

REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
HT6300 PURITAN THEOLOGY **JANUARY 2024**

Interest in the theology of the English Puritans, until the middle of the twentieth century, was largely confined either to academic specialists (often in the disciplines of History and English Literature rather than theology) or to a small number of people usually in smaller reformed denominations. Apart from John Bunyan's (largely unread) *Pilgrim's Progress* evangelical Christians in general would have found difficulty in naming any Puritan theologian or work. By contrast, since the 1950s there has been a remarkable resurgence of interest in the social history of England in the 17th century, and in the marginal radical movements of the period, but also within the evangelical tradition a resurgence of interest in the major orthodox Puritans. Scholarship in the area has become a minor industry.

The theology of the Puritans is rightly described as 'practical divinity'. Set within the context of revolutionary times in both church and society the literature they produced has had striking resonance in many parts of the contemporary world. As a consequence study of Puritan thought within a *seminary* context is of more than antiquarian or even historical or sociological interest. Our focus in this class will first set the Puritan movement within its historical context and thereafter reflect on a selection of theological and pastoral themes in Puritan preaching and writing ranging from their doctrine of Scripture to their understanding of ministry and preaching.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

LECTURES

The class meets January 15-19 2024, from 9.00am – 4.00pm.

Some adjustments may be made to this schedule as the course proceeds.

READING

Required Reading The following should be read *prior* to the end of the lectures:

Richard Baxter: *The Reformed Pastor*

Samuel Bolton: *The True Bounds of Christian Freedom*

(A Vindication of the Rights of the Law & the Liberties of Grace)

William Bridges: *A Lifting Up for the Downcast*

John Owen: *The Mortification of Sin*

General Introductory Reading:

The following more general standard studies, written from various perspectives, will be found informative: Apart from the more recent work by David Hall these books focus on English Puritanism.

Patrick Collinson: *The Elizabethan Puritan Movement*

David Hall:	<i>The Puritans</i>
William Haller:	<i>The Rise of Puritanism</i> <i>Liberty and Reformation in the Puritan Revolution</i>
M Knappen:	<i>Tudor Puritanism</i>
J. I. Packer:	<i>Among God's Giants/ A Quest for Godliness</i>
Leland Ryken:	<i>Worldly Saints</i>

An extensive bibliography is available online at:

<https://www.yumpu.com/en/document/read/3869827/bibliography-of-puritan-resource-center-holdings-primary-sources->

WRITTEN REQUIREMENTS:

There are two (2) written requirements:

1: Required Reading

Reflection Papers: Four (4) approximately 500 word reflection papers are required, one on each of the required readings.

The reflection papers should include:

- (i) A brief summation of the book's author, context, theme, and contents.
- (ii) Reflections on its chief emphases;
- (iii) Brief conclusions on its ongoing value (or otherwise) for the church today.

Reading Reports should be submitted (as a single file please) by midnight (EST) on 29 February 2024 to: 1662Goodwin@gmail.com

2: Exam:

An exam will be held *at the end of the class meetings*.

This will be based on

- (i) Material from the lectures
- (ii) The Required Reading.

The exam will take the form of three (3) essay-type questions.

Two questions will be related directly to the class material

One question will be related to the Required Readings

The exam should be submitted to: *Goodwin1662@gmail.com*

Grade: The exam will constitute 36%, each Reflection Paper 16% of the final grade.

Grade point averages on RTS transcripts will be determined on the basis of work done only at Reformed Theological Seminary.

A (97-100)	4.00
A- (94-96)	3.66
B+ (91-93)	3.33
B (88-90)	3.00
B- (86-87)	2.66
C+ (83-85)	2.33
C (80-82)	2.00
C- (78-79)	1.66
D+ (75-77)	1.33
D (72-74)	1.00
D- (70-71)	0.66
F (below 70)	0.00
I (incomplete)	–
W (withdraw)	–
S (satisfactory)	–
P (passing)	–

The grade “I” indicates that the work required for the course was not completed. It is given only when special, extenuating circumstances (such as illness) prevent the student from completing the work or taking the examination. A written request for an extension must be submitted prior to the due date of the work concerned. If the request is granted, it remains the responsibility of the student to complete all work for the course as soon as possible. In any case, an “I” grade must be removed within the extension time granted; otherwise it will be changed to “F.”

The grade “W” indicates that a student has withdrawn from a course after the drop deadline. This grade is granted by the academic dean only in extenuating circumstances.

The grade “P” is only used as a Pass/Fail option and is limited to the Field Education course.

A grade of C or better is required to continue in the sequence of language courses (does not apply to RTS Charlotte).

If a course is retaken, the original grade remains on the transcript and is included in the GPA.

For all RTS courses that have exceeded standard degree time limits and are now ineligible to be applied to a degree, these courses will be shown on a separate transcript and will not be applied to the student’s GPA.

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: 02HT6300 Puritan Theology

Professor: Ferguson

Campus: Orlando

Date: 15-19 January 2024

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u> <i>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.</i> <i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i>		<u>Rubric</u> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Moderate	Course is historical-theological, but most material engages with biblical theology
Scripture	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Moderate	Required as framework for critical assessment of the historical material
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	Course examines the theology developed within the period of the Standards
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	Sanctification a major goal of the material covered
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Strong	The period covered has a major focus on issues of worldview
Winsomely Reformed	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Strong	Course deals with authors marginalized from the national church but concerned for it and the church on continental Europe
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Moderate to Strong	While not a course on preaching, a considerable proportion of the work of the authors studied emerged from their preaching
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Moderate	Course covers aspects of worship and the theology that drives it
Shepherd	Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.	Strong	The theology explored was predominantly focused on the life of the believer set within the context of the local and national church
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Moderate	The course covers a period when how this was to be done was a matter of significance