

Introduction to Pastoral and Theological Studies
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Reformed Theological Seminary, Washington D. C.

Required Readings: 30%

1. Chad Van Dixhoorn, *Creeds, Confessions, and Catechisms* (Crossway, 2021): Nicene Creed, Chalcedonian Definition, Westminster Confession of Faith, Westminster Shorter Catechism, and your choice of either the Belgic Confession, Thirty Nine-Articles, or the Heidelberg Catechism.
2. Carl Trueman, *Crisis of Confidence: Reclaiming the Historic Faith in a Culture Consumed with Individualism and Identity*. (Crossway, 2024). Entirety
3. Blair Smith, *Reformed Confessionalism* (P&R, 2025)
4. Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, vol. 1 (P&R, 1997), Topics 1-2 (On Theology and the Holy Scriptures).
5. *The Essential Herman Bavinck*, ed. Doornbos and Sutanto (Baker Academic, 2026),
 - a. Part 1, chps. 3-8.
 - b. Part 2: chps. 10, 12, 13.
 - c. Part 3: chp. 19.
6. Cory Brock and N. Gray Sutanto, *Neo-Calvinism: A Theological Introduction* (Baker Academic, 2023), Entirety.
7. Herman Bavinck, *Christian Worldview* (Crossway, 2019), Entirety.

Estimated Total Reading: 1000 pages of reading.

Term Synthesis Paper: 40% of grade

A paper of no more than 3000 words: you will answer, using the course readings, two questions,

- i.) From the Van Dixhoorn, Trueman, Smith, and Turretin Readings, answer the question: How does Scripture and the creeds and confessions of the Protestant tradition inform my ecclesial ministry? 1500 words
 - ii.) From the Trueman, Bavinck, Brock and Sutanto readings, answer the question: How does Reformed theology engage our contemporary culture and local context? 1500 words.
- To answer each of the following questions, begin with an introductory paragraph that communicates your thesis and how you will argue for that thesis:
 - o E.g: 'I argue that the creeds and confessions of the Protestant tradition are necessary for a healthy church ministry, and this is seen in three ways: the use of creeds are mandated by Scripture itself, it connects us to the whole church Catholic, and the Protestant confessions reminds us of the decisive contributions of the Reformation for our understanding of Scripture...'
 - Be sure that your paper focuses on *arguments* and not on subjective impressions:
 - o E.g. "Psalm 145 shows that each generation should transmit a pattern of sound words concerning God", and not "The creeds remind me of important historical events";
 - o E.g. "The confessions challenge our temptations to succumb to a pragmatic philosophy of ministry because of these reasons...", and not "I do not like the confessions because I find them hard to understand"...
 - Be sure that your paper cites the course readings.

Use Turabian/SBL citation style.

Final exam: 30% of grade

A final exam consisting of short and long essay prompts on the lecture and reading material. I provide a study guide, to be posted on Canvas.

Sample short essay prompts:

1. Define Reformed confessionalism
2. What is the difference between historical and systematic theology?
3. Name and define three Christological heresies.

Sample Long essay prompts:

1. Why are creeds and confessions necessary for a healthy church ministry? Draw from Scripture and theological authorities for your argumentation.
2. Discuss: Calvinism and Reformed Theology
3. Outline and discuss B. B. Warfield's Soteriological Taxonomy.

All assignments are due the final day of the Fall semester exam week, on the academic calendar.

Schedule

As an Intensive: Read Van Dixhoorn, Trueman, Smith, and Brock/Sutanto before class Starts, and read Bavinck and Turretin after Class

Weekly: Read Vandixhoorn, Trueman, Smith and Turretin from Weeks 1-4. Reading Bavinck, Brock and Sutanto, between weeks 5-12.

1. Syllabus, Introduction to the Theological and Seminary Curriculum
2. Scripture, Creeds, and Confessionalism
3. Creeds: Nicene Creed and the Trinity
4. Creeds: Chalcedonian Creed and Christological Heresies
5. A Soteriological Taxonomy: B. B. Warfield's Plan of Salvation and TULIP
6. What is Reformed Theology? Reformed Confessions, Calvinism, and Developments
7. What is Reformed Theology? Surveying Westminster Shorter Catechism (1)
8. What is Reformed Theology? Surveying Westminster Shorter Catechism (2)
9. What is Reformed Theology? Surveying Westminster Shorter Catechism (3)
10. Basics of Presbyterianism: Ecclesiology and Preaching
11. Neo-Calvinism and Sphere Sovereignty
12. Contextualization and Philosophy of Ministry

Select Bibliography

I would strongly recommend reading through some key primary sources:

Gregory the Great, *Book of Pastoral Rule*
Franciscus Junius, *A Treatise on True Theology*

Petrus van Mastricht, *Theoretical-Practical Theology*
 Herman Bavinck, *A Guidebook on the Christian Religion*, and *A Sacrifice of Praise*
 B. B. Warfield, *The Emotional Life of Our Lord*

See also:

Allen, Michael, *Reformed Theology* (T&T Clark, 2010/ second edition, 2026)
 Allen, Michael, and Scott. R. Swain, *Oxford Handbook of Reformed Theology* (Oxford, 2021)
 Allen, Michael, *Cambridge Companion to Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge, 2024)
 Anizor, Uche, *How to Read Theology: Engaging Doctrine Critically and Charitably* (Baker Academic, 2018)
 Fairbairn, Donald, and Ryan Reeves, *The Story of Creeds and Confessions: Tracing the Story of the Christian Faith* (Baker Academic, 2019)
 Hansen, Colin, Ivan Mesa, Skyler R. Flowers, *The Gospel After Christendom: An Introduction to Cultural Apologetics* (Zondervan, 2025)
 Keller, Timothy, *Center Church* (Zondervan, 2012)
 Keller, Timothy, *Preaching: Communicating Faith in an Age of Skepticism* (Penguin, 2016)
 Mouw, Richard and Sander Griffioen, *Pluralisms and Horizons: An Essay in Christian Public Philosophy* (Eerdmans, 1993)
 Sutanto, N. Gray, and Cory Brock, *T&T Clark Handbook of Neo-Calvinism* (T&T Clark, 2024)
 Swain, Scott. *Trinity, Revelation, and Reading: A Theological Introduction to the Bible and Its Interpretation* (T&T Clark, 2011)

Grading System

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.

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



Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: ST 5100

Professor: Sutanto

Campus: Washington, D.C.

Date: Fall 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> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 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. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	Reading, lectures, and writing, focus on content, clarity, and logical analysis.
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	Lectures and reading will emphasize a theological reading of Scripture and its relationship to creeds and confessions
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	Lectures and reading will advance understanding of the defining features of the Reformed tradition.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	Lectures and reading emphasize the importance of love of God and his word for the sake of ministry

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	The course introduces a Reformed worldview for all of life.
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	The course will focus on engaging with our modern world winsomely from a Reformed foundation.
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	Ministers will develop confidence in the resources of the Reformed tradition for ministry.