

# Theological Dutch 1: Grammar and Literature

## Syllabus

Reformed Theological Seminary, Fall 2026

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**Course:** Theological Dutch I

**Instructor:** Lianne Kalkman-Mahdi, ResMA

**Time:** Wednesdays, 09:00-11:00

*An online office-hour for contacting the instructor will be determined in consultation with the students.*

**Course Description:** This is an introductory course in the Dutch language designed to teach basic proficiency in reading Dutch for theology students. After building basic vocabulary and an understanding of Dutch grammar, students will focus on reading theological texts written in Dutch. Emphasis will be placed on the basics of translation of these texts. Translation is a skill in itself, but to translate a language, one must also learn the feel of the language and have an ability and desire to speak it, read it, and write it. For this reason, pronunciation, speaking, and listening skills will be included in the lessons. This course is designed to be the first part of a two-or-more-semester sequence.

**Bibliography:** The textbook for this course will be the newest edition of the “Delftse Methode – Het Groene Boek” (the Delft Method, the Green Book; hereafter DM), including the online audio component, available together from Boom publishers here: [https://www.nt2.nl/en/product/100-17209\\_Nederlands-voor-anderstaligen-tekstboek](https://www.nt2.nl/en/product/100-17209_Nederlands-voor-anderstaligen-tekstboek). Literature to translate and will be made available through Canvas during the semester, as well as suggestions for further reading. Please purchase the textbook as soon as possible because shipping delays from the Netherlands may occur.

**Attendance and participation:** This course meets entirely online and is taught through lecture and discussion. Learning a language requires a lot of repetition and practice. Attending and preparing each lecture is the best way to prepare for the exam. If you cannot make a class, please email the instructor.

Since this course takes place online, the instructor will be extra mindful of ways to ensure a stimulating learning environment. Multiple applications in Canvas will be used for preparation and consolidation of class material.

### Grading:

Participation: 30% (For exceptions related to personal circumstances, please email the instructor.)

Assignments: 30% (Weekly course preparation includes reading and translating primary sources, increasing in difficulty over the course of the semester. Assignments will be graded good/satisfactory/unsatisfactory.)

Final exam: 40% (This will probably be an online, oral exam; details to be determined.)

**Outline of classes:** The class will meet for 12 periods of 2 hours each. Some of the topics we will cover include (modifications might be made; discretion of the instructor):

1. Brief overview of the language (alphabet, numbers, introductions, personal introductions, time)

Read: DM – Les 1 (= ‘Lesson 1’)

Theological text to translate: Genesis 1: 1-2, Bijbel in Gewone Taal (= ‘Bible in Plain Language’ (Dutch-English))

Additional preparation: 1. Read and prepare DM Les 1, p. 12, lines 1-10. Can you try to figure out the meaning of some of the words? 2. Listen to Het Alfabetlied (= ‘The Alphabet Song’) and try to sing along: <https://youtu.be/OuDp-C9w-vQ?si=VMMbGIErLMzs7fyi>

2. Pronouns. Definite and indefinite articles, nouns

Read: DM – Les 2

Theological text to translate: part of the Apostolische geloofsbelijdenis (= the Apostles’ Creed)

Additional preparation: Prepare the first part of the dialogue in DM Les 2. Try to translate the sentences and note any words you do not recognize.

3. Word order, plural nouns, negation

Read: DM – Les 3

Theological text to translate: Genesis 1: 1-5, Herziene Statenvertaling (= revised version of the States’ Translation. Compare verses 1-2 to your translation prepared for Les 1 (based on the Bijbel in Gewone Taal).

Additional preparation: Prepare the first part of the dialogue in DM Les 2. Listen to the audio file and practice your pronunciation.

4. Adjectives, possessives.

DM – Les 4

Additional homework to be determined

5. Recap lesson

Please bring your questions!

6. Verbs and conjugation

DM – Les 5

Additional homework to be determined

7. Separable, reflexive, and modal verbs.

DM – Les 5

Additional homework to be determined

8. Perfect tense and past tense.

DM – Les 7

9. Why Theological Dutch is often archaic/ old-fashioned.

Delftse Methode – Les 8, 9

Additional homework to be determined

10. Irregular verbs

DM – Les 10

Additional homework to be determined

11. Do's and don't of translation.

DM – Les 11

Additional homework to be determined

12. Practice for exam/ Exam.

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

Course:

Professor:

Campus:

Date:

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<p>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.</p> <p><small>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</small></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong</li> <li>• Moderate</li> <li>• Minimal</li> <li>• None</li> </ul>	
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.		Moderate. The focus is on written, historical texts, but not on oral exposition.
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. This course includes practice translating scriptures from Dutch to English.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.		Strong. This course explores theological writings.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.		n/a
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.		Moderate. Helps to provide a connection to theology/theologians in the Netherlands.
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.)		Minimal. Texts are primarily from within the Reformed tradition.
Pastoral Ministry	Ability to minister the Word of God to hearts and lives of both church and unchurched, to include preaching, teaching, leading in worship, leading and shepherding the local congregation, aiding in spiritual maturity, concern for non-Christians.		Minimal. Indirect. This is designed for scholars, and such scholarship may help to better understand scripture and traditions.

