

PASTORAL MINISTRY IN THE REFORMATION AGE

PT 6252; RTS Charlotte; July 2026
Professor Scott M. Manetsch

Course Description

This two-credit course will examine the theology and ministry practice of pastoral leaders in Protestant churches during the era of the Reformation. Students will be exposed to important 16th and 17th century sources related to pastoral life and ministry as well as to the growing body of scholarly literature related to the clerical office in early modern Europe. In particular, two trajectories of contemporary research will be explored: (1) Local and regional studies of Protestant clergy and clerical institutions; (2) Specialized studies of activities related to the pastor's vocation, including clerical education, preaching, public worship, catechetical instruction and moral discipline. Throughout the course, John Calvin's model of ministry in Geneva will be given special attention.

Learning Objectives

There are four major objectives for this course: (1) Students will gain a broad understanding of contemporary scholarship on the clerical office during the sixteenth-century Reformation. (2) Students will mature in their ability to analyze and interpret theological and historical texts. (3) Students will gain significant insight into the nature, challenges, and responsibilities of pastoral leadership in the history of the Christian church. (4) Students will be encouraged and challenged to consider ways in which this broad historical perspective of the pastoral office might inform and enrich their ministries at the present.

Method of Instruction

This course will meet on five successive days, from Monday, July 6 to Friday July 10, at the following times: Monday (1:00 – 4:30 p.m.); Tuesday – Thursday (9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.); Friday (9:00 a.m. – noon). Each session will include lecture, text analysis, and class discussion. Attendance and active participation in each class session is required. Students should bring their copy of Scott Hendrix's *Early Protestant Spirituality* with them to each class session.

Contacting the Professor

Professor Manetsch will be available to meet with students for 30 minutes after class each day, and at other times by special arrangement. The professor can be contacted by email at smanetsc@tiu.edu, or by cell phone at 224-637-0524.

Extension Policy for Assignments

In extenuating circumstances, a deadline extension of up to one week may be granted at the discretion of the professor. Requests for extensions of more than one week must be submitted to the Registrar for consideration by the Academic Dean in consultation with the professor. Extensions are granted only for significant emergencies or unforeseen circumstances, and a grade penalty may be applied. *All extension requests must be made prior to the assignment deadline.* No retrospective extensions will be granted.

RTS Charlotte Classroom Technology Usage

RTS Charlotte recognizes how essential it is for students to have reliable, campus-wide access to the internet. For that reason, we have made Wi-Fi available for our student body, not only in the library and student lounges, but also in the classrooms. We know that students need to use the internet to download class materials, access files on the Cloud, and locate other important information. However, we also recognize that internet access in the classroom provides opportunity for abuse and misuse. Some students have unfortunately used their internet access to engage in many activities that distract them from the classroom lectures (e.g., surfing the web, checking sports scores, playing games). Not only does such activity hamper a student's own seminary education, but it distracts other students who can easily view the screens of nearby students. In addition, donors and classroom guests (who often sit in the back) can see this inappropriate internet usage, which reflects poorly on RTS. Classroom etiquette includes leaving cell phones turned off, refraining from surfing the Internet or playing computer games or other distracting activities. In addition, students must respect standards set by individual professors regarding the use of technology during their class.

In order to address this issue, we must appeal to the integrity of the students as ones who are preparing for a lifetime of ministry to Christ and his church. We expect each student to take personal responsibility for proper classroom technology usage and to encourage others around them to do the same. All RTS-Charlotte students are accountable to the policies stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Catalog and are therefore expected to use technology in the classroom only for appropriate class-related activities. Student conduct is under the supervision of the Dean of Students.

Required Course Texts

Students are asked to purchase or possess the following five texts:

- * Martin Bucer, *Concerning the True Care of Souls*, reprint edition (Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Press, 2009) ISBN: 978-051519845
- * John Dillenberger, editor, *Martin Luther, Selections from his Writings* (New York: Anchor Books, 1962). ISBN: 0-385098766. **Please read pages 3-41; 42-85, 207-239, 249-359, 403-431.**
- * Scott Hendrix, ed., *Early Protestant Spirituality*. Classics of Western Spirituality (New York: Paulist Press, 2009). ISBN: 978-0809142118. **Please read: Volume introduction and selections #1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 22, 28, 29, 33, 35, 38, 42, 44, 46.**
- * Scott M. Manetsch, *Calvin's Company of Pastors, Pastoral Care and the Emerging Reformed Church, 1536-1609* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). ISBN: 978-0199938575
- * Carl Trueman, *Luther on the Christian Life* (Wheaton, Il.: Crossway, 2015). ISBN: 978-1433525049

Course Requirements and Grading

Student grades for this course will be determined by the following four criteria:

(1) Critical Reviews of Trueman (20%) and Manetsch (20%). The Trueman review is due on the last day of class, **July 17th** at noon. The Manetsch review is due a week later, on **July 24th** at noon. These reviews must be no longer than four pages (double spaced, one-inch margins, 12 cpi font), and should provide both a concise summary as well as a penetrating critical assessment of the book. Detailed instructions for this review are provided at the end of this syllabus.

(2) Ministry Application Paper (40%). Students are required to write an 8-page (2,500 word maximum; double spaced; 1 inch margins; 12 point font) paper exploring in detail **one** of the following aspects of ministry in the Reformation: preaching; church discipline; worship and liturgy; catechesis; pastoral care; celebration of the sacraments. The first six pages of this paper must provide a clear articulation of the Protestant reformers' theological understanding of your chosen ministry activity as well as the ways this ministry was practiced in Reformation Europe. For this section, students are required to reflect carefully on resources presented in class—they are not expected to do additional research outside of class material. The final 2 pages of the paper should be a well-considered reflection on ways that the reformers' treatment of this ministry area might inform and enhance congregational ministry in *your* present church context. This Ministry Application Paper is due no later than 5 p.m. on **August 7, 2026**, and should be sent as an electronic file to Professor Manetsch at smanetsc@tiu.edu. Papers submitted after August 7 will be penalized 1/3 letter grade per day unless the student has made prior arrangement with the professor.

(3.) Class Participation (10%): At the end of the course, the professor will evaluate the frequency and quality of each student's participation in class discussion.

(4.) Reading Covenant (10%). At the time that students submit their Ministry Application Paper (August 7), they must report the percentage of required course reading that they have read (not skimmed) during the semester. Students will receive a numerical grade, based on the percentage read. (E.g. a student who reads 75% of required material will receive 7.5 out of potential 10 points = D+ grade.)

The grading scale for this course will be 97-100 (A); 94-96 (A-); 91-93 (B+); 88-90 (B); 86-87 (B-); 83-85 (C+); 80-82 (C); 78-79 (C-); 75-77 (D+); 72-74 (D); 70-71 (D-); F (below 70).

Schedule of Topics and Reading Assignments

* **Class Session One** (Monday, July 6, 1:00 – 4:30 p.m.)

Topics: Introduction to Course; The Reformation of the Pastoral Office
Reading: Begin reading Trueman and assigned Hendrix readings.

* **Class Session Two** (Tuesday, July 7, 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

Topic: The Reformation of the Pastoral Office; Pastors and the Biblical Text

Reading: Continue Trueman; continue assigned Hendrix readings; begin assigned Dillenberger reading.

*** Class Session Three** (Wednesday, July 8, 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

Topic: Pastoral Calling and Preaching

Reading: Continue Trueman; continue assigned Hendrix readings; continue Dillenberger reading.

*** Class Session Four** (Thursday, July 9th, 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.)

Topics: Worship, the Sacraments and Pastoral Care

Reading: Finish reading Trueman; continue assigned Hendrix readings.

*** Class Session Five** (Friday, July 10th, 9:00 a.m. – noon)

Topics: Catechesis, Church Discipline, and Church Institutions. Final thoughts.

Reading: Finish Hendrix readings.

After Class Session Five:

- Read Martin Bucer, *Concerning the True Care of Souls*

- Read Scott Manetsch, *Calvin's Company of Pastors*

Assignment Dates:

**** Turn in Book review of Trueman:** July 10th at noon.

**** Turn in book review of Manetsch:** July 17th at noon.

**** Turn in Ministry Application Paper:** August 7th at 5 p.m.

Guide Sheet for Book Review

For this course, students will write two critical book reviews, one of Carl Trueman's *Luther on the Christian Life* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Books, 2015) and the other of Scott Manetsch's *Calvin's Company of Pastors* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012). These reviews must be no more than four pages in length, double-spaced with normal one-inch margins and 12 cpi font. The written review must include the following elements:

Introduction: In addition to introducing the author and title of the book you are reviewing, the first paragraph of your paper should provide a brief overview of the book, describing the subject matter, and explaining necessary background information. The centerpiece of this introduction should be a succinct statement of the author's major thesis or arguments.

The Book Summary: The major portion of your review should contain a carefully crafted explanation of the author's major thesis/theses and a general summary of the book's contents. Consider the methods and sources that the author employs to prove his central arguments. Ask yourself: 'What is the author concerned about? Why? What is new or unique in the author's treatment of this topic? How is this book different than other treatments on this same subject?' You may also wish to mention details in your summary that will become 'evidence' in the critical evaluation section of your review. Nevertheless, this first descriptive part *must not* contain a critical evaluation of the book (positive or negative). Instead, a good summary provides an 'objective' report of the book's major themes and arguments. Your objective is to summarize the book in such a way that, if the author were present, he would say 'that's exactly what I was arguing.' **NB** – Please avoid quoting extensively from the book. This summary should be in *your* voice, not the language of the author!

The Critical Evaluation: In the final page of your review you should provide a thoughtful critique of the book. How well does the author use his sources? Does he successfully defend his thesis/es? Does the evidence bear out the author's conclusions? Are there flaws in the author's reasoning or the book's organization? Does he propose new approaches, use any major new documents, propose new interpretations, challenge existing interpretations, or present old information in new ways? What are the major strengths and weaknesses of the work? If you judge the book to be 'interesting,' 'provocative,' 'boring,' or 'significant,' explain why or how. If you did not like the book, say so, but support your opinion with solid reasons. In other words, the critical evaluation requires you to state *and* defend your opinion of the book. **NB** -- a critical evaluation must *always* be gracious and polite. Avoid cheap shots or *ad hominem* arguments!

Conclusion: In a final paragraph, briefly summarize the argument of your review and provide a concluding assessment (whether positive or negative) of Trueman's monograph.