Note: This syllabus is the “mini-syllabus” and is not to be confused with the “mega-syllabus” that contains all the class-lecture notes, biblio, various articles, etc. The mega-syllabus will be posted on “Canvas” and is needed for all the class lectures. For the first day of class, the student should be prepared with either a hard-copy of the mega-syllabus or have it downloaded to his laptop.

Note: No prerequisites for this course.

Required Texts:

Trinity Psalter.
R. L. Pratt. He Gave Us Stories.
M. Silva, ed. Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation.
S. Greidanus. Preaching Christ from the OT.
S. R. Swain. Trinity, Revelation, and Reading: A Theological Introduction to the Bible and its Interpretation.
R. J. Cara, “Psalms Applied to both Christ and Christians: Psalms 8, 22, 34, 118, and Romans 15:3 // Psalm 69:9.” Pages 97–111 in Redeeming the Life of the Mind: Essays in Honor of Vern Poythress. Edited by Frame, Grudem, and Hughes. Wheaton; Crossway, 2017. (Pdf of this article is included in Cara’s mega-syllabus.)

Professors

* Professors Dr. Cara and Dr. Belcher (technically, Dr. Robert J. Cara, Ph.D. and Richard P. Belcher, Jr., Ph.D.).

Class participation

* For both Cara and Belcher, bring and sing Psalter.

* Attend class and participate (intelligently!) when called on. Lose points for not being in class and/or not participating.
Course Objectives

* The overarching purpose is for the student to interact with a variety macro-hermeneutical issues, including Reformed models, to enable the student to better interpret/apply the Bible.

* Course objectives as coordinated with MDiv Student Learning Outcomes are shown at the end of this document.

Structure of the Course

* Cara, first 6 weeks.

  * Three units: (1) Post-modernism vs modernism w/in a Van Till framework. (2) Macro-hermeneutics per se. (3) Review of Cara’s hermeneutical proverbs.

* Belcher, second 6 weeks.

  * Three units: (1) History of interpretation of the Bible: Philo through modern day. (2) NT use of OT, including NT writers’ hermeneutical context. (3) Preaching X from the OT: Typology and Greidanus.

* Cara, Belcher, and Kruger 13th week, Covenant Structure of Bible

Course Requirements and Grades

* Final Test

  * Test will be ≈ 85–90% verbatim of Lecture Review Questions. The remainder will be miscellaneous questions from the class lectures and readings.
  * For answers to Lecture Review Questions, you may/should enquire of fellow students in this class.
  * 40% of grade.

* Pratt’s He Gave Us Stories, pages 1-128, 306-402 and Swain’s Trinity, Revelation, and Reading.

  * Submit a fake (i.e., no or few footnotes) 7–10 page paper that includes:
    * A statement that student read 100% of Pratt and Swain reading requirement.
    * Self-consciously evaluate one or more aspects of the student’s interaction w/in his covenant community (both heritage and present) that has (or will have) influenced the student’s macro method of biblical interpretation (e.g., BT/R-H/ST, preaching theory) or a specific theological topic (e.g., elder roles, Trinity, inerrancy). This influence can be either positive, negative, or both.
    * The paper should show knowledge of your covenantal community and at least some categories from Cara’s lectures and Pratt/Swain books.
* Although no research is required, this paper should have a sophisticated understanding of macro-hermeneutics and indicate that the student can “theologize” about himself relative to his theological community.

* Paper due on last day of Cara’s lectures (≈ half-way through semester). Give to Cara. 32 f/s/s.
* 25% of grade.

* Silva, M., ed. *Foundations of Contemporary Interpretation*.

* Read anyone of the books in this book, excepting *God, Language and Scripture*.
* Submit a (fake) 7–10 page paper that includes:
  * A statement that student read 100% of book w/in the book.
  * Summarize book (1/3 of paper).
  * Critique one small or large section in the book (2/3 of paper). The critique should show knowledge of Cara/Belcher lectures and the ability of the student to theologize about hermeneutics.
* Paper due on last day of Belcher’s lectures. Give to Belcher. 32f/s/s.
* 25% of grade.

* Read all of Greidanus’ *Preaching X from the OT*, all of Beale’s *Handbook on the NT Use of the OT*, Belcher, *Fulfillment of the Promises of God*, pp. 139–270, and the two Cara articles.

  * On final test will be the question, “Did you read 100% of the assigned reading from Greidanus, Beale, Belcher, and Cara?”
  * 10% of grade.

* Bring and sing *Trinity Psalter*.

  * No grade associated with this unless one does not do it!
Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes. *As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</td>
<td>Strong • Moderate • Minimal • None</td>
<td>1. Submits one self-reflective paper and one critical book review. 2. Significant overview of the history of hermeneutics, both in the church and in philosophy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1. Scripture’s interpretation of Scripture is included. 2. Scripture’s understanding of “meaning” is included. 3. Some original language included in OT-in-NT texts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Scripture</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1. Overview of Reformed view of General and Special Revelation. 2. Reformed hermeneutics. 3. History of Reformed denominations. 4. Swain and Belcher books and Cara articles include historical Reformed views.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>1. Psalm singing in class. 2. Self-reflective paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Worldview</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>1. Is Bible the ultimate authority for hermeneutics? 2. Student’s background affects hermeneutics. 3. Van Til discussions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Winsomely Reformed</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>1. The ethos of RTS is explicitly presented and evaluated as to effect on hermeneutics.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pastoral Ministry</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>1. Preaching is related to hermeneutics. 2. Creeds are related to shepherding.</td>
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