

REFORMED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

GLOBAL



Theology of Westminster Standards Dr. J. Ligon Duncan III

Course Overview

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Course Description:

00ST6370 Theology of Westminster Standards, 2 hours Lecturing Professor: Dr. J. Ligon Duncan III Professor of Record: Dr. Josh Malone

A historical and theological survey of the Westminster Assembly and its work. The major documents produced by the Assembly will be studied in detail. Attention will also be given to the historical, political, and theological context of the Assembly. Such issues as the Westminster doctrine of Scripture, the Confession's relation to the theology of Calvin, and the debate over Church Government will be discussed.

Course Objectives:

- To introduce the student to all the major documents of the Assembly and assist the student in gaining a working understanding of the theology of the Westminster Symbols.
- To familiarize the student with the historical, political and theological background of the Assembly, and with major issues in current debate concerning the Westminster Theology
- The student will also be introduced to the basic secondary literature concerning the Westminster Assembly and its work.

Required Textbooks:

Westminster Confession & Catechisms (PCA or OPC editions)

Dixhoorn, Chad Van. Confessing the Faith: A Reader's Guide to the Westminster Confession. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2014.

Dixhoorn, Emily Van. Confessing the Faith: Study Guide. Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth, 2017. [These books may also be available in ebook format through various retailers]

Syllabus Articles: (available for download within the Learning Management System (Canvas)) Ligon Duncan, "Owning the Confession: Subscription in the Scottish Presbyterian Tradition".

- MacLeod, Donald. 1972. "The Westminster Confession Today." The Banner of Truth, February 1972.
- MacLeod, Donald. "Five Misunderstandings About Calvinism." Banner of Truth. May 14, 2019.
- Murray, John. 1982. "Calvin, Dordt and Westminster on Predestination." *In Collected Writtings*. Vol. 4. Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth.
- Murray, John. 1982. "The Theology of the Westminster Confession of Faith." *In Collected Writings*. Vol. 4. Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth.
- Murray, John. 1976. "The Importance and Relevance of the Westminster Confession" *In Collected Writings*. Vol. 1. Carlisle, PA: The Banner of Truth.

Online Student Handbook:

The Online Student Handbook (can be downloaded here) has been designed to assist you in successfully navigating the Distance Education experience, whether you are taking a single course or pursuing a certificate or degree program. In it you will find valuable information, step-by-step instructions, study helps, and essential forms to guide you through every aspect of your distance education opportunity from registration to graduation. Please use this resource as your first-stop reference manual.

Summary of Requirements:

- 1. Listen to all recorded Lectures
- 2. Complete all Readings
- 3. Participate in Forum Discussions (with other students and the professor)
- 4. Take Midterm
- 5. Submit Course Paper
- 6. Take Final Exam
- 7. Submit a Reading Report
- 8. Submit Mentor Report/Course Application Paper
- 9. Submit Course Complete Form

Meet the Professor



Lecturing Professor:

Dr. J. Ligon Duncan III is the Chancellor & CEO of Reformed Theological Seminary and the John E. Richards Professor of Systematic and Historical Theology. He is also currently serving as President of RTS Jackson. He served as Senior Minister of the historic First Presbyterian Church (1837) in Jackson, Miss. for 17 years (1996-2013). He is co-founder of Together for the Gospel, Senior Fellow of the Council on Biblical Manhood and Womanhood (having served as both Chairman of the Board and President), and was President of the Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals from 2004-2012. Duncan served as the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (2004-2005). He studied at Furman University,

Greenville, SC (BA); Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis (MDiv, MA, cum laude); and the University of Edinburgh, Scotland (Ph.D.). Duncan has edited, written, and contributed to numerous books. Ligon and his wife Anne reside in Jackson, Miss. They have two adult children.



Professor of Record:

Dr. Josh Malone joined the faculty of RTS Jackson as Associate Professor of Systematic Theology in 2023. He previously served as Associate Professor of Theological Studies at Palm Beach Atlantic University in West Palm Beach, Florida, where he taught graduate and undergraduate courses and chaired the theology department. Prior to his time at PBA, he taught at Moody Bible Institute in Spokane, Washington.

Dr. Malone's publications include a number of essays and chapters on the topics of Trinity and Christology. His doctoral research, which he is revising for publication as a book, focused on the doctrine of

eternal generation. He is working on an additional manuscript relating Christology and anthropology. Dr. Malone is ordained as a teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church in America and has served as a college and young adults' pastor. He and his wife Emily have three children.

Grades

Forum Discussion (15%):

The student is required to interact in two (2) forums:

- 1. Student-Professor Posts (15 total posts)
 - A. Personal Introduction Forum: The student is required to post a brief personal introduction to the professor/class. Suggested details include your vocation, where you live, your church background, why you chose RTS, and what you hope to gain through the course (1 required post).
 - B. 5 Topical Discussion Q&A Forums: The student is required to answer each topical discussion question with one (1) response. The professor will acknowledge the student's answer and will follow up with a subsequent question to which the student must also answer with one (1) response. Each topical discussion question, therefore, requires two (2) total posts/responses from the student (Total of 5 forums x 2 posts =10 total posts).
 - C. Student-Professor Forum: The student is required to post four (4) times in this forum. Posts in this forum should focus on course-related content such as research paper topics, lectures and reading assignments, or other academic issues related to the course.
- 2. Student-Student Forum (5 total posts)
 - · A post may be either a new topic or a response to an already existing topic.

Examinations (Midterm 20%, Final 20%):

There are two exams for this course. Each will cover approximately half of the course. The exam for this course is to be taken online in the Learning Management System (LMS). After clicking on the exam link you, will be given detailed instructions about the exam. Please read these instructions carefully before entering the exam. Please note that you are required to have a proctor for all exams. Please see the proctor policy in the Global Student Handbook.

The midterm will cover material from lesson 1-6. The questions will primarily come from the course lectures, with some questions also being drawn from Confessing The Faith: Study Guide.

The final exam will cover material from lesson 7-13. As with the midterm, the questions will primarily come from lecture material, with some based on Confessing The Faith: Study Guide.

Exposition/Paper (30%):

The student will prepare a short term paper (8-10 pages) expounding one chapter in the Standards. Students should pick a term paper topic, to be approved by the professor, from one of the 171 topics listed in the Topical Outline of the Confession that has been uploaded into Canvas. The student will use Scripture, the Confession and resources.

Reading Report (10%):

The student should complete the required reading according to the schedule given in the course. The reading corresponds to the lecture material, and therefore learning will be aided by reading according to the given schedule. At the end of the course the student will be required to give a percentage of the reading they completed.

Mentor Report **OR** Course Application Paper (5%):

If you are enrolled in an **RTS Global** degree or certificate program submit a mentor report. Every portion of the form (goals, summaries, assessments, and signatures) should be filled out completely by both the student and the mentor to receive full credit. You can download the Mentor Report form in your Canvas classroom. See specific instructions for this assignment in Canvas.

If you are receiving your degree through another **RTS campus** (Orlando, Jackson, Charlotte, et. al.), or special student (e.g. from another seminary), submit a 250-word summary of how you perceive what you have learned in this course will fit into the objectives you have for your ministry, your educational goals, or other objectives you wish to achieve in life. Course Application Papers (CAP) that fall well-short of 250 words will receive a grade deduction. See specific instructions for this assignment in Canvas.

Assignments:

Best practice for your time management is for you to submit all assignments at the end of the week in which they fall, using the upload links provided in the LMS. All work must be submitted by midnight of the course end date, per your course start letter. You are responsible for turning in all assignments on time; no late submissions are permitted. Any student who needs an extension must get approval from the Registrar prior to that time.

Contact Information:

Reformed Theological Seminary, Global Education

2101 Carmel Road

Charlotte, NC 28226

Campus: (704) 366-4853 Toll Free: (800) 227-2013

E-mail: dess@rts.edu

Web site: rts.edu/campuses/online

Lessons

Lesson One

Course Introduction

The Historical Context of the WCF

A Case of Confessionalism

C1

Lesson Two

Chapter 1: Holy Scripture

Chapter 2: God the Trinity

Lesson Three

Chapter 3: God's Eternal Decree

Chapter 5: Providence

Lesson Four

Chapter 4: Creation

Chapter 6: The Fall of Man

Chapter 9: Free Will

Lesson Five

Chapter 7: God's Covenant with Man

Lesson Six

Chapter 8: Christ the Mediator

Lesson Seven

Chapter 10: effectual Calling

Chapter 11: Justification

Chapter 12: Adoption

Chapter 13: Sanctification

Lesson Eight

Chapter 14: Saving Faith

Chapter 15: Repentance unto Life

Chapter 16 Good Works

Chapter 17: Perseverance

Chapter 18: Assurance

Lesson Nine

Chapter 19: The Law of God

Chapter 20: Christian Liberty

Chapter 21: Religious Worship and

Sabbath-Day

Chapter 22: Lawful Oaths and Vows

Lesson Ten

Chapter 23: Civil Magistrate

Chapter 24: Marriage and Divorce

Lesson Eleven

Chapter 25: The Church

Chapter 26: The Communion of the

Saints

Chapter 27: The Sacraments

Chapter 28: Baptism

Chapter 29: The Lord's Supper

Lesson Twelve

Chapter 30: Church Censures

Chapter 31: Synods and Councils

Chapter 32: The State of Men After

Death and the Resurrection of

the Dead

Chapter 33: The Last Judgment

Lesson Thirteen

Catechism Introduction

Directory of Public Worship

Course Conclusion

Course Objectives Related to Student Learning Outcomes

Course: ST6370 Theology of Westminster Standards

Professor: Dr. J. Ligon Duncan III

Student Learning Outcomes			Rubric <u>Mini-Justification</u>		
In order to measure the success of the curriculum, RTS has defined the following			>	Strong	
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			> >	Moderate Minimal	
outcomes.				None	
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.	Strong		Students will study the major documents of the Westminster Assembly to understand their contents and to be able to articulate and explain them faithfully and persuasively by preparing answers to study guide questions, a comprehensive exam, and a term paper on the Westminster Standards using Scripture, the Confession and Catechisms, and Reformed resources.	
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.)	Strong		Students will explore how Scripture informs and shapes the doctrines contained within the Westminster Standards.	
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong		Students will become familiar with the Reformed theology of the Westminster Standards by reading and reflecting upon the Westminster Confession and Catechisms in their entirety.	
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate		to attain a wholes	ly the Westminster standards come and comprehensive ruth in order to glorify God ness.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God. Includes ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues	Strong		background of the and reflect upon of ecclesiastical and to gain a knowled	n about the history and Westminster Assembly contemporary issues of both I cultural relevance as well as Ige and appreciation of the minster to guard against the four own age.
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 Godhonoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Strong		affectionate expo- the Westminster S	aught to provide an sition of the doctrines of Standards and address es in a winsomely Reformed
Pastoral ministry	Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both churched and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading, and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Christians.	Strong		Standards, this co students engage both theologically	om the Westminster purse is designed to assist in pastoral ministry that is informed and pastorally and private settings.