



T8171A / Church Fathers: An Introduction



Semester 2/2022

Teaching Staff:

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Consultation Times:	by appointment.

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Credit value:	9 credit points
Mode of study:	Face-to-face or online
Pre-requisite units:	Nil
Co-requisite units:	Nil
Units excluded:	T7171 Early Church Fathers

Scheduled times and Venues:	Thursday, 6:00pm – 9:00pm 242 Cleveland street Redfern NSW 2010, or online.
Teaching Staff:	Name: Mr. Michael Ibrahim Qualifications: MRes (MQ), MA (SCD) Email: mibrahim@stcyrls.edu.au Consultations times: by appointment First contact by email preferred. (Usually replies within the day; please allow 1-3 working days.)

Workload:	Weeks in Teaching Session:	12 weeks
	Timetabled hours/week:	3 hours
	Study and Assignments	8 hours personal study/week;
	Total Demand Hours	143

Curriculum Objectives

This graduate course unit engages the main themes and characteristics of the patristic tradition, which it examines within their historical context up to the early fifth century and from a comparative perspective. It assists students to appreciate the significance of various trends in traditional theology and spirituality for the general Christian experience.

Learning Outcomes & Threshold Concepts

At the end of this unit, students will be able to:

1. Evaluate the historical and ecclesial contexts of various trends in patristic tradition
2. Investigate the main themes pertaining to the patristic tradition

3. Understand recent developments of knowledge in relation to the primary and secondary sources addressing patristic themes
4. Investigate, analyse and synthesise themes pertaining to the patristic tradition within their immediate and distant literary and historical contexts
5. Apply with initiative the patristic tradition to contemporary scholarship and the Christian experience

Content

1. Apostolic fathers and martyrdom literature
2. Greek and Latin apologists
3. Defenders of the apostolic tradition
4. The Alexandrians
5. Early Syrian fathers
6. The Cappadocians
7. Fathers from Jerusalem and Antioch
8. The Latin fathers

Learning Activities

The usual pattern for each session will include

- Lecture, presenting the content of the topic
- Associated discussion and note-taking
- Workshopping of related skills, for example, exegetical exercises on patristic texts and class discussions
- Student, not assessable contributions from set readings.

Attendance

Face-to-face students must attend a minimum of 80% of lectures in order to pass the unit. Online students must similarly watch or listen to 80% of lectures in order to pass the unit. Rolls of face-to-face attendance are maintained by the college. Similarly, our online software produces metrics which track how much of the lectures are viewed by each student.

Unit Weekly Schedule

Week	Date	Topic
1	Thursday, 28 July 2022	Introduction. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is/are the definition/s of Patristic studies? • Historical background in East and West • The layers of Patristics
2	Thursday, 4 August 2022	Patristic Methodology. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What defines a Church Father or Mother? • Delineating the Patristic Age? • At the crossroads of <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the immanence and transcendence (sociological reality and faith) ○ Theory and practice. ○ The letter and the spirit. ○ The Church and the academy. • Models of Patristic discourse. Monologue, dialogue, synthesis and symphony. • Quantum Mechanics and the Church Fathers!

3	Thursday, 11 August 2022	The Apostolic fathers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Didache • The Shepherd of Hermas • St Clement of Rome, • St Ignatius of Antioch • St Polycarp of Smyrna
4	Thursday, 18 August 2022	The boundaries of faith: St Irenaeus of Lyon and St Justin Martyr
Assessment 1 Due: Critical Review		
	Thursday, 25 August 2022	Break
5	Thursday, 1 September 2022	The Alexandrians: Clement and Origen.
6	Thursday, 8 September 2022	Latin Christianity: St Cyprian of Carthage and Tertullian
7	Thursday, 15 September 2022	St Athanasius and Nicene Orthodoxy
8	Thursday, 22 September 2022	Early Syriac Christianity: St Ephraem Monasticism. [Guest lecturer: Dr Samuel Kaldas]
	Thursday, 29 September 2022	Break
	Thursday, 6 October 2022	Break
Assessment 2 Due: Major Essay		
9	Thursday, 13 October 2022	The Cappadocians Pt 1
10	Thursday, 20 October 2022	The Cappadocians Pt 2 [Guest Lecturer: His Grace, Bishop Silouan of Sinope]
11	Thursday, 27 October 2022	St John Chrysostom, and St Augustine
12	Thursday, 3 November 2022	Synopsis of Patristic Themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trinitarian Theology. • Christology. • The Holy Scriptures • Liturgy and Life.
Assessment 3 Due: Take-home exam		

Learning Resources

Essential Texts

Behr, J. *The Formation of Christian Theology*, volumes 1-2. Crestwood: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2001-2004.

Chrysavgis, J. *The Way of the Fathers: Exploring the Patristic Mind*. Second edition, revised and expanded. Minneapolis: Light and Life Publishing Co. (n.d.).

Drobner, H. R. *The Fathers of the Church: A Comprehensive Introduction*, English translation by S. S. Schatzmann, with bibliographies updated and expanded by W. Harmless, SJ, and H. R. Drobner. Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2007.

Suggested Texts

Behr, J., A. Louth, & D. Conomos, eds. *Abba: The Tradition of Orthodoxy in the West*. Crestwood, NY: St Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2003.

Sears, Francis W., and Hugh D. Zemansky, Mark W. Young. *University Physics*. 7th ed. Reading: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1987.

Chrestou, P. *Greek Orthodox Patrology: An Introduction to the Study of the Church Fathers*. Rollinsford: Orthodox Research Institute, 2005.

Christensen, M.J. & J.A. Wittung, eds. *Partakers of the Divine Nature: The History and Development of Deification in the Christian Traditions*. Cranbury: Rosemont Publishing, 2007.

Cunningham, M.B. & E. Theokritoff, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Orthodox Christian Theology*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008.

Esler, P.F., ed. *The Early Christian World*, vol. I. London and New York: Routledge, 2000.

Evans, G.R., ed. *The First Christian Theologians: An Introduction to Theology in the Early Church*. Carlton: Blackwell Publishers, 2004.

Finlan, S. & V. Kharlamov, eds. *Theosis: Deification in Christian Theology*. Princeton Theological Monograph Series. Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2006.

Florovsky, G. *The Eastern Fathers of the Fourth Century*. Belmont, MA: Notable & Academic Book, 1987

Harvey, Susan Ashbrook, and David G. Hunter, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Early Christian Studies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Louth, A. *Modern Orthodox Thinkers: From the Philokalia to the Present*. Downer Groves, IL: IVP Academic, 2015.

Louth, A. *The Origins of the Christian Mystical Tradition: From Plato to Denys*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983.

Markham, Ian S., ed. *The Student's Companion to the Theologians*. West Sussex: Blackwell Publishers, 2013.

McGuckin, John Anthony. *The Westminster Handbook to Patristic Theology*. Westminster John Knox Press, 2004.

Parry, Ken, ed. *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Patristics*. West Sussex: Blackwell Publishers, 2015.

Quasten, J. *Patrology*, vol. 1-4. Westminster: Christian Classics Inc., 1986.

Russell, N. *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.

Young, F., Lewis A., and Andrew L., eds. *The Cambridge History of Early Christian Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.

Online Resources

Late 19th/early 20th century English translation of the church fathers: <http://www.ccel.org/fathers.html>

Further church fathers: <https://www.ccel.org/ccel/pearse/morefathers/files/morefathers.html>

More modern English translations: http://www.orthodox.cn/patristics/frchurchnewtrans_en.htm

Patrologia Graeca (PG): <http://patristica.net/gaeca/>

Searchable PDFs of PG: <http://patristica.net/gaeca/PG-IndexAuthorWeb.htm>

Patrologia Latina (PL): <http://patristica.net/latina/>

Patrologia Orientalis: <https://www.roger-pearse.com/weblog/patrologia-orientalis-po-pdfs/>

Greek dictionary: <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/resolveform?redirect=true>

Latin Dictionary:

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/resolveform?type=exact&lookup=nortia&lang=la>

Further Links: <https://www.patristics.org/resources/early-christian-texts/>

Assessment

All students must complete all assessment requirements as set, and conform with SCD Policy requirements.

Please submit all assignments on Moodle site.

Assessment Schedule

Type of Assessment Task	Value (%)	Date due	Unit Learning Outcome(s) assessed
Critical Review	20	Sunday, 21 August 2022	3
Major Essay	50	Sunday, 2 October 2022	2, 4
Take-Home Exam	30	Friday, 18 November 2022	1, 5

Detailed information on assessment tasks and assessment standards

Assessment 1: Critical Review

Due: Sunday, 21 August 2022

Length: 1200 words (no less than 1080 words, and no more than 1320 words) excluding bibliography, cover sheet and title.

Learning Outcome: 3. Understand recent developments of knowledge in relation to the primary and secondary sources addressing patristic themes

Weighting: 20% of the final mark.

Submission: On Moodle or via email in Word or PDF format.

Write a brief review of the first section of Florovsky's work *Aspects of Church History* (pgs 11-28). In this text, Florovsky, who is considered the founder of 'neo-patristic synthesis' dominant until this day in the Christian East, outlines his vision for the Orthodox approach to the fathers. Whilst undoubtedly the dominant vision of Orthodox patristics, nonetheless in recent times the success the neo-patristic synthesis has been questioned by figures such as Alfeyev and Behr.

In this review of Florovsky's description of the 'neo-patristic synthesis' / 'return to the fathers', you may want to address:

- What is Florovsky's understanding of the neo-patristic synthesis?
- What made this approach unique?
- From the perspective of your own faith tradition, what are the strengths (and weaknesses) of the neo-Patristic approach as outlined by Florovsky?

When writing a review, it is important to indicate the page numbers which you are citing. Whilst it is not necessary to reference other sources other than the text being reviewed, if you do, it is important to follow proper footnoting and bibliographic style as specified in your college's study guide.

Please refer to the marking rubric below in order to understand the way in which the review will be marked. In short, the assessment will be graded based on:

- Accuracy of summary: How well you presented the content of the chapter (25%).
- Critical Analysis: How well did you analyse the content and engage with, or critique the author's position (25%)
- Conceptual Synthesis (20%): How well did you argue the points for and against the application of Florovsky's program to your faith tradition.
- Writing Style: How well was the review written (15%)
- Referencing: How well did you reference the text and secondary material (including bibliography if appropriate) (15%)

If you need a guide, please have a look at book reviews in scholarly journals.

Marking Rubric

	HD (>85%)	D (84%-75%)	C (74%-65%)	P (64%-50%)	F (<50%)
Accuracy of Summary (25%)	High degree of summary accuracy, and engagement beyond core texts and materials	High degree of summary accuracy of the core text	Evidence of sound understanding of core texts and materials	Evidence of having read core texts and materials	Inadequate evidence of having read any of the core texts and materials
Critical Analysis (25%)	Evidence of highly developed analytical and evaluative skills	Evidence of well-developed of analytical and evaluative skills	Evidence of developed analytical and evaluative skills	Evidence of analytical and evaluative skills	Insufficient evidence of analytical and evaluative skills
Conceptual Synthesis (20%)	Outstanding factual and conceptual knowledge incorporating highly distinctive insight into deeper and more subtle aspects of the topic	Substantial factual and conceptual knowledge incorporating distinctive insight into deeper and more subtle aspects of the topic	Extensive factual and conceptual knowledge	Satisfactory factual and conceptual knowledge	Unsatisfactory factual and conceptual knowledge
Writing Style (15%)	Highly developed skills in expression, presentation, and	Well-developed skills in expression, presentation, and	Good skills in expression, presentation, and documentation.	Adequate skills in expression, presentation, and documentation.	Inadequate skills in expression, presentation, and documentation.

	documentation appropriate to wider audiences	documentation appropriate to the discipline and audience			
Referencing (15%)	Flawless referencing and bibliographic information	Near perfect referencing and bibliographic information	Some mistakes in referencing and bibliography	inconsistent referencing and bibliography	Largely Inaccurate referencing and bibliography

Assessment 2: Major Essay

Due: Sunday, 2 October 2022

Length: 3000 words (no less than 2700 words, and no more than 3300 words) excluding bibliography, cover sheet and title.

Learning Outcomes: 2. Investigate the main themes pertaining to the patristic tradition

4. Investigate, analyse and synthesise themes pertaining to the patristic tradition within their immediate and distant literary and historical contexts

Weighting: 50% of the final mark.

Submission: On Moodle or via email in Word or PDF format.

The aim of this essay is to engage with one of the following texts:

- St Ignatius of Antioch's *Letters*
- *The Shepherd of Hermas*
- St Justin Martyr's *Dialogue with Trypho*
- St Clement of Alexandria's *Exhortation to the Greeks*
- Origen's *On First Principles*
- St Athanasius' *On the Incarnation of the Word*
- Ps. Macarius' *Spiritual Homilies*
- St Basil's *Hexameron*
- St Gregory of Nyssa's *Life of Moses*
- St John Chrysostom's *No one can Harm the Man who does not Injure Himself*

Points which you may want to consider:

- What is the immediate context of the author and work?
- What is the literary style and structure of the work?

- Who was the intended audience?
- What are the theological themes addressed by the author?
- Where does this author's theological perspective sit within the spectrum of patristic and ecclesial opinions?
- In what ways does the author engage with his contemporary society and philosophy?
- What is the significance of this author's theology for the edification of the church today and for the transformation of the world?
- What information do we have about the providence of texts?

In order to successfully complete this task, you will need to accurately engage with the primary text, any subsequent ancient texts, as well as modern scholarly works. Where possible utilise newer translations of the primary text. As a rough guide approximately 10 referenced works indicate a reasonable engagement with the topic.

In some of these texts, the breadth of themes engaged with are broad. As such you can narrow your focus down to a smaller number of themes, but not without first listing the various themes dealt with in the text.

If there is another patristic figure or work which you would like to analyse, please contact me well in advance of the due date to discuss this. You **must** receive permission if you would like to do this.

Please follow proper footnoting and bibliographic style as defined in the college's study guide.

Please refer to the marking rubric below in order to understand the way in which the review will be marked. In short, the assessment will be graded based on:

- Appropriate contextualisation of the author and work (10%).
- Understanding of the theological content of the work (25%)
- Scholarly engagement: What do reputable scholars think about the issues? What is your position? (30%)
- Contemporary application of the author's theological position. (15%)
- Writing Style: How well was the essay written (10%)
- Referencing: How well did you reference the text and secondary material (10%)

A good guide for the style of your essay will be a scholarly article in a peer-reviewed journal.

	HD (>85%)	D (84%-75%)	C (74%-65%)	P (64%-50%)	F (<50%)
Appropriate contextualisation of the author and work (10%)	Outstanding contextualisation of author, culture, theology	Substantial contextualisation of author, culture, theology	Extensive contextualisation of author, culture, theology	Satisfactory contextualisation of author, culture, theology	Poor contextualisation of author, culture, theology
Understanding of the theological content of the work (25%)	Outstanding factual and conceptual knowledge incorporating highly distinctive insight into deeper and more	Substantial factual and conceptual knowledge incorporating distinctive insight into deeper and more	Extensive factual and conceptual knowledge	Satisfactory factual and conceptual knowledge	Unsatisfactory factual and conceptual knowledge

	subtle aspects of the topic	subtle aspects of the topic			
Scholarly engagement (30%)	Evidence of highly developed analytical and evaluative skills	Evidence of well-developed of analytical and evaluative skills	Evidence of developed analytical and evaluative skills	Evidence of analytical and evaluative skills	Insufficient evidence of analytical and evaluative skills
Contemporary application (15%)	Highly insightful application of the ancient author's thought in a modern context	Well-developed application of the ancient author's thought in a modern context	Good application of the ancient author's thought in a modern context	Rudimentary application of the ancient author's thought in a modern context	Little or no contemporary application
Writing Style (10%)	Highly developed skills in expression, presentation, and documentation appropriate to wider audiences	Well-developed skills in expression, presentation, and documentation appropriate to the discipline and audience	Good skills in expression, presentation, and documentation.	Adequate skills in expression, presentation, and documentation.	Inadequate skills in expression, presentation, and documentation.
Referencing (10%)	Flawless referencing and bibliographic information	Near perfect referencing and bibliographic information	Some mistakes in referencing and bibliography	inconsistent referencing and bibliography	Largely Inaccurate referencing and bibliography

Assessment 3: Take Home Exam

Due: Friday, 18 November 2022 (released Friday, 4 November 2022)

Length: 1800 words (no less than 1620 words, and no more than 1980 words) excluding bibliography, cover sheet and title.

Learning Outcomes: 1. Evaluate the historical and ecclesial contexts of various trends in patristic tradition

5. Apply with initiative the patristic tradition to contemporary scholarship and the Christian experience

Weighting: 30% of the final mark.

Submission: On Moodle or via email in Word or PDF format.

At the end of week 12, students will receive two take home questions pertaining to a patristic text and contemporary context. These should be answered in approximately 900 words each, with appropriate footnotes and references.

[Extension Policy](#)

Students must submit all assignments by the due dates set by the lecturer and published in the course unit profiles.

Late Penalty

Late assignments without an approved extension will attract an automatic penalty deduction of 5% of the marks available for the item of assessment for every day (including weekends and holidays), or part thereof, beyond the date and time of submission (or any extension granted).

Assignments submitted without an approved extension beyond 10 days after the due date will receive a zero mark and NOT be annotated by the lecturer.

Example:

Student submits an assignment worth 50 marks 4 days late.

Total mark available=50

Penalty: 4 days late = 5% of 50x4 = 10 mark penalty

The student's original mark is 40.

Final mark =40-10=30

Grounds for Extension

An extension of an assignment's due date may be granted on the following grounds: medical illness (certified by Medical Certificate); extreme hardship; and compassionate grounds

In such cases an extension of up to 28 days may be granted without penalty but only if requested before the assignment due date. The student should submit an "Application for Extension" including supporting documentation to the Member Institution for authorising and signing by the Lecturer / Registrar / Academic Secretary prior to the due date. The student will then be informed of the result of the request.

In extreme cases, extensions beyond 28 days may be granted. Such extensions must be applied for in writing, including supporting documentation, to the Member Institution setting out the extreme circumstances. The appropriate Member Institution's committee will consider such an unusual extension and notify the student of the outcome in writing.

If the unit assessment includes an examination and an extension is granted arrangements will be made for an alternative examination to be given to the student within the extension period.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the representation of another's works or ideas as one's own; it includes the unacknowledged word for word use or paraphrasing of another person's work, and the inappropriate unacknowledged use of another person's ideas. For more information on plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct refer to the [SCD Handbook](#).

Intellectual Property

The Course Unit Outline from which this Course Unit Booklet is derived is the property of the Sydney College of Divinity. The particular interpretation, amplification, and extension of the Course Unit Outline that expresses the theological values of the MI and meets the needs of its stakeholder are the property of the Member Institution.

How Assignments are Graded

The general description of each of the grades in the table below is the overarching statement of the principles that discriminate between each of the grades.

The subsidiary descriptions (*Reading, Knowledge of topic, Articulation of argument, Analytical and evaluative skills, Problem solving, Expression and presentation appropriate to the discipline, Oral presentation skills, Tutorial preparation, Participation and interaction with others*) amplify the general description. The subsidiary descriptions are guides to the general description. Student work at any grade will satisfy some of the subsidiary descriptions without necessarily satisfying all subsidiary descriptions.

	High Distinction (H)	Distinction (D)	Credit (C)	Pass (P)	Fail (N)
Percentage score	85-100%	75-84%	65-74%	50-64%	0-49%
General Description	Outstanding work that comprehensively attains the required outcome(s) showing superior knowledge, understanding, analysis, critical interpretation, presentation, and originality	Excellent work that substantially attains the required outcome(s) showing a high level of knowledge, understanding, analysis, critical interpretation, presentation, and some originality.	Work that soundly attains the required outcome(s) showing a good level of knowledge, understanding, analysis, presentation, and some evidence of critical interpretation.	Work that satisfactorily attains the required outcome(s), with adequate knowledge, understanding, analysis, and presentation.	Work that fails to attain the required outcome(s), lacking in basic knowledge, understanding, analysis, and presentation.
Subsidiary Descriptions					
Reading	Evidence of wide, relevant, and independent reading beyond core texts and materials	Evidence of relevant reading beyond core texts and materials	Evidence of sound understanding of core texts and materials	Evidence of having read core texts and materials	Inadequate evidence of having read any of the core texts and materials
Knowledge of topic	Outstanding factual and conceptual knowledge incorporating highly distinctive insight into deeper and more	Substantial factual and conceptual knowledge incorporating distinctive insight into deeper and more	Extensive factual and conceptual knowledge	Satisfactory factual and conceptual knowledge to serve as a basis for further study	Inadequate factual and conceptual knowledge

	subtle aspects of the topic	subtle aspects of the topic			
Articulation of argument	Sustained evidence of imagination, originality, and independent thought	Evidence of imagination, originality, and independent thought	Ability to construct well-reasoned and coherent argument based on discriminating use of evidence	Ability to construct sound argument based on evidence	Inability to construct coherent argument
Analytical and evaluative skills	Evidence of highly developed analytical and evaluative skills	Evidence of well-developed of analytical and evaluative skills	Evidence of developed analytical and evaluative skills	Evidence of analytical and evaluative skills	Insufficient evidence of analytical and evaluative skills
Problem solving	Ability to solve or resolve non-routine or very challenging problems	Ability to solve or resolve routine or challenging problems	Ability to use and apply fundamental concepts and skills to basic problems	Evidence of problem-solving skills	Insufficient evidence of problem-solving skills <i>(Continued on next page)</i>
Expression and presentation appropriate to the discipline	Highly developed skills in expression, presentation, and documentation appropriate to wider audiences	Well developed skills in expression, presentation, and documentation appropriate to the discipline and audience	Good skills in expression, presentation, and documentation.	Adequate skills in expression, presentation, and documentation.	Inadequate skills in expression, presentation, and documentation.
Oral presentation skills	Highly developed skills in Delivery; Content; Structure; Use of Visual Aids Response to Questions	Well developed skills in Delivery, Content, Structure, Use of Visual Aids, and Response to Questions	Good skills in Delivery, Content, Structure, Use of Visual Aids, and Response to Questions	Adequate skills in Delivery, Content, Structure, Use of Visual Aids, and Response to Questions	Inadequate skills in Delivery, Content, Structure, Use of Visual Aids, and Response to Questions
Tutorial preparation, participation and interaction with others	Evidence of outstanding preparation, highly developed skills in making	Evidence of thorough preparation, well developed skills in making a constructive	Evidence of sound preparation, good skills in actively contribution to	Evidence of adequate preparation, adequate skills in participating and in listening	Insufficient evidence of preparation, participation, and interaction with others

	focused and constructive contributions to discussion, in listening to and responding to the contributions of fellow members of the group.	contribution to discussion, in working well with other members of the group and in valuing their contributions	discussion and in responding positively to the views of others	to others while relying on others to do most of the work.	
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Final Marks for the Unit

The final mark for the unit will be based on the proportional aggregate of the individual assessment marks, with any late penalties taken into account. Once the aggregate is calculated, St Andrew's academic board will review the marks for all students and may apply some scaling to the cohort in order to align them with SCD benchmarked results distributions.