

Reformed Theological Seminary- Washington, D.C.
Communications II - 06PT5150
Syllabus

GENERAL INFORMATION

Dates: February 04 to May 06, 2026

Time: Wednesdays 10:00am-12:00pm

Credit Hours: 2

Instructor: Rev. Joel St. Clair

Contact Info: joel@mosaicssilverspring.org

Office Hours: Available on-campus Wednesdays from 12:00pm-1:00pm and by appointment.

Academic Catalog Information

Course Description: A continuation of Communication I. This course continues to develop the skills required for interpreting and communicating the Bible. Special emphasis is given to sermon composition, including its constituent parts, as well as to the different ecclesial contexts of sermon delivery (e.g., weddings, funerals).

Prerequisite: PT5125 (Communications I) is a prerequisite to PT5150 (Communications II). It introduces the theological framework and basic skills required for interpreting and communicating the Bible within the context of the church's ministry (both formal and informal).

COURSE OVERVIEW

Goals:

This course intends to facilitate the achievement of the following goals:

- Greater competency in creating Christ-centered sermons and homilies that are faithful to the biblical text and sensitive to the redemptive-historical contours of scripture.
- Greater competency in creating doctrinally rich sermons and homilies that are both clear and compelling for listeners from various ethnic, racial, cultural, and spiritual backgrounds.
- Sharpening the Christ-centered instincts of the student as it pertains to biblical interpretation, gospel proclamation, and congregational formation.
- Encouraging greater freedom and confidence in proclaiming the excellencies of Christ; specifically, through the student's own personality, gifts, and experience of union with Christ.
- To foster pastoral reflection and awareness that goes beyond the individual sermon, giving thought to the sermon series and a broader preaching ministry as well.

Class Format:

The majority of class hours will be spent in lecture and in guided discussion based upon assigned reading. Each student will be expected to come to class prepared to critically engage the material and contribute to the guided discussions. As with most things in life, the more effort you put into your preparation, the more benefit you will take away. We will seek to foster an encouraging, truthful, and gracious environment in our class discussions, keeping in mind that our every meeting is yet another occasion to obey the great commandment: "*You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.*" - Luke 10:27

Assignments

1. Completion of a Sermon Series Plan (30%)

Outline a sermon series that traces the grand, narrative arc of Scripture. You should plan to accomplish this assignment with no fewer than 6 sermons and no more than 12 sermons. Put your theological rigor and creativity to pastoral use!

- Provide a series outline document. This should include the title and an introductory briefing (a paragraph) on the entire series, aiming to communicate the need for, and expected results of this series.
- Provide details on the resources you plan to consult for your research and preparation.
- Provide specific texts, titles, and skeletal outlines for each sermon within the series. Provide a manuscript of the introduction and conclusion for each sermon within the series (no more than 1 page for each sermon).
- For context, use the church that you currently attend and surrounding neighborhoods as your target audience.

2. Essay on Homiletical Approach (30%)

Write an essay (3000 words max) to “your congregation” detailing:

- a) The importance of preaching
- b) Your Homiletical approach, and
- c) How your congregants should prepare their hearts for preaching

3. Reading checklist indicating the total percentage of reading accomplished (20%)

Books:

- Octavius Winslow, *The Precious Things of God* (156 pages)
- Timothy Keller, *Preaching* (309 pages)
- Sidney Greidanus, *The Modern Preacher and the Ancient Text* (374 pages)
- Joshua D. Chatraw, *Telling A Better Story* (225 pages)
- Eugene Lowry, *The Homiletical Plot* (138 pages)

Articles:

- Sinclair Ferguson, *Preaching Christ From the Old Testament* (18 Pages, PDF)
- Jonathan Edwards, *The True Excellency of a Gospel Minister* (15 Pages, PDF)
- **Total Pages: 1235**

Recommended:

- Bryan Chapell (ed), *The Hardest Sermons You'll Ever Preach*

4. Classroom Engagement (20%)

You are expected to attend every class and engage in discussion that connects reading and lecture material. If you know you cannot make it to a class session, you are responsible to notify the instructor.

RTS Grading Scale: The seminary uses the following grading system:

A (97-100) 4.00 quality points
 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) 0.00
 W, WP (withdraw, 0.00 withdraw passing)
 S (satisfactory) 0.00

Late Assignments: Late assignments will be dropped one grade on the above scale for each week they are late. For example, an assignment that is four weeks late will be dropped from an A to a B-. Late and Missing assignments are the primary reason for low course grades. 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 by the extended deadline. In any case, an “I” grade must be removed within the extension time granted; otherwise, it will be changed to “F.”

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: 06PT5150
 Professor: Rev. Joel St. Clair
 Campus: Washington, DC
 Date: Spring 2026

<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. *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.	Strong	Students will write an essay on homiletics, craft a sermon series, and learn to write homilies effectively.

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 have to demonstrate the ability to communicate the overarching story of God through a sermon series. This will require sufficient command of Scripture.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Students will develop their ability to communicate the reformed faith in the context of preaching.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	Emphasis will be given to the importance of personal piety as it pertains to preaching.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	Students will sharpen their ability to understand congregational challenges and apply the Word of God
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.)	Moderate	Lecture time will be given to cross-cultural considerations in preaching.
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	This is the primary subject matter of the course.
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Minimal	Preaching is an important aspect of worship, however, focus will be narrowed to proclamation.
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.	Moderate	Since preaching is a significant aspect of shepherding, attention will be given to the relationship between preaching and pastoring. There will also be instruction regarding how students may improve their shepherding impact through proclamation.
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Moderate	The content of this class will be accessible and applicable across denominational contexts. This class will also foster a gracious dialogical spirit.