and state, crusades</p> <p><i>Excursion: Gemäldegalerie Berlin (Potsdamer Platz)</i></p>
Tuesday, August 7, 2018	<p>Reformation and its consequences Late middle age, pre-reformators, Martin Luther and the European Reformations</p>
Friday, August 10, 2018	<p>Enlightenment and Pietism Challenges and chances for Christianity in modern era</p>
Tuesday, August 14, 2018	<p>The Churches in the 20th century Catholic and Protestant churches under the National Socialism and in the German Democratic Republic</p> <p><i>Excursion: Bonhoeffer-Haus Berlin (Charlottenburg)</i></p>
Friday, August 17, 2018	<p>Conclusion and Outlook Worldwide trends, secularism, charismatic movements</p>

*Field trips may be subject to change depending on the availability of appointments and speakers. On field trip days, adaptation of class times is possible.