

CODE: THO 2131W	TITLE: General Introduction to the Eastern Churches
CREDITS: 3 cr.	
TERM: Fall 2014	PROFESSOR: Andrew T. Onuferko

DESCRIPTION	The course aims at a general introduction to the four families of Eastern Churches: Eastern Orthodox, Oriental Orthodox, Eastern Catholic and the Assyrian Church of the East. After reviewing the history of the Eastern churches and the critical moments that shaped their development (including schisms, attempts at re-union and the impact of Islam), the course will give particular attention to the history and culture of the Assyrian Church of the East, the Coptic and Armenian Orthodox Churches, the Orthodox Churches of Greece and Russia, the Maronite and Ukrainian Catholic Churches. Subsequently, the course will examine the East's distinctive approaches to liturgy, art, architecture, music, spiritual life, monasticism, social service, hagiography, mission and theology. The course ends with an assessment of the current state of these Churches in North America and their approaches to inter-Christian and inter-religious relations. Field trips to Eastern Christian communities are part of the course requirement.
OBJECTIVES	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To enable students to become familiar with the wide variety of Eastern Christian Churches. 2. To expose students to Eastern Christian liturgy, theology, spirituality and culture in order to be able to begin to evaluate current ecumenical relations between the Churches. 3. To provide a basic understanding of the historical background of these Churches, in order to give the student a broader view of Christianity in general. 4. To prepare students for more advanced courses in the Eastern Christian Studies programs at Saint Paul University
WORKLOAD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approximately 50 pages of readings per week, supplemented by class notes • 1-2 page weekly reflection on readings and/or online discussion to specific questions • Mid-term written exam • Research Paper (12-15 pages) on a particular Eastern Christian community • Final written exam
EVALUATION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Discussion 10% • Weekly reflections 15% • Mid-term exam 25% • Research paper 25% • Final written exam 25%
REQUIRED TEXTS	<p>Ware, Timothy, <i>The Orthodox Church</i> (revised edition), London: Penguin, 1993.</p> <p>Roberson, Ronald, <i>The Eastern Christian Churches: A Brief Survey</i> (revised 7th edition), Rome: Edizioni Orientalia Christiana, 2008. [Available on-line at the CNEWA website (Catholic Near East Welfare Assn., www.cnewa.org)]</p>
RECOMMENDED TEXTS	Additional reading material and extensive source material will be made available online on the course website.