

The Origin and Authority of the NT Canon/ NT6500

RTS Dallas: Fall, 2026

I. Details

- A. Time: October 30-31, November 6-7 F 4pm-9pm, S 8am-4pm
- B. Professor: Dr. Michael J. Kruger
 - 1. Email: mkruger@rts.edu
 - 2. TA email: fkey@rts.edu

II. Purpose

- A. To gain familiarity with the history of the NT Canon.
- B. To gain acquaintance with the main theological approaches to the authority of the canon
- C. To understand the patristic and textual evidence for the development of the canon.
- D. To understand and articulate the Reformed self-authenticating approach to canon and biblical authority.

III. Course Requirements

- A. Faithful class attendance
 - Attendance is vital in a one-week class
 - Expect class participation when applicable
 - Feel free to ask questions during lecture
- B. Prepare any Greek assignments from the photographic facsimiles by:
 - Providing an English translation
 - Parsing all verbs
 - Assessing the use/function of key words or grammatical constructions -
Analyzing any noteworthy scribal features or habits.
 - **See additional information below for instructions on Greek readings C. Canon Paper
 - Serious paper approximately 10 pages in length (typed) due on December 4th at 11:59PM.
 - Assignment: Write a fictional dialogue between two individuals contrasting different theological approaches to canon (e.g., Reformed vs. Catholic, Reformed vs. NeoOrthodox, etc.). Dialogue should demonstrate knowledge of a Reformed approach to defending the canon. Although not a research paper, per se, you should incorporate the required readings (and other research you may do) into the paper. Creativity, originality, and profundity are rewarded.
 - For all footnotes, use the standard *SBL* format, sections 3, 4, 5.2, 5.4, 6, 7 and abbreviations (8-16). The *SBL* standards are in the reference section in the library, or you can purchase the book, *The SBL Handbook of Style*, (Hendrickson, 1999). The paper should have footnotes (not endnotes) and resemble the articles found in the standard journals; e.g., *JBL*, *JTS*, *JETS*, *NTS*, etc.

- D. Complete the required reading in preparation for class sessions and examinations.
- E. No Midterm Exam. Final Exam to be taken via lockdown browser by December 10th at 11:59PM.

IV. Grading

- A. Greek Readings—10%
- B. Canon Paper—40%
- C. Final Exam—50%

V. Textbooks

- A. Michael J. Kruger, *Canon Revisited: Establishing the Origin and Authority of the New Testament Writings* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2012). ALL.
- B. Bruce M. Metzger, *The Canon of the New Testament: Its Origin, Development, and Significance* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1987). ALL.
- C. John Barton, *Holy Writings, Sacred Text* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 1997), 63-162.
- D. M.J. Kruger, "Manuscripts, Scribes, and Book Production within Early Christianity," in *Christian Origins and Classical Culture: Social and Literary Contexts for the New Testament* (ed. S.E. Porter and A. W. Pitts; Leiden: E.J. Brill, 2013): 15-40.

Special Assignment for Greek Readings

- A. Students taking the class for credit are responsible for preparing two photographs of Greek manuscripts to be read in class. Photos will be available on Canvas.
- B. Students need to have this preparation complete by **Friday, October 30. We will translate at various points during the week. So prepare before the week of class begins.**
- C. Print color photos of each manuscript.
- D. Translate each manuscript into English. Feel free to write on your printout.
 - Keep in mind that all letters are in caps with no spaces. Note: what looks like a capital "C" is really a Greek sigma - First photo is of John 1:1-13.
 - Second photo is of John 7:52-8:14
- E. Take note of grammatical and textual issues
 - Be prepared to parse all verbs
 - Take note of scribal differences that vary from your printed Greek text - Take note of any other odd scribal patterns or habits
- F. Be prepared to read aloud and discuss the text in class. **Participation in Greek reading will be 10% of your grade.**

APPENDIX 2

RTS Student Instructions for Final Exams for Intensive Classes

1. Install the LockDown Browser application on the computer you intend to use for exams, prior to sitting for the exam, using this link: <http://www.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=998253613>
 - This link is ONLY for RTS students and covers both Mac and Windows applications.
 - Be sure that you are able to login to your Canvas account from the LockDown Browser before scheduling a time to take your exam.
 - The LockDown Browser application is already installed on the computers in the RTS Charlotte library. (Note that if you elect to use the library computers, your proctor must still be present throughout the duration of the exam.)
2. Make arrangements with a proctor to supervise the exam within the date timeframe set by the professor. The proctor cannot be a current RTS student (current = taken a class within the past year but not yet graduated) or member of the library staff. The proctor CAN be a spouse who is not a student.
3. The proctor must observe student taking 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 midterm:
 - a. Start the LockDown Browser application using a wired or known reliable WIFI connection. We do not recommend using restaurant or coffee shop WIFI to take exams.
 - b. Login to your Canvas account.
 - c. 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)**.
 - d. Time clock will begin once you open the exam.
 - e. Exam must be completed in one sitting. You may not exit and return to exam later.
 - f. The exam will contain questions requiring the proctor contact information, an honor pledge, and certification that your proctor was present during the entire exam period.
5. Proctors may be contacted to verify information regarding exam administration.
6. In the rare case of a technical issue (for example, if internet service goes out during exam), the proctor should contact the course TA. While the TA's may not be immediately available, the date and time of the email will document when the issue was reported. Please have your TA's contact information available for your proctor before opening the exam. Once you open the exam using the LockDown Browser, you will not be able to access other programs on your computers.

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: NT6500 The Origin and Authority of the New Testament Canon
 Professor: Dr. Michael Kruger
 Campus: Dallas
 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	-Theology of NT canonical development -Historical Development of NT Canon -Lectures and paper equip student to teach biblical view of canon - Students will write a fictional dialogue interacting two models of canon
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	-History of NT book acceptance -Some Scriptural support for early canon -Some of the content of Scripture is studied in terms of the manuscripts which represent it
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	-Reformed/Westminster view of canonical development
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Minimal	-Deeper love for God and his Word by strengthening confidence that we have the right books
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	-Understanding the formation of the NT canon is foundational to an informed Christian worldview
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.)	Moderate	-Survey of critical scholarship on canonical process; students are taught good aspects and bad aspects of critical thinking - Other canonical approaches are surveyed and critiqued in a respectful manner.
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.	Moderate	-Questions concerning canon underlie numerous questions most pastors will face