

Introduction to Pastoral and Theological Studies

ST5100

Reformed Theological Seminary - Charlotte

Fall 2026

Thursdays 6pm-9pm

Professor: Dr. Mantle Nance

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Course Description

This course is an introduction to pastoral and theological studies.

Course Objectives

1. Introduce basic theological themes that are helpful for navigating seminary studies, living as a Christian, and engaging in Christian ministry.
2. Develop an appreciation for historic Christian creeds and confessions of faith.
3. Develop an appreciation for the relationship between theology and spiritual formation, personal relationships, worship, and pastoral ministry.
4. Learn from previous generations of pastor-scholars regarding the relationship between theology and ministry.
5. Explore how to develop one's own theological distinctives while appreciating, learning from, and engaging charitably with those who have different perspectives.
6. Develop the practice of being "winsomely Reformed." (In other words, show the world that you can be Reformed and not angry about it. In fact, you can be Reformed and happy at the same time!)

Required Reading (You need to read these in their entirety.)

Donald Fairbairn, *Life in the Trinity: An Introduction to Theology with the Help of the Church Fathers*. 272 pages

Douglas F. Kelly. "The Recovery of Christian Realism in the Scottish Expository Ministry Movement," in *Pulpit and People: Essays in Honour of William Still on his 75th Birthday*. 12 pages (available on Canvas)

J.N. McGuire, "A Kinder, Gentler Calvinism." *RTS Reformed Quarterly* (Summer 2000) 14-16. 3 pages (Available on Canvas)



Mantle Nance, *The Adorable Trinity: Standing for Orthodoxy in Nineteenth-Century America*. 256 pages

Mantle Nance, "The Greatest Gift." *Tabletalk Magazine*, May 2022. 3 pages (Available on Canvas)

Nicene Creed (Available on Canvas). 1 page

Mark Ross, "In Essentials Unity, In Non-Essentials Liberty, In All Things Charity." *Tabletalk Magazine*, Sep 2009. 4 pages (Available on Canvas)

D. Blair Smith, *Reformed Confessionalism*. 144 pages

James B. Torrance, *Worship, Community & The Triune God of Grace*. (Preface - Chapter 3) 84 pages

Frank Viola, *Regrace: What the Shocking Beliefs of the Great Christians Can Teach Us Today*. 224 pages

Supplemental Reading – Available on Canvas (You do not need to read these in their entirety for this class. We will be highlighting portions of these texts in class.)

Apostles' Creed

Athanasian Creed

Book of Common Prayer

Calvin's Geneva Catechism

Heidelberg Catechism

Luther's Catechism

To Be A Christian: An Anglican Catechism

Westminster Confession of Faith and Shorter Catechism

Requirements

1. Attendance and Participation (10%)

Students are expected to attend each class and be ready to participate in class discussion. Please let the professor know if you have an unavoidable conflict that will require you to miss class.



2. Reflection Paper (5%)

Students will write a brief (250-500 words) reflection paper on Dr. Smith's book *Reformed Confessionalism*. Included in the reflection should be a discussion of the student's perspective on the strengths and weaknesses of confessionalism. **The reflection paper is due October 14.**

3. Midterm Exam (25%)

Students will take a mid-term exam, which will cover the class lectures up to that point. The mid-term will also include questions based on key concepts from the following reading material (which should be read in the following order): *Nicene Creed*; Ross, "In Essentials Unity"; Nance, "The Greatest Gift"; McGuire, "A Kinder, Gentler Calvinism"; Fairbairn, *Life in the Trinity*; Kelly, "Recovery of Christian Realism"; Smith, *Reformed Confessionalism*. **The mid-term exam will be taken outside of class October 3-14.**

4. Final Exam (30%)

Students will take a final exam, which will cover the class lectures delivered after the mid-term exam. The final exam will also include questions based on key concepts from the following reading material (which should be read in the following order): *Nicene Creed*; Torrance, *Worship* (chapters 1-3); Viola, *Regrace*; Nance, *Adorable Trinity*. **The final exam will be taken outside of class during finals week (December 3-8).**

5. Paper (30%)

- a. Students will write a paper consisting of 3500-4500 words, excluding footnotes, typed and double-spaced, with appropriate footnoting and bibliography.
- b. Make sure you (1) present a clear thesis; (2) have a proper introduction and conclusion and a clear structure for your essay; (3) deal with the relevant information competently and fairly to all sides; (4) where necessary, engage primary-sources; (5) offer critical analysis (and not merely summary) of the positions and views you engage; (6) consider the implications and significance of your investigation for the life of the church; and (7) use at least 8 scholarly sources.
- c. Your paper will be graded according to the following criteria, in no particular order: responsible use of Scripture, responsible use of sources, extent of research, creativity, clarity, structure and coherence, cogency of argument, evidence of critical thinking, practical relevance, and good writing style (inc. grammar, spelling, and punctuation).
- d. The paper should be word-processed, not hand-written.
 - i. Use a 12-point font and double line-spacing for the main text.
 - ii. Use section headings where applicable to improve readability.
 - iii. Use footnotes (10-point font) rather than endnotes.
 - iv. Use a recognized scholarly style for citations (e.g., Chicago/Turabian, SBL).
- e. The paper should be submitted with a title page containing all of the following: the name and year of the course; your name; the professor's name; the title of the paper; and the *exact word count* for the main text of the paper (obtained from your word processor's word-count feature).
- f. You will be penalized if you do not observe the requirements and guidelines above.



- g. For good examples of research papers from RTS Charlotte students, visit the *Pen and Parchment* webpage [here](#).
- h. Your paper is due on **December 3**.
- i. Ideas of themes to research:
 - i. Explore the relationship between theology and preaching.
 - ii. Explore the relationship between theology and hymnody.
 - iii. Explore the relationship between theology and liturgies (orders of worship).
 - iv. Explore the relationship between theology and the Church year.
 - v. Choose a theological topic (such as the Trinity, incarnation, ascension, justification, adoption). Compare and contrast how various confessions of faith and/or catechisms have articulated that doctrine; consider the pastoral implications of the different ways the doctrine has been articulated.
 - vi. Explore another topic raised in the course readings or lectures. *This topic needs to be approved by the professor.*

Extensions 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.



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Student Instructions for Exams with LockDown Browser

1. Install the LockDown Browser application on the computer you intend to use for exams, prior to sitting for the exam, using this link: <https://download.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=998253613>
 - a. This link is ONLY for RTS students and covers Mac and Windows applications.
 - b. Be sure that you are able to log in to your Canvas account from the LockDown Browser before the day of the exam.
 - c. If you use internet filtering software (for example, Covenant Eyes) you may need to disable it before beginning an exam with LockDown Browser. Some types of filtering software can block your computer's connection to Canvas. Also, please be sure to add an exception for our Canvas URL: <https://rts.instructure.com>
2. The exam proctor should not be a current RTS student (current = taken a class within the past year but not yet graduated) or a member of the library staff.
3. The proctor must observe the student taking the exam and ensure that there are no devices or resources available other than the computer being used for the exam.
4. Access the exam during the date window specified for that exam.
 - a. Sign in with the proctor.
 - b. Start the LockDown Browser application using a wired or known reliable Wi-Fi connection. We do not recommend using restaurant or coffee shop Wi-Fi to take exams.
 - c. Have your student ID number and proctor details available to input into the exam.
 - d. Log in to your Canvas account.
 - e. Navigate to the exam. You will not be able to access the exam with a standard web browser. For additional details on using LockDown Browser, review this [Student Quick Start Guide \(PDF\)](#).
 - f. The time clock will begin once you open the exam.
 - g. The exam must be completed in one sitting. You may not exit and return to the exam later.
 - h. The exam will contain questions regarding an honor pledge, and certification that your proctor was present during the entire exam period.
 - i. Sign out with the proctor.
5. Proctors may be contacted to verify information regarding exam administration.
6. In the rare case of a technical issue (for example, if power goes out during exam) the proctor will document the date and time when the issue was reported. Once you open the exam using the LockDown Browser, you will not be able to access other programs on your computer.



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.



Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: ST5100 IPTS
 Professor: Dr. Mantle Nance
 Campus: Charlotte
 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.</i> <i>*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. Also includes ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Moderate	Students will respond to the material through class discussion, a paper, and exams.
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 emphasizes the Good News revealed in Scripture and its implications for Christian ministry.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	Students are introduced to the character, teaching, and shape of Reformed theology.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	The relationship between theology and spiritual formation is emphasized throughout the course.
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	The course explores the truth that Christian theology touches on 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 stresses humility and charity in theological scholarship and pastoral ministry.
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.	Strong	Every facet of the class is designed to translate theology into service and equip students for pastoral ministry.



Course Objectives Related to MACC Student Learning Outcomes

Course: ST5100 IPTS
Professor: Dr. Mantle Nance
Campus: Charlotte
Date: Fall 2026

MACC Student Learning Outcomes <i>In order to measure the success of the MACC 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 MACC outcomes.</i>		Rubric • Strong • Moderate • Minimal • None	Mini-Justification
Articulation	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, cultural/global, and counseling-related information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Moderate	Students will respond to the material through class discussion, a paper, and exams.
Counseling Knowledge	Demonstrates knowledge of counseling theories and modern anthropology.	None	This course does not directly address counseling theories or modern anthropology.
Counseling Skill	Ability to apply biblical truths and common-grace insights in church-based counseling settings.	Minimal	Theological and pastoral foundations are explored, which will assist in Christian counseling.
Scripture	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture and ability to apply to modern counseling circumstances.	Strong	This course emphasizes the Good News revealed in Scripture and its implications for Christian ministry.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice and ability to apply to modern counseling circumstances.	Strong	Students are introduced to the character, teaching, and shape of Reformed theology.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Strong	The relationship between theology and spiritual formation is emphasized throughout the course.
Winsomely Reformed	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos.	Strong	The course stresses humility and charity in theological scholarship and pastoral ministry.

