

# Intro to Pastoral & Theological Studies

04ST5100/1 | Dr. Brian H. Cosby  
Reformed Theological Seminary, Atlanta  
Spring 2026

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

An introduction to biblical, theological, and practical ministry studies within the Reformed tradition.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Understand the connections between theological study and Christian spiritual growth;
- Discern their vocational identity and the way(s) in which theological study will inform its pursuit and practice;
- Read, research, and write in a manner appropriate to graduate theological education;
- Gain familiarity with the broad patterns of Reformed theology regarding its commitments and distinctives;
- Learn biblical models of pastoral ministry and analyze their potential to inform and revitalize churches today.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

1. *The Holy Bible* (any version, but we will be using the ESV primarily)
2. *Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms* (any modern version with post-1788 American revisions)
3. Sinclair Ferguson, *Some Pastors and Teachers: Reflecting a Biblical Vision of What Every Minister is Called to Be* (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth, 2017).
4. R. Michael Allen, *Reformed Theology* (London: T&T Clark, 2010).
5. Kelly Kopic, *A Little Book for New Theologians: Why and How to Study Theology* (Downers Grove: IVP Academic, 2012).

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. **Attendance, Participation, & Reading (20%)**
  - a. Because this is a modified-intensive course with very few actual class days, your attendance, participation, and reading are very important.
  - b. Don't miss class, do the required course material, and come prepared to participate.
2. **Book Review (20%)**
  - a. Write a review of Michael Allen's *Reformed Theology* (see required reading above).

- b. The review should be between 800 and 1,000 words, Turabian or Chicago footnote style, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt. font.
- c. It should be well written and should include (1) information about the author, (2) the purpose of the book, (3) the audience, (4) an overview of the content, and (5) your evaluation.

**3. Philosophy of Pastoral Ministry Paper & Presentation (30%)**

- a. Paper should be between 8–10 pages—Turabian or Chicago footnote style, double-spaced, Times New Roman, 12 pt. font—making a case for a particular philosophy of pastoral ministry. The paper should be well written, well organized, and easy to follow.
- b. Interact primarily with Sinclair Ferguson’s *Some Pastors and Teachers* (see required reading above). You are also encouraged to reference other primary or secondary sources.
- c. Provide biblical and theological support for your philosophy of pastoral ministry.
- d. You will then present your philosophy of pastoral ministry to the class. Use of handouts and/or PowerPoint is encouraged.

**4. Final Exam (30%)**

- a. A final exam will be given based on class discussions, handouts, and the reading.
- b. This exam will be given on the final day of class.

**COURSE EVALUATION & GRADING**

Grading will be based on following the guidelines outlined above in the course requirements:

1. Attendance, Participation, Reading	20%
2. Book Review	20%
3. Philosophy of Pastoral Ministry	30%
4. Final Exam	<u>30%</u>
	100%

**SCHEDULE OF ASSIGNMENTS**

*Classes will meet on Fridays (from 6:00pm–9:00pm) and Saturdays (from 8:30am–4:30pm)*

**Due on February 6–7**

- Read *A Little Book for New Theologians* by Kelly Kopic

**Due on February 20–21**

- Book review of *Reformed Theology* by Michael Allen

**Due on March 13–14**

- Philosophy of Pastoral Ministry Paper & Presentation

## **Due on April 17–18**

- Final Exam

## **CONTACT**

You may contact Brian Cosby at either [brian@waysidechurch.org](mailto:brian@waysidechurch.org) or 423-599-9643.

## **Zoom Policy**

Your professor may allow you to Zoom into class or watch Zoom recordings for excused absences based on the professor's discretion and subject to the availability of equipment. Students should contact their professor well in advance of the class meeting. For a third absence the Registrar should be consulted. Your professor may require additional interactive assignments to offset the absence of classroom interaction. Sync or Remote Live courses have priority for the limited Zoom equipment.

## **Extension Policy**

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class.

Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed.

Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an Extension Request Form from the Registrar's Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 46 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 18)

Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 49)

## **Course Objectives Related to MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes**

<b><u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u></b> <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. *As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i>		<b><u>Rubric</u></b> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None	<b><u>Mini-Justification</u></b>
<b>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</b>	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Moderate	As an introductory course, IPTS will help equip students to use both written and oral communication and evaluate both.
<b>Scripture</b>	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	This course will rely heavily on the Scriptures, especially in the development of a philosophy of pastoral ministry.
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	As a primary theological background to the course, students will utilize and analyze pastoral theology from a Reformed perspective.
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	This course will help the students develop both theologically and spiritually.
<b>Desire for Worldview</b>	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Minimal	This course is specifically targeted at equipping students to develop an overview of pastoral and theological studies, not necessarily an entire worldview.
<b>Winsomely Reformed</b>	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	Moderate	Part of the development of a philosophy of pastoral ministry includes the winsome articulation of Reformed theology.

	non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)		
<b>Pastoral Ministry</b>	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-Xns.	Strong	The development of the student's pastoral ministry (through biblical & theology study) is one of the primary goals of this course.