



PERSECUTION & MARTYRDOM YESTERDAY & TODAY
HIST 6358/THEO 6358/MISS 6358
FALL 2021 (NOLA2U Flex)
MONDAY 2:00-4:50

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I. Mission Statement

New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary and Leavell College prepare servants to walk with Christ, proclaim His truth, and fulfill His mission.

II. Course Description:

This course examines persecution and martyrdom and the resulting theology of suffering in the early church and in the contemporary world in various global settings. The course follows a seminar-based and student-led format with intense reading, discussion, research, and writing. Can be taken as HIST6358, THEO 6358 or MISS6358.

III. Student Learning Outcomes:

By the completion of this course, students should be able to:

- **Understand** early and contemporary Christian experiences of persecution and martyrdom
- **Apply** knowledge of persecution and martyrdom in the early church and the contemporary world to the situation of the American church
- **Communicate** principles learned about persecution and martyrdom in the early church and in the contemporary world

IV. Required Texts:

These are the required textbooks for this class:

Litfin, Bryan. *Early Christian Martyr Stories: An Evangelical Introduction with New Translations*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2014.

Allen, John. *The Global War on Christians: Dispatches from the Front Lines of Anti-Christian Persecution*. New York: Image, 2013.

Ripken, Nik. *Insanity of Obedience: Walking with Jesus in Tough Places*. Nashville, TN: B&H Books, 2014.

There will be additional required reading from primary sources that are available on the Internet.

Also, each student will be encouraged to read The Voice of the Martyrs at <http://www.persecution.com/> and to pray for suffering Christians worldwide.

V. Requirements:

- A. *Background Papers*: These papers are intended to be prepared by students as teaching tools. Each paper will be eight to ten pages long and written according to standard guidelines (Turabian; Times New Roman 12 pt. font; double-spaced; standard margins, etc.) and include a bibliography of at least ten resources (textbooks, reference books, and the Internet are allowed, but you must consult a minimum of five monographs as well).

All papers are due on **September 13**. Submit your background paper on the Discussion Board.

The topics for these papers will be assigned by the end of the first day of class:

- Imperial Persecution during the First Century after Christ
- The Martyrdom of Polycarp
- Justin: Apologist and Martyr
- The Martyrs of Lyons and Vienne
- Tertullian and Martyrdom
- Persecution and Martyrdom of Christian Women
- Cyprian
- Voluntary Martyrdom
- The Great Persecution
- The Conversion of Constantine and the End of Persecution of Christians
- Relics, Pilgrimages and Other Superstitions Arising from Martyrdom
- Dietrich Bonhoeffer
- Eric Liddell
- Betsy & Corrie ten Boom
- The Missionaries to the Aucas
- Richard Wurmbrand
- Bill Wallace of China
- Brother Andrew
- Southern Baptist Martyrs
- Communist state sponsored persecution of Christians in Cuba, China, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Vietnam, or name a state.
- The suppression of educational, financial and human rights as a form of persecution of Christians in (pick a world system).
- Cultural persecution as exemplified in treatment of Gypsies, Kurds, Berbers or others and how it intertwines with persecution of the Christian faithful.

Each student will read every Background Paper on the Discussion Board and then respond with a 150-300 word reflection.

Both the Background Paper and the Major Research Paper will be evaluated as follows:

1. Grammar and style: Spelling, sentence and paragraph development; punctuation; and conformity to the 6th or 7th edition of Turabian. (20 points)
2. Clarity and Coherence: Balance; thoroughness; organization; logical development; overall sense of the paper. (20 points)

3. Research: Bibliography; type and variety of sources (primary, secondary, monographs, journal articles, websites, etc.); most bibliographic entries should be accompanied by footnote citations. (20 points)
4. Historical Awareness and Insight: Factual accuracy; awareness of historical connections (continuity/discontinuity, cause/effect, contrasts/comparisons); sensitivity to historical context; awareness of the historical impact of a person. (20 points)
5. Analysis and Evaluation: Going beyond the mere reporting of facts to include explanation, interpretation, analysis of material; evaluation of strengths and weakness of a person; demonstration that you have thought about the material that you have researched. Give strong and insightful introduction and conclusion. (20 points)

Safe Assignment: Blackboard offers a service known as “SafeAssignment.” Every written assignment will be submitted as a First Draft to Safe Assignment before the Final Copy is submitted for grading.

A paper submitted through this service will be compared to other papers in the database and checked for the percentage of copying from other sources. Your work will not be used for any purpose other than preventing plagiarism in the Seminary and other participating institutions. Ownership of the intellectual property contained in your written work will not be transferred to any third party.

Your paper will be assessed for the amount of material copied from other sources and returned to you. The highlighted passages do not indicate plagiarism necessarily, but they point out the percentage of your paper that can be found in other sources. You need to be sure that you properly quote and cite such passages, and you may need to put more of your paper in your own words.

By the way, you probably will find that your footnotes and bibliographical entries are highlighted. That should be expected, since the papers in the database also cite the same sources that you use.

NOBTS Writing Center: Students have access to *Write Stuff*, the NOBTS Writing Center. Information about the Writing Center and the process for submitting papers can be found at <http://www.nobts.edu/writing>. The writing center staff will review the paper and work with the student as necessary to improve it before the final paper is submitted. Working with the writing center should help you in all of your academic writing, as well as help you produce excellent written assignments for this course.

NOBTS Style Guide: A copy of the approved NOBTS Style Guide can be found in the course Blackboard shell, or can be located online at the Writing Center’s page on the seminary website at: https://www.nobts.edu/_resources/pdf/writing/StyleGuide.pdf

- B. *Two Book Reviews*: Each student will write two Book Reviews. Choose the book for your first review from the bibliography at the end of this syllabus. Submit 3-5 choices in order of preference, and send them by email to Dr. Butler. See above for the email address. He will assign your book to you so that there are no duplications.

Every student will write a second Book Review on Nik Ripken, *Insanity of Obedience: Walking with Jesus in Tough Places*.

Each review should be between five to six double-spaced typewritten pages in length. Bibliographical information should appear at the top of the first page of the

review. The review also should contain: 1) a brief summary [one to two pages] of the contents of the book, 2) a statement of the author's purpose and the extent to which the purpose was realized, 3) a statement regarding the book's uniqueness, 4) a description of the author's style, 5) a description of the author's biases, and 6) a concluding evaluation.

First Book Review is due on October 18.

Second Book Review is due on November 15.

- C. *Assigned Reading & Class Discussion:* Students are expected to read the assigned pages listed for each class period as well as the others' papers. Our class meetings will be conducted seminar-style, and all students will participate in the discussions of the readings and students' papers.
- D. *Reflection Paper:* Each class participant will prepare a personal reflection paper. **Due November 29.**
- a. The personal reflection paper should be **4-5 double-spaced pages.**
 - b. Personal reflections will be submitted and presented during the last class meeting
 - c. Reflections should be guided by the following questions:
 - i. What have I learned from this class during this semester?
 - ii. How can I apply what I have learned?
- E. *Prayer for Martyrs:* Each week, students will review stories of Christian suffering in the contemporary world printed in *The Voice of the Martyrs* at <http://www.persecution.com/>. You will examine these stories according to the Matrix of Persecution/Persecutors and come prepared to discuss them in class. You are encouraged to pray individually and corporately for our brothers and sisters in Christ who are suffering for the advance of the Kingdom of God throughout world that is increasingly hostile to the Gospel.

VI. Penalties:

Attendance: No student who misses more than nine classroom hours – or the equivalent of three class meetings – can receive credit for this course. Three occasions of arriving late for class or leaving early will count as one absence. For more information, see the Graduate Catalog.

Tardiness: A late project assignment will be assessed a **10 percent penalty if it is submitted after the deadline and a 20 percent penalty after five days. Penalties are even more severe after one week past the deadline.**

Plagiarism: New Orleans Baptist Seminary maintains high academic standards and is not tolerant of plagiarism. If you copy another author's work and present it as your own, you will be caught, and the penalty could be failure on that assignment or the course or expulsion from the Seminary. **See the Graduate Catalog for more information on the Definition of Plagiarism and Consequences for Violations of Plagiarism.**

VII. Grading:

Background Paper:	25%
Major Research Paper:	30%
Book Review:	25%
Reflection Paper	15%
Reading & Discussion:	<u>5%</u>
	100%

VIII. NOLA2U FLEX

If you are taking this course as a NOLA2U Flex student, please note the following attendance policies:

1. You are required to be in class either through viewing the lectures live or viewing the recorded lectures on Blackboard. When you view the recorded lecture, you will be considered present for that class. Regardless of if you watch the class live or recorded, you are only allowed to miss the amount of class time specified in the NOBTS attendance policy as stated in the graduate catalog. (See page 184 in the graduate catalog: https://www.nobts.edu/_resources/pdf/academics/GraduateCatalog.pdf).
2. You will be asked to certify that you have been present for the live session or have viewed the recorded session. This certification will be done through the reporting of the professor's Key Word after having watched the class live or viewing the recorded session.
3. All video lectures are available for 7 days after the video is posted. If you are unable to view the video within that time frame, you will be considered absent for that class session.
4. Technical issues will not be considered a valid reason for missing a lecture.

IX. Need technical assistance? Contact the ITC today!

Selfserve@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the Selfserve.nobts.edu site (Access to online registration, financial account, online transcript, etc.)

BlackboardHelpDesk@nobts.edu - Email for technical questions/support requests with the NOBTS Blackboard Learning Management System NOBTS.Blackboard.com.

ITCSupport@nobts.edu - Email for general technical questions/support requests.

504.816.8180 - Call for any technical questions/support requests.

www.NOBTS.edu/itc/ - General NOBTS technical help information is provided on this website.

X. Emergency Plan

In case of hurricane or any other emergency, go to the seminary web site for information: www.nobts.edu

The administration will communicate information that relates to the seminary: the nature of the emergency, instructions for responses, evacuation, contingency plans, duration of the emergency, and plans to return to campus and/or resume the schedule.

Also, check Blackboard for instructions related to this class. Because this class is available on Blackboard, there should be minimal disruption unless the emergency affects electrical power and connection to the Internet.

In any emergency, communication is important, and our best means of staying connected is through the seminary's web site and Blackboard.

XI. LECTURE & READING SCHEDULE

EC: Early Christian Martyr Stories

GW: Global War on Christians

Internet Sources:

Tacitus, *Annales* 15.44, <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/tacitus.html>

Correspondence of Pliny & Trajan, <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/pliny.html>

Cyprian, *Life & Passion*, <https://www.newadvent.org/fathers/0505.htm>

Week	Date	Daily Topic	Assignments Due
Week 1	August 16	Introductions – Professors & Syllabus Biblical background of Christian suffering Definitions of persecution	
Week 2	August 23	www.persecution.com Matrix of Persecution/Persecutors New Testament Persecution	EC Intro & chs. 1-2 Tacitus 1 Peter 3:13-5:14 Revelation 1-3
Week 3	August 30	www.persecution.com Turn of the 2 nd Century	EC chs. 3-4 Pliny & Trajan
LABOR DAY	<i>Sept. 6</i>	<i>No class</i>	
Week 4	Sept. 13	www.persecution.com Second Century Persecution	Background Papers Due EC chs. 5-6
Week 5	Sept. 20	www.persecution.com North African Persecution	EC chs. 7&9
Week 6	Sept. 27	www.persecution.com Passion of Perpetua Decian Persecution Cyprian Case Study	EC ch. 8 Cyprian
FALL BREAK	<i>Oct. 4</i>		
Week 7	Oct. 11	www.persecution.com Great Persecution Conversion of Constantine	EC chs. 10-13 & Epilogue
Week 8	Oct. 18	www.persecution.com Our Calling: Making reproducing disciples in a persecutorial world	1st Book Review Due GW Intro, chs. 1-2
Week 9	Oct. 25	www.persecution.com Managing witness and risk in the majority (2/3s) world	GW chs. 3-4
Week 10	Nov.1	www.persecution.com The nuclear family: 1 of 4 dimensions of persecution	GW chs. 5-6
Week 11	Nov.8	www.persecution.com The extended family: 2 of 4 dimensions of persecution	GW chs. 7-9

Week 12	Nov.15	www.persecution.com Socio-economic sphere: 3 of 4 dimensions of persecution	2nd Book Review Due GW chs. 10-11
THANKSGIVING	<i>Nov.22</i>		
Week 13	Nov.29	www.persecution.com Local and national government: 4 of 4 dimensions of persecution	Reflection Paper Due GW chs. 12-Postscript
Finals Week	<i>Dec. 6</i>		

SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

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- Allen Jr., John L. *The Global War on Christians: Dispatches from the Front Lines of Anti-Christian Persecution*. New York: Image, 2013.
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- Bibi, Asia and Anne-Isabelle Tollet, *Blasphemy: A Memoir: Sentenced to Death over a Cup of Water*. Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2013.
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- Brother Andrew and Al Janssen. *Secret Believers: What Happens When Muslims Believe in Christ*. Grand Rapids, MI: Revell, 2007.
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