

ST5100 Introduction to Pastoral and Theological Studies

Reformed Theological Seminary

Fall 2026—Atlanta Campus

Mondays, 6pm to 9pm
August 24th through November 30th

Dr. Guy M. Richard
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I am available for in-person meetings during lunch the week of class or by email or phone call before or after that week. My assistant is Katherine Canady (kcanady@rts.edu).

Course Description

This course seeks to provide students with an introduction to seminary, to RTS in particular, to ministry, to pastoral minister in particular, to Christian leadership, and to reformed theology.

Course Objectives

1. To help students understand the purpose of seminary education, the unique challenges of seminary education, and the best ways of not only surviving but thriving while in seminary.
2. To guide students in understanding the concept of calling and in discerning whether or not they are called to pastoral ministry specifically.
3. To offer students a biblical-theological framework for thinking about ministry and, specifically, the work of pastoral ministry, and to explore historical models and practical helps for the same.
4. To introduce students to Reformed theology—its biblical foundations, historical expressions and challenges, and practical applications to life and ministry—and set the table for the remaining ST courses. This introduction will focus on the theology of the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms.

Course Requirements

I. Required Reading: Students will be required to read the following texts during the course:

1. Edmund P. Clowney, *Called to the Ministry* (P&R, 1976), 90 pages.
2. David Mathis and Jonathan Parnell, *How to Stay Christian in Seminary* (Crossway, 2014), 80 pages.
3. BB Warfield, *The Religious Life of the Theological Student* (P&R), 15 pages.
4. William Cunningham, *An Introduction to Theological Studies* (A Press, 1992), 119 pages. This text will be made available electronically to all students on Canvas.
5. Charles Octavius Boothe, *Plain Theology for Plain People*, with introduction by Walter R. Strickland II (Lexham Press, 2017), 160 pages.
6. RC Sproul, *What is Reformed Theology?* (Baker, 2016), 272 pages.
7. John Fesko, *The Need for Creeds Today* (Baker Academic, 2020), 125 pages.
8. Westminster Confession of Faith and Shorter Catechism.

In addition to the abovementioned required reading, each student will select one (1) of the following tracks and complete the assigned reading for that track.

Pastoral Ministry Track

1. Thabiti M. Anyabwile, *The Faithful Preacher: Recapturing the Vision of Three Pioneering African-American Pastors* (Crossway, 2007), 169 pages.
2. Charles M. Wingard, *Help for the New Pastor* (P&R, 2018), 232 pages.
3. Richard Baxter, *The Reformed Pastor* (Banner of Truth, 1997) with Introduction by JI Packer, in "Puritan Paperbacks" series, 247 pages.

Theological and Historical Studies Track

1. JI Packer, *A Quest for Godliness: The Puritan Vision of the Christian Life* (Crossway, 2010), 368 pages.
2. John Owen, *The Death of Death in the Death of Christ*, with introduction by JI Packer (Banner of Truth, 1999), 312 pages.

Women's and Family Ministry Track

1. Elyse M. Fitzpatrick and Eric Schumacher, *Jesus & Gender: Living as Sisters and Brothers in Christ* (Bellingham, WA: Kirkdale Press, 2022), 217 pages.
2. Jerram Barrs, *Through His Eyes: God's Perspective on Women in the Bible* (Crossway, 2009), 352 pages.

Missions and Contextualization Track

1. J.H. Bavinck, *An Introduction to the Science of Missions* (P&R, 1993), 323 pages.
2. Carl F. Ellis, Jr., *Free At Last?: The Gospel in the African-American Experience* (IVP, 1995), 285 pages.

II. Class Attendance

As per seminary policy, you are required to attend all the lectures. If you know that you will be unable to attend class on a certain date, please inform me in advance. Otherwise there may be a penalty for your absence.

III. Evaluation

1. Reading (10%). Due date: December 7 at 11:59pm.

The reading assignments for this class are important. Therefore, you will be required to complete all of them. Each student must report the percentage of reading he or she has completed (in Canvas or by email). That percentage will constitute the grade for the reading portion of the course.

2. Final Exam (40%). Due date: Exam will be taken in Canvas and is due by December 7 at 11:59pm.

3. Reflection Paper (20%). Due date: Email to professor by December 7 at 11:59pm.

You will write a 5-page paper (double spaced 12pt font) assessing Fesko's argument for the importance of confessions for the health of the church found in his book *The Need for Creeds Today*. No need for footnotes or bibliography in this paper. This is meant to be a reflection paper, not a research paper that is interacting with a variety of published sources.

4. Research Paper (30%). Due date: Upload to Canvas by December 7 at 11:59pm.

You will write a 10-12 page paper on any topic covered in one of the tracks for this course. You will need to clear your topic with the professor before you begin research and writing. Please heed the following instructions for the paper:

- (1) Each paper should include a clear statement of the thesis being argued or the problem being answered. The argument or answer you provide must be based first on careful exegesis of Scripture (please show your exegesis in the paper) and on historical and theological arguments as well. *Please use original languages if you know them.*
- (2) Each paper should be a RESEARCH paper. In other words, I am looking for you to read widely in the area of your proposed article. You should cite *at least* 10-12 good, scholarly sources in your bibliography and interact with those sources throughout the paper, citing them in your footnotes. Use these sources to support your argument. Please note: Wikipedia is NOT considered a scholarly source! I am interested in published articles or books primarily. On rare occasions, a website might serve in this capacity. But this is rare.
- (3) All papers should use footnotes (NOT endnotes) and be written according to the style advocated by Kate Turabian in *A Manual for Writers*. If you don't own a copy of Turabian, you should consider buying one. You will use it throughout your seminary experience.
- (4) Each paper should show an awareness of possible objections to your position. So, for example, if you are arguing *for* a certain approach to pastoral ministry, you will need to show that you are aware of at least a few relevant objections to that approach and be able to respond to those objections biblically and theologically.
- (5) Each paper should also show how the selected topic applies practically to life and ministry, if applicable.
- (6) Each paper should be no less than 10 pages in length and no more than 12 and should be written with one inch margins, double-spaced, 12pt Times New Roman font (or equivalent).
- (7) Late papers will warrant a deduction of 3 percentage points, per day late, off the final grade for the paper.
- (8) All papers should contain a title page with the following information: name and year of course; student name; professor's name; title of the paper; and date of submission.

Course Lecture Schedule

The following is the tentative schedule for the course:

Aug 24	Introductions, Syllabus, Intro to seminary, to RTS, and to curriculum. Why and how you should go to seminary
Aug 31	Why and how you should go to seminary, continued
Sept 14	Calling and calling to ministry
Sept 21	What does the Bible teach us about ministry?
Sept 28	What the Bible teaches about ministry, continued. Intro to leadership in ministry
Oct 12	Leadership lessons
Oct 19	Intro to theology
Oct 26	Intro to theology, continued
Nov 2	Intro to reformed theology
Nov 9	Five points of Calvinism
Nov 16	Five points of Calvinism, continued
Nov 23	Five <i>solas</i> of the Reformation
Nov 30	Five <i>solas</i> , continued

Zoom Policy

Your professor may allow you to Zoom into class or watch Zoom recordings for excused absences based on the professor's discretion and subject to the availability of equipment. Students should contact their professor well in advance of the class meeting. For a third absence the Registrar should be consulted. Your professor may require additional interactive assignments to offset the absence of classroom interaction. Sync or Remote Live courses have priority for the limited Zoom equipment.

Extension Policy

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class.

Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed.

Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an Extension Request Form from the Registrar's Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 46 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 18)

Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 49)

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: 04ST5100

Professor: Guy M. Richard

Campus: Atlanta

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.	Strong	This course engages Scripture. Students are expected to be able to articulate and defend the Bible's teaching.
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 spend a significant amount of time studying Scripture and historical interpretations of it.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	This course examines issues raised by Reformed Theology.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	A deeper understanding of God's Word should help students cultivate a deeper faith in and love for God.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	Course will touch on worldview issues.
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	Course will be taught with an emphasis on being winsome in all things.
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-Xns.	Strong	Course will prepare students for pastoral ministry by introducing students to pastoral ministry and leadership in ministry contexts.