



# Puritan Reformed

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

## 2024 - 2025 CATALOG

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

Welcome

Statement of Mission

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and Licensing

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

### **Welcome**

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary is a place where students are trained for faithful ministry in Christ's church (2 Tim. 2:2). It serves as an extension of the church, preparing its students for ministry worldwide (Matt. 28:18-20). We believe the gospel is the hope for our perishing world. By God's Spirit, theological education of qualified spiritual leaders can enliven His people, save the lost, and glorify His name with faith that overcomes the world.

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary aims to nurture biblical, Reformed, and experiential faith through its students, graduates, and faculty. The world needs a God-given, Christ-centered and Spirit wrought faith based on Scripture, self-denying and serving, and dependent on God's sovereign grace. Through such faith, Jesus Christ is represented, and God's glory is revealed in the world.

The need for faithful ministry is great, and so are the opportunities. No vocation on this side of heaven is as privileged or rewarding as Christian ministry. Puritan Reformed has been blessed with God-fearing instructors and students who have a deep love for God and each other. Our diverse student body from various backgrounds and denominations seeks to glorify God by promoting His kingdom. The biblical, doctrinal, experiential, and relevant Reformed faith we teach builds a solid foundation for ministry today.

If you feel called by God to church ministry though teaching, preaching, pastoring and seek training that combines solid Reformed theology with robust, biblical piety, our programs may be just what you are looking for. We hope you will consider Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary as the place to prepare for a life of Christ-centered service. For more information and to schedule a visit, please contact our Registrar, Isaac Bronkema, at (616) 432-3400, or email [admissions@prts.edu](mailto:admissions@prts.edu).

May the Lord guide you and us in His way, and if it is His will, bring us together for fruitful fellowship.

On behalf of the seminary community,



Adriaan C. Neele, Ph.D., President

### **Statement of Mission**

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary is an educational institution whose mission is to prepare students to serve Christ and His church through biblical, experiential, and practical ministry. The seminary purposes that such training be God-glorifying and in accord with the Scriptures and historic Reformed creeds for the promotion and defense of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In dependence on the Holy Spirit, we believe that this purpose is well served by providing theological instruction and training to facilitate the development of knowledge and skills as well as personal piety and Christian character that is essential for faithful Christian ministry.

### **Scriptural and Confessional Commitment**

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary is committed to the conviction that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as originally written, are God's inerrant Word inspired by His Spirit and therefore are the only infallible authority for faith and practice.

Foundational to the character and mission of the seminary is its identity as a confessionally Reformed institution. Each faculty member, together with the ecclesiastical leaders of the seminary's supporting and governing denominations (the Heritage Reformed Congregations and Free Reformed Congregations), subscribe the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith as

expressed in the Ecumenical Creeds, and the teaching of the Reformed faith as expressed in the Three Forms of Unity (The Belgic Confession, 1561; the Heidelberg Catechism, 1563; and the Canons of Dort, 1618-1619) and the Westminster Standards of the 1640s. From these sources flow our Reformed perspective, our value system, our motivation for ministry, and our curricular emphases.

As Puritan Reformed is a confessional institution, and each faculty member subscribes the above-stated confessions, it is to be expected that faculty will teach courses from the perspective of these confessional standards that articulate their personal convictions. Although in certain cases students are admitted who may not fully subscribe all of the statements in these confessions, they should be aware that all courses will be taught according to the grid of Reformed and covenant theology as set forth in the Three Forms of Unity and Westminster Standards. Such students are welcomed into the student body with the understanding that they will respect the confessional commitments of the institution. In situations where particular assignments may address issues that differ from their personal convictions, students should show that they are able to articulate the confessional position. In certain cases when dealing with potentially controversial topics, students are encouraged to discuss alternative projects or courses with the professor.

## **Perspective on Ministerial Training**

The seminary is committed to the perspective that a balanced training for Christian ministry includes a sound theological education and the nurturing of healthy, personal piety. Truth known by revelation is reasonable truth, and therefore the instruction of students for the ministry must have solid theological content. Adequate knowledge of the original languages of the sacred Scriptures and an acquaintance with the teachings of biblical revelation are essential. In keeping with the Reformed and Puritan tradition, we emphasize preaching the whole counsel of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, which entails preaching biblically, doctrinally, experientially, and practically. We believe



that such preaching is God's primary means to save sinners and to nurture His church in her most holy faith (Rom. 10:14-17).

All true scholarship serves piety. Diligent theological training nurtures true faith. With the blessing of God's Spirit, such instruction aims to develop in the student a clear, systematic, intellectual knowledge of the doctrines of biblical revelation. Since faithful theology includes *theologia practica*, i.e., "practical theology" that studies and nurtures Christian experience, piety, and God-honoring service, instruction must also be directed to a student's conscience. Such instruction calls for the wholehearted assent and childlike trust of faith in Christ that exercises divine graces such as repentance, love, and zeal for holiness. Academic instruction should promote personal meditation upon the Word and prayer, thus equipping students to nurture spirituality in every facet of their personal lives and ministry.

This foundational perspective for theological training has been held in varying degrees by most Reformed seminaries in the past (particularly among the English Puritan and Dutch Further Reformation movements) and has been most successful in equipping men for a practical, pastoral ministry. Gisbertus Voetius, a seventeenth-century Dutch Reformed theologian, expressed this perspective as *pietas cum scientia* ("piety with knowledge"), and more recently, John Murray said that seminaries should promote "intelligent piety." We believe that ministers of the gospel who have religion without learning or learning without religion will soon prove to be injurious to the church.

The seminary also strives to provide its students with a social environment that nurtures godliness. Instruction is complemented by formal and informal occasions for personal interaction with academically qualified and spiritually minded theological professors or instructors as well as with godly fellow students. This creates a seminary atmosphere that facilitates personal piety in the context of responsible scholarship.

With the Spirit's blessing and help, Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary is dedicated to serve Christ and His kingdom by effectively equipping its graduates with the necessary tools and skills for instructing, proclaiming, and

applying the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ biblically, doctrinally, experientially, and practically with passion and conviction. This perspective of ministry includes the following skills and ability to:

- Exegete individual passages of Scripture accurately, employing understanding of the original languages, historical circumstances, and literary and theological relationships.
- Articulate the major issues of faith and life that the church has confronted throughout its history.
- Articulate confessional Reformed theology on exegetical, biblical, and theological grounds.
- Systematize exegetical, historical, and theological data into a consistent and coherent theology, and explain how theology applies to personal and church beliefs and actions.
- Serve their constituencies in biblical instruction or proclamation and application of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; employ homiletic skills to preach or teach the Word of God biblically, doctrinally, experientially, and practically with passion and conviction.
- Respond with biblical discernment to contemporary trends in biblical interpretation and apply a sound Christian worldview to contemporary cultural issues that impact the church today.
- Demonstrate empathetic, pastoral love for others and servant leadership skills in public and private pastoral or teaching roles.
- Exhibit personal communication skills in meeting people, forming friendships, and providing biblical counseling.
- Demonstrate understanding and commitment to promote evangelism, outreach, and mission endeavors.
- Conduct, evaluate, and articulately communicate (in oral and written English) graduate level research, exercising critical analysis and constructing sound arguments, reflecting advanced understanding of theology.

Since there is a pervasive impact of Reformed principles on all of

life and on every aspect of the Christian ministry, the seminary aims to expound, apply, and defend this statement of mission and these goals and perspectives in every division and department of its curriculum.

## **Distinctives**

### **Identity and Governance**

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary is governed by a Board of Trustees that includes seven members appointed by the Synod of the Heritage Reformed Churches (HRC), and three appointees from the Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRC). The daily administration conducted by the faculty and office staff is under the direction of the president, who is also a faculty member and is answerable to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees is accountable to the denominational Synods of both HRC and FRC. This ecclesiastical oversight is the biblical model of governance for the seminary in accordance with the Reformed Church Order.

### **Reformed, Experiential Emphasis**

Many seminaries in North America today uphold Reformed doctrine, but few such institutions have a deep respect for experiential preaching. By experiential preaching we mean Christ-centered preaching which stresses that sinners must have a personal, experiential, Spirit-wrought knowledge of Christ unto salvation (John 17:3; 1 Cor. 1:30), and by extension, of all the great truths of Scripture (2 Tim. 3:14-17). In theological terms this means that the two loci of Christology and soteriology are taught in the seminary as two inseparable sides of one coin. Soteriology is the subjective experience of objective Christology. Thus, we stress, as the Puritans did, that the Holy Spirit causes the objective truths about Christ and His work to be experienced in the hearts of sinners.

Experiential preaching is therefore applicatory. It explains, in terms of biblical truth, how matters do go and how they ought to go in the Christian life. It aims to apply faith in Christ to all of the

experience of the believer, as an individual and in all of his relationships in the family, church, and the world (Rom. 7:24-25; Col. 2:6-7).

Experiential preaching is also discriminatory. It defines the difference between believers and unbelievers, opening the kingdom of heaven to believers and shutting it against unbelievers (Matt. 16:19). In dependence upon the Holy Spirit, the seminary trains men who feel kinship with this emphasis.

### **The Academy Model**

Ministry in the church of Jesus Christ—whether it be preaching, teaching, counseling, or administering—must be theologically informed. Theology, the seminary, and the church must enrich one another. A seminary must equip students for a variety of forms of gospel ministry, ever remembering that the Spirit’s unction and blessing are requisite to make men “able ministers of the New Testament” (2 Cor. 3:6).

A seminary must give hands-on experience to its students. At Puritan Reformed, we believe in high academic standards for ministry while stressing that the faith of God’s people is not an “ivory tower” academic enterprise. Since the church is God’s ordained means for the spiritual growth of His people, Puritan Reformed serves as an arm of the church in assisting theological students to grow in grace by being an academy closely related to the local church. Every student is expected to be an active member of a local church so that when there are pastoral needs for the students, the governing bodies of the church may be informed. The seminary does not have any ecclesiastical authority over the personal life of the student; that falls under the jurisdiction of the church. That is not to suggest that the seminary will not be deeply involved in assisting its students to grow in grace, but we recognize that this growth is properly under the pastoral care of the church of which the student is a member.

### **History, Facilities, and Location**

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary began in 1995 with the acceptance of four seminary students from the Heritage

Reformed Congregations (HRC). Classes officially commenced on August 9, 1995, under the leadership of our president, Dr. Joel R. Beeke. When we first opened, the vision of Puritan Reformed was to provide a high quality, four-year seminary program for men accepted by the HRC to train for pastoral ministry. After one year that vision broadened to include training men from other denominations, providing that they meet the admission requirements and adhere to the Reformed confessional tradition represented in the Three Forms of Unity or the Westminster Standards. In 1998 the Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRC) chose to train their theological students at Puritan Reformed, at which time Dr. Gerald M. Bilkes became the second full-time professor, teaching Old and New Testament Studies.

Within five years Puritan had outgrown its building. Receiving degree-granting status from the State of Michigan and several other approvals were contingent on a new facility as well. Construction began on our current facility in northeast Grand Rapids and the doors were opened in November of 2004. In October of 2005, we opened and dedicated the Puritan Resource Center, a unique part of our library intended to allow people around the world access to a wide variety of Puritan literature and to gain a deeper appreciation for the Puritan tradition. In 2012 Puritan hired on Dr. Michael P. V. Barrett as Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean and Professor of Old Testament, as well as Dr. Mark Kelderman as Dean of Students and Spiritual Formation. Over twenty visiting professors/instructors round out our faculty. An extensive addition, effectively doubling the size of the original building, was completed in 2014.

Puritan Reformed also recently added the PhD program in Historical Theology (2016), Biblical Studies (2017), and Systematic Theology (2020). To support this program and others, many additional faculty members have been hired since its inception: Dr. Adriaan Neele as current President and Professor of Homiletics and Historical Theology; Dr. Stephen Myers as Professor of Systematic and Historical Theology; Dr. Jonathon Beeke as Assistant Professor of Historical Theology and current Academic Dean; Dr. Daniel Timmer as Professor of Biblical

Studies and program director of the PhD program; Dr. David Kranendonk as Professor of Theology and Assistant Dean of Students; Dr. Maarten Kuivenhoven as Professor of Theology and Assistant Professor of Church History, and Dr. Bruce Baugus as Professor of Systematic Theology and program director of the ThM program. Puritan Reformed also proudly hosts four scholars in residence who regularly contribute colloquia, courses, and fellowship for the student body and faculty here.

The faculty is also supported by a growing administrative staff. Currently, Mr. Zachary Ash serves as Director of Digital Strategy; Mr. Darryl Bradford as Video Producer and Editor; Mr. Isaac Bronkema as Registrar and Director of Admissions; Dr. Marjoleine deBlois as Chief of Staff; Miss Kim Dykema as Hospitality and Events Manager; Mr. Chris Hanna as Director of Operations; Miss Giselle Huang as Assistant to the MABC Program; Mr. Seth Huckstead as IT Director; Mrs. Laura Ladwig as Librarian; Mr. Erich Lee as Bookstore Manager; Miss Salome Neele as Marketing Director; Miss Sarah Paga as Administrative Secretary; Dr. Paul Smalley as Research/Teaching Assistant to Dr. Joel Beeke; Mrs. Karla Soule as Director of Marketing and Development; Mr. Alec Thies as Financial Analyst; Mr. William Thies as the Lilly Grant Coordinator; and Mr. Kevin Walkotten as Chief Financial Officer.

From 1995 until the present, Puritan Reformed has graduated over 225 students; many other part-time and non-program students have attended throughout the years. Alumni are serving the church in various ways: pastoring, preaching, teaching, pursuing further education, international missions, domestic missions, and church planting. Puritan Reformed students hail from numerous denominations and countries around the globe.

### **Programs, Accreditation, and Licensing**

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary offers six programs designed to meet the needs of church and ministry: the Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree, the Master of Arts (Religion) degree, the Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling (MABC) degree, the Master of Theology (ThM) degree, the Doctor of Ministry (DMin) degree, and the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree. Our programs are demanding and thorough; we believe that there are no shortcuts

to proper preparation for ministry. Graduates find that the work done at Puritan is foundational, instructive, and invaluable for the rewarding obligations of their vocation and ministries.

The State of Michigan has granted Puritan Reformed a degree-granting license and approved all of our degree offerings. As of February 2014, Puritan has been fully accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS). The Association of Theological Schools can be contacted by means of the following: writing to 10 Summit Park Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15275, telephone: (412) 788-6505, fax: (412) 788-6510, website: [www.ats.edu](http://www.ats.edu).

Puritan Reformed is recognized by the US Internal Revenue Service as a tax-exempt, non-profit organization, with the privilege of issuing tax-deductible receipts for donations to the seminary.

**FACULTY**

Full-Time Faculty

Visiting /Adjunct Professors and Instructors



# FACULTY

## FULL-TIME FACULTY

DR. MICHAEL BARRETT

Senior Research Professor of Biblical Studies

For ten years, Dr. Barrett served as Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean at Puritan Reformed, but currently has been appointed as Senior Research Professor. Prior to his ministry at Puritan Reformed, for almost thirty years he was professor of Ancient Languages and Old Testament Interpretation and Theology at Bob Jones University. For twelve years, he was president of Geneva Reformed Seminary, the denominational seminary of the Free Presbyterian Church of North America. He is now an ordained minister in the Heritage Reformed Congregations and has been called by the Grand Rapids Heritage Reformed church to serve as Professor of Theology. He earned his doctorate in Old Testament Text with a special focus on Semitic languages. His dissertation was entitled "A Methodology for Investigating the Translation Philosophies and Techniques of the Septuagint." He has a passion for teaching biblical languages and Old Testament theology with special attention on the Old Testament's Christological and redemptive message. Dr. Barrett and his wife, Sandra, have two sons, five grandchildren, and currently one great granddaughter.

DR. BRUCE BAUGUS

Professor of Systematic Theology, Program Director ThM

Dr. Bruce P. Baugus has a PhD in Philosophical Theology from Calvin Theological Seminary (2009) and served on the faculty of Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, for fourteen years (2008-2022) prior to joining Puritan Reformed. He

is a Teaching Elder in the Presbyterian Church in America, has served as a pastor, and continues to preach regularly and serve on various committees of Presbytery and General Assembly. Dr. Baugus frequently teaches in other countries and serves on the board of two organizations focused on the global development of Reformed theological education. He is the author of *The Historical Roots of Reformed Moral Theology* (RHB, 2022), the editor of *China's Reforming Churches* (RHB, 2014), and has contributed numerous chapters, articles, and papers. He and his wife Tricia have two sons, one daughter-in-law, and one granddaughter.

DR. JOEL R. BEEKE

Chancellor, Professor of Homiletics & Systematic Theology

Joel R. Beeke's PhD is in Reformation and Post-Reformation theology from Westminster Theological Seminary (Philadelphia). He is frequently called upon to lecture at seminaries and to speak at Reformed conferences around the world. He is a pastor of the Heritage Reformed Congregation in Grand Rapids, Michigan, editor of *Puritan Reformed Journal* and *Banner of Sovereign Grace Truth*, editorial director of *Reformation Heritage Books*, president of *Inheritance Publishers*, and vice-president of the *Dutch Reformed Translation Society*. He has written and co-authored over one hundred books, most recently, *Reformed Systematic Theology Vols. 1-3*; *Reformed Preaching*; *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life*; *Knowing and Growing in Assurance of Faith*; *Prepared by Grace, for Grace: The Puritans on God's Ordinary Way of Leading Sinners to Christ*; and *Debated Issues in Sovereign Predestination*, edited another one hundred books, and contributed 2,500 articles to Reformed books, journals, periodicals, and encyclopedias.

DR. JONATHON BEEKE

Academic Dean, Associate Professor of Historical Theology

Dr. Jonathon D. Beeke is Academic Dean and Associate Professor of Historical Theology at Puritan Reformed Theological

Seminary. His PhD is from the University of Groningen (2019), which focused on the twofold kingdom of Christ in Reformed Orthodoxy. His Master of Arts (Historical Theology) is from Westminster Theological Seminary (California), and prior to this he completed a Bachelor of Arts from Redeemer University College, Canada. Jonathon currently serves as a ruling elder at Redeemer, OPC in Ada, Michigan. Jonathon is married to Allyson Beeke, and they are blessed to have four children.

DR. GERALD BILKES

Vice President, Professor of Homiletics and Biblical Studies

Dr. Gerald M. Bilkes completed a PhD (2002) from Princeton Theological Seminary. He was a recipient of the United States Information Agency Fellowship at the Albright Institute (ASOR) in Jerusalem during the 1997-1998 year. He has authored several books and preaches and speaks at churches and conferences worldwide. His areas of special interest include hermeneutics, the history of interpretation, and conversion in the Bible. He and his wife Michelle have five children: Lauren, Seth, Zachary, Audrey, and Joshua.

DR. MARK KELDERMAN

Professor of Biblical Counseling, Program Director MABC, Dean of Students

Dr. Mark Kelderman is Dean of Students and Spiritual Formation, as well as Director of the Biblical Counseling MA Program at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. He completed his seminary training at Puritan Reformed, was ordained as a pastor in the Heritage Reformed Congregations denomination and served as the pastor of Heritage Reformed Church in Burgessville, Ontario for 13 years. He received his Doctor of Ministry from Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary, specializing in biblical counseling, and is a certified counselor with Association of Certified Biblical Counselors and Institute for Reformed Biblical Counseling. He continues preaching on the Lord's Day at various local churches and, with his wife, serves the Christian community

with counseling. He and Donna have six children and eight grandchildren.

DR. DAVID KRANENDONK

Professor of Theology, Assistant Dean of Students, Program Director MDiv

David Kranendonk earned his MDiv from Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary (2003) and his ThM from Calvin Theological Seminary (2008). He obtained his PhD from the Theological University of Apeldoorn (2021) with a dissertation on Paul Baynes' Pastoral Teaching of Predestination. He is an ordained pastor and professor in the Free Reformed Churches of North America, having previously pastored the Free Reformed Churches of Bornholm (2003-2013) and Oxford County (2013-2021). Special interests include He and his wife Elly have received seven children: Simon, Ruth, Elnathan, Leah, Thomas, Ezra, and Hannah-Jo. His interests include the Reformed Confessions and the Dutch Reformed experiential tradition.

DR. MAARTEN KUIVENHOVEN

Professor of Theology, Assistant Professor of Church History, Program Director DMin

Maarten Kuivenhoven earned his BA in Honors History from University of Western Ontario (2004), his MDiv from Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary (2010), and his ThM from Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary (2011). He completed a PhD from Calvin Theological Seminary (2019) writing his dissertation entitled "Songs of the Son: Exegetical Method, Christology, and Piety in Reformation and Post-Reformation Interpretations of Select Messianic Psalms." In 2022 he began his position as Professor of Theology and Assistant Professor of Historical Theology at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary in Grand Rapids, MI. Prior to taking up this position, Maarten served as pastor of Heritage Reformed Congregation in Grand Rapids, MI for twelve years. His academic research focus is on the history of biblical interpretation in the Reformation and Reformed

Orthodoxy, and more particularly the exegesis of the Psalms. His book, *Songs of the Son*, has been accepted for publication in 2023. He also serves on the boards of the Dutch Reformed Translation Society (DRTS) and Reformation Heritage Books (RHB), contributes regularly to the denominational magazine, *The Banner of Sovereign Grace Truth*, and preaches regularly upon invitation. He is married to Jennifer, and they have five children.

DR. STEPHEN MYERS

Professor of Systematic & Historical Theology

Dr. Stephen G. Myers was reared in a Christian family in Concord, North Carolina and mercifully was brought to faith at a young age. Prior to his appointment at Puritan Reformed, Dr. Myers served as the pastor of Pressly Memorial Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in Statesville, N.C. While in the full-time pastorate, Dr. Myers also served as a visiting professor of theology at Reformed Theological Seminary - Charlotte and a professor at International Biblical Seminary in Kiev, Ukraine. Dr. Myers's primary research interests are covenant theology, Trinitarian doctrine, and Scottish theology. In all of his work, Dr. Myers's desire is to see Biblical doctrine shape the lives and witness of God's people around the world. Dr. Myers and his wife Lisa have four children.

DR. ADRIAAN NEELE

President, Professor of Homiletics & Historical Theology, Program Director MA

Dr. Adriaan Neele (PhD, University of Utrecht) is a minister of Word and Sacrament in the Heritage Reformed Congregation. Prior to arriving at Puritan Reformed in 2016, he lectured in Post-Reformation studies at Farel Reformed Theological Seminary (Montréal), the University of Pretoria, and the African Institute for Missiology. He was Professor of Historical Theology and Director at the Jonathan Edwards Centre at the University of the Free State, South Africa. Since 2007 he serves as Research Scholar and Digital Editor at the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University, and as a member of various businesses and academic boards

(Dutch Reformed Translation Society, Bavinck Institute, Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale, Reformation Heritage Books). In addition, he is co-editor of the Yale Jonathan Edwards Studies journal, co-editor of the Jonathan Edwards Encyclopedia, and co-editor of the global Edwards sermon editing project. His research interests concern seventeenth-century Europe as well as early American (eighteenth-century New England) theology and philosophy. As co-founder of a foundation for internet-based and global theological education, he has a continuing interest in the intersection of primary sources, digitization, and web-based education.

DR. DANIEL TIMMER

Professor of Biblical Studies, Program Director PhD

Daniel Timmer (PhD, Trinity International University) serves as an ordained ruling elder in the Reformed Church of Quebec and also teaches at the Faculté de théologie évangélique in Montreal. Prior to coming to Puritan Reformed, Dr. Timmer taught at Farel Reformed Seminary in Montreal, Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, MS, and the University of Sudbury in Ontario. He is a member of the Evangelical Theological Society, the Institute for Biblical Research, and the Society of Biblical Literature, and has published a number of articles and several books exploring various aspects of biblical theology and related subjects. Dr. Timmer's research has been supported by grants from the Association for Theological Schools and the Priscilla and Stanford Reid Trust, and he was a guest lecturer at the University of Duisberg-Essen in 2017. He and his wife Andreea have two sons, Nathan and Felix.

## **SCHOLARS IN RESIDENCE**

DR. MARTIN KLAUBER

Originally from Buffalo, NY, Martin Klauber (PhD, University of Wisconsin) came to faith as a teenager through the ministry of

Young Life. He was active in Cru (Campus Crusade) in college and served on its staff for seven years in campus ministry. Martin went to seminary at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School and received an MA in Church History and an MDiv. He completed his PhD in European History at the University of Wisconsin. Martin has taught Church History and Theology for several colleges and seminaries over the years, primarily at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, North Park Theological Seminary, and Rawlings School of Divinity at Liberty University. He also teaches for the online PhD program in the History Department at Liberty University. He is the author or editor of several books and articles on the Reformed tradition in French-speaking Europe.

DR. RICHARD A. MULLER

Dr. Richard Muller received his PhD from Duke University (1976) and currently serves as a Senior Fellow for the Junius Institute for Digital Reformation Research alongside his position as a scholar in residence at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. He has previously held positions at Calvin Theological Seminary, serving as the P.J. Zondervan Professor of Historical Theology (1992-2015) as well as a Professor of Historical Theology at Fuller Theological Seminary (1980-1992). Dr. Muller has published many significant journal articles and books in Reformation and Post-Reformation studies, such as *After Calvin: Studies in the Development of a Theological Tradition* (Oxford University Press, 2003); *Christ and the Decree: Christology and Predestination in Reformed Theology from Calvin to Perkins* (Baker Academic, 2008); and, notably, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725* (Baker Academic, 2003). He and his wife Gloria have two children and three grandchildren.

DR. DAVID C. NOE

Dr. David Noe has a PhD in Classics from the University of Iowa (2003) and served on the faculty of Calvin University (2007-2021),

chairing the Philosophy Department and teaching in the departments of Philosophy, Classics, and History. Dr. Noe pastors at Reformation Orthodox Presbyterian Church in Grand Rapids and serves on various ecclesiastical committees. He is the translator of numerous works from the 16th and 17th century, including letters and treatises by Franciscus Junius, Theodore Beza, William Perkins, John Calvin, and many others, as well as the forthcoming *Plans for Holy War* by John Arrowsmith (RHB, 2023; co-edited with Chad Van Dixhoorn). Dr. Noe is also the Latin editor for the Confessional Presbyterian Journal, and his online pedagogy for Latin, Greek, and Classics generally can be found at [LatinPerDiem.com](http://LatinPerDiem.com), [MossMethod.com](http://MossMethod.com), and [AdNavseam.com](http://AdNavseam.com). He and his wife Tara have four children.

#### DR. TOM SCHWANDA

Dr. Tom Schwanda is Associate Professor Emeritus of Christian Formation and Ministry at Wheaton College and is fellow in the Royal Historical Society of England. He is an experienced pastor and has published and taught widely on Christian spirituality. Reviving contemplative spirituality from the Puritans for Protestants is a desire of his. He is also the author of countless articles and books such as *Soul Recreation: The Contemplative-Mystical Piety of Puritanism; Emergence of Evangelical Spirituality, The: The Age of Edwards, Newton, and Whitefield*; and *Puritanism and Emotion in the Early Modern World*.

#### DR. DAVID TURNER

Dr. David Turner is widely respected for his scholarly work, particularly his commentaries on the Gospel of Matthew. Throughout his distinguished career, he has demonstrated a profound commitment to equipping students with a deep understanding of the New Testament and nurturing spiritual growth within congregations. His contributions to the Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament series and the Cornerstone Biblical Commentary (Tyndale House Publishers) have established him as a leading voice in biblical exegesis and



interpretation. Dr. Turner remains deeply engaged within his local church community as a visiting scholar at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary and on his website, [drdavidturner.com](http://drdavidturner.com). His continued commitment to theological education and pastoral ministry serves as a testament to his enduring passion for equipping others with the knowledge and wisdom of Scripture.

## **ADMISSION PROCEDURES**

Admission Enrollment Deposit

Pre-Seminary Requirements International Students Orientation

# ADMISSION PROCEDURES

## Admission

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary considers applications from interested students who adhere to the Three Forms of Unity or Westminster Standards, have successfully completed an undergraduate degree, and possess spiritual commitment and adequate intellectual abilities. Because of our commitment to male church leadership, women are only invited to apply for the MA (Religion), MABC, ThM, DMin (biblical counseling) or PhD degrees.

Puritan Reformed accepts applications year-round. To begin the online application process, please visit [www.prts.edu](http://www.prts.edu) and fill out the form after clicking on "Apply Now." Our admissions staff will respond to the form, and then the rest of the application process can be completed online.

Visiting, language, and certificate students (i.e., non-degree seeking students) need only complete a short application; this too can be completed online.

To apply for study in any of the master's programs of the seminary, the applicant must ordinarily present the following application components:

1. A completed general application form.
2. Two recommendations: an ecclesiastical recommendation from the pastor or consistory (i.e., session or council) of the church of which the applicant is a member, and an academic recommendation from a college professor under whose guidance the applicant has pursued studies. The specific questions to be answered by the referent are supplied in the online application. In certain circumstances, the Director of Admissions may approve obtaining recommendations from other sources.
3. Official transcripts of all academic work beyond high school. If more than one college was attended, transcripts from each

institution must be sent. Non-degree seeking applicants should have some college background, but exceptions may be granted to enroll in certain classes. Degree-seeking applicants (for the MA, MABC, or MDiv) should have at least a four-year bachelor's degree. If the bachelor's degree program has not been completed at the time of application, a final transcript should be submitted before final admission can be granted and the student be allowed to register for classes. Applicants should have achieved a minimum average of 2.7 (B-) in college coursework. Applicants for the ThM and PhD, in addition to submitting transcripts reflecting a four-year bachelor's degree, must supply transcripts reflecting the MDiv/MA degree, or its equivalent.

4. Application essay(s). All applicants must submit a short essay (250–500 words) explaining why they are applying to Puritan Reformed. MDiv applicants must also submit an essay describing their conversion and their calling to pursue the ministry. The specific details for these two essays can be found on the general application form.
5. Academic writing sample. All applicants must submit an academic writing sample. This sample may be a previously written paper, article, or essay that demonstrates proper citation methods and ability to construct, in English, a graduate-level paper.
6. TOEFL or IELTS results. All ESL (English as a Second Language) students are required to submit their TOEFL or IELTS results to verify their abilities in the English language. Puritan Reformed requires a score of 85 on the internet-based TOEFL. The IELTS minimum score required is a 6.5. Our reporting code for both the TOEFL and the IELTS is 0368.
7. Application Fee of \$30. The application fee is non-refundable. Each applicant:
  - is subject to all the admission and registration regulations of the institution;
  - is responsible to determine whether a current institution will accept credit earned at Puritan Reformed, if desired;
  - must understand that falsification of any part of an application may result in cancellation of admission and/or registration at

the institution;

- if transferring from another seminary, must include with the application form an official transcript of their current seminary work, syllabi of courses requesting to be transferred, and an academic catalog from that institution.

The seminary may also make one or more of the following requests of the applicant before granting admission:

- To take a trial course via independent study or distance learning;
- To meet with a representative of the seminary for a personal interview, or to conduct a phone interview;
- To provide a physician's health certificate;
- To take the Graduate Record Examination General Test (administered at various centers throughout the United States and the world, as well as by computer).

All applications are reviewed by the Admissions Committee of Puritan Reformed and are subject to their approval. After reviewing the credentials submitted, the seminary will notify the applicant of the committee's decision. The seminary admits students of any race, age, and national or ethnic origin.

### **Admission Consideration in Exceptional Cases**

In exceptional cases, mature students (typically 30+ years) who feel a call to ministry later in life *may* be permitted to enter the MDiv or MABC programs without a four-year bachelor's degree. Such a student could be admitted to the seminary by special approval, providing the applicant can demonstrate an equivalent academic background and/or evidence of current experience that prepares one for the program he/she is applying for.

While the student, if accepted, is received under the "mature-student status," he/she is still enrolled at a master's level. Puritan Reformed does not provide such students with a Bachelor of Divinity (BDiv) or a bachelor's degree in biblical counseling. The seminary has therefore chosen to limit its acceptance of mature students to a small percentage of each program to maintain academic integrity and expectations at a master's level.

## **Enrollment Deposit**

All accepted students must confirm their desire to begin studies at Puritan Reformed with a \$100.00 deposit to be paid by four weeks (for national students)/sixty days (for international students) after receipt of acceptance letter. This deposit will be used towards the tuition of the students' first course. Furthermore, accepted applications are valid for a maximum of 12 months; after this point a prospective student must re-apply.

## **Pre-Seminary Requirements**

Applicants to Puritan Reformed must demonstrate they have a comprehensive four-year undergraduate degree, something essential to theological studies. While it is not possible to prescribe one pattern as normative for all pre-seminary education, students will be greatly helped if they earned the following credits as part of their post- secondary education:

- Greek: 12 credits (4 courses)
- English (preferably grammar, composition, and speech): 9 credits (3 courses)
- History: 6 credits (2 courses)
- Philosophy: 3 credits (1 course)
- Logic: 2 credits (1 course)
- Speech: 2 credits (1 course)

Though not required, it is also recommended that students earn 6 credits in Hebrew, Latin, and one modern language.

An applicant whose academic history does not show sufficient breadth in the liberal arts may be requested to do additional work as a condition of admission. The Director of Admissions is ready to advise any applicant regarding the course of pre-seminary studies.

## **International Students**

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary has obtained federal and state permission to receive for study students from foreign countries. U.S. immigration laws do not allow foreign citizens with a student visa (F-1 status), their wives, or their children to have

paid employment while living in the United States. Spouses of F-1 status students and children under the age of 18 are granted residence in the United States (F-2 status). Non-minor children cannot legally reside in the United States under the F1 visa of a parent, and would need to establish their own legal visa, independent of their parents. The only legal employment for international students is work done at Puritan Reformed; at times, opportunities for on-campus work arise, but applicants should not rely on this to cover all living expenses while studying at the seminary. All international students must maintain full-time status in a degree program in order to maintain their F-1 status.

### **Orientation**

At the beginning of each academic year, an orientation for new students is given; attendance is mandatory. The purpose of the orientation is to introduce new students to the seminary facilities and policies, including the resources of the library and of the surrounding community.

## **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

Master of Divinity  
Master of Arts in Religion  
Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling  
Master of Theology  
Doctor of Ministry  
DMin in Homiletics  
DMin in Biblical Counseling  
Doctor of Philosophy  
PhD in Historical Theology  
PhD in Biblical Studies  
PhD in Homiletics  
PhD in Systematic Theology  
Certificate Programs



## ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

### **Master of Divinity (MDiv) – 106 Credits**

This course of study educates and prepares men for official, ordained ministries of instruction and leadership in the church as pastors, evangelists, missionaries, and teachers. This program furnishes the students with the tools to bring the Word of God to the part of God's church they are called to serve. The Master of Divinity (MDiv) curriculum is designed to enable the student to:

1. Exegete Scripture accurately, employing understanding of the original languages, historical contexts, and literary genres.
2. Articulate the system and history of doctrine of confessional Reformed theology and integrate it into the disciplines of biblical, systematic, and practical theology, as well as into life and ministry of the church.
3. Apply a sound Christian worldview and biblical principles to both life in the church and the contemporary cultures of our changing world.
4. Cultivate and demonstrate spiritual and personal qualities that evidence the biblical principles of leadership necessary for church ministry.

All of the general admission requirements apply to the MDiv program. Traditional students *must* take a minimum of 50 percent of their credits of study at Puritan Reformed (not counting language studies), though church-embedded students do not have any residency requirements. All MDiv students must show a godly walk of life, and fulfill their financial obligations to be awarded a Master of Divinity degree from Puritan Reformed.

A total of 106 credit hours (including language credits) must be completed with a minimum 2.3 grade average (C+) for the completion of the MDiv program. Should a student already possess knowledge of Greek and/or Hebrew, the number of credits may be reduced upon successful completion of a language placement exam. All credit hours for the MDiv must be completed within eight years of matriculation; any exception

must be approved by the president and academic dean.

In 2023, the seminary also began its Church Embedded MDiv program. The Church Embedded MDiv offers the same academic rigor and accreditation in a program suitable for students who are unable to relocate to meet the residency requirements of the traditional MDiv degree. The “embedded” aspect of the program enables students to remain in their congregation or local ministry, where they will work under the direction and nurture of a personal mentor. The personal mentor is an experienced pastor or other ministry leader who also fulfills an important role in guiding the student’s spiritual formation and practical experience.

In the church embedded MDiv, Academic coursework will be completed remotely, under the direction of an academic mentor at the seminary. The program harnesses technology through a specially designed web application to track and assess assignments done within the ministry setting and to maintain the vital communication link between the student and both mentors. Embedded students will also benefit from the Puritan Reformed campus experience by coming to Grand Rapids for one-week modular courses offered in the summer term.

The Master of Divinity requires completion of the following courses:

*Old Testament (100-number courses) - 17 required credits*

- 111 - Hebrew I (3 credits)
- 112 - Hebrew II (3 credits)
- 120 - Methods of Hebrew Exegesis (3 credits)
- 121 - Old Testament Exegesis I: Narratives (3 credits)
- 122 - Old Testament Exegesis II: Poets and Prophets (3 credits)
- 132 - Old Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*New Testament (200-number courses) - 17 required credits*

- 201 - Greek I (3 credits)
- 202 - Greek II (3 credits)
- 220 - Methods of Greek Exegesis (3 credits)

- 221 - New Testament Exegesis I: Gospels and Acts (3 credits)
- 222 - New Testament Exegesis II: Epistles and Revelation (3 credits)
- 232 - New Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*Historical Theology (300-number courses) - 13 required credits*

- 311 - Ancient Church History (3 credits)
- 312 - Medieval Church History (3 credits)
- 313 - Reformation Church History (3 credits)
- 314 - Modern Church History (3 credits)
- 322 - Research and Methodology (1 credit) - to be taken in student's first semester

*Systematic Theology (400-number courses) - 24 required credits*

- 411 - ST I: Prolegomena (2 credits)
- 412 - ST II: Theology Proper (2 credits)
- 413 - ST III: Anthropology (2 credits)
- 414 - ST IV: Christology (2 credits)
- 415 - ST V: Soteriology (3 credits)
- 416 - ST VI: Ecclesiology (2 credits)
- 417 - ST VII: Eschatology (2 credits)
- 421 - Introduction to Apologetics (3 credits)
- 424 - Puritan Theology (2 credits)
- 432 - Biblical Ethics (2 credits)

One of the following:

- 441 - Three Forms of Unity (2 credits) *OR*
- 441c - Westminster Standards (2 credits)

*Homiletics (500-number courses) - 12 required credits*

- 511 - Homiletics I: Sermon Preparation, Construction, & Delivery (3 credits)
- 512 - Homiletics II: Reformed Experiential Preaching (2 credits)
- 513a - Homiletics III: Sermon Preparation for Special Services (2 credits)
- 521 - Practice Preaching (1 credit per semester for 5 semesters—equals 5 credits)

*Pastoral Theology (600-number courses) - 15 required credits*

- 613a - Catechetics (1 credits)
- 613b - Youth Ministry (1 credit)
- 614 - The Christian Minister & His Ministry (3 credits)
- 620 - Field Study #1 (1 credit)
- 622 - Field Study #2 (1 credit)
- 629 - Ministry Practicum (3 credits)
- 650 - Introduction to Biblical Counseling (3 credits)
- 652 - Practice of Biblical Counseling (2 credits)

*Missiology (600-number courses) - 4 required credits*

- 631 - Foundations of Reformed Missions (2 credits)

An additional two missions credits from any of the following:

- 632 - Evangelism and Church Planting (2 credits)
- 634 - Encounter with World Religions (2 credits)
- 635 - Intercultural Gospel Communication (2 credits)
- Contemporary Studies in Missions (2 credits)

*General Degree Requirements - 4 required credits*

- 099 - English Grammar and Syntax (0 credits)
- 701 - Nature and Method of Biblical Theology (2 credits)
- 702 - Hermeneutics (2 credits)

All incoming MDiv students should be aware that Research Methodology (322) and English Grammar and Syntax (099) are required for completion of the program and must be taken in the first semester of study (both courses are offered in-person every fall semester and online every Spring semester).

## **Master of Arts (Religion)**

This course of study educates and prepares the student for service in a teaching capacity. It can be used as a terminal degree, or as a transitional degree to additional graduate studies, particularly a ThM or PhD program in religion or theology. As a terminal degree, it is designed for those who desire a theological background and training for various callings other than full-time,

ordained gospel ministry. It is suitable for church office-bearers and for Christian professionals who desire a solid biblical and theological foundation for the work in which they are or will be engaged.

Students may choose the General Emphasis track or one of four non-general emphases: Old Testament, New Testament, Historical Theology, or Systematic Theology studies. In all cases, the program provides a thorough grounding in the Scriptures, Reformed theology, and church history. The Master of Arts (Religion) curriculum is designed to enable the student to:

1. Exegete Scripture accurately, employing an understanding of the original languages, historical contexts, and literary genres.
2. Articulate the system and history of the doctrine of confessional Reformed theology.
3. Evidence foundational knowledge in the principal theological disciplines of Biblical Studies, Systematic Theology, and Church History.
4. Articulate a proficient understanding in the student's focused discipline.

All of the general admission requirements apply to the MA program. Unlike other degree programs at Puritan Reformed, students are not required to take a minimum of 50 percent of their credits on campus to be awarded an MA, as Puritan Reformed offers a fully online MA for students interested in studying from a distance.

The Master of Arts (Religion) program is earned after completion of a minimum of 65 credits of coursework (depending on the emphasis), including Greek and Hebrew. This allows dedicated students to complete the program in two years (assuming approximately 16 credits/semester), and then proceed to further education. A minimum grade point average of 2.7 (B-) is required. Should a student already possess knowledge of Greek and/or Hebrew, the number of credits may be reduced upon successful completion of a language placement exam. The MA program must be completed within five years of matriculation; any exception must be approved by the academic dean.

MA students who do not wish to take the General Emphasis

track must declare one of the following four emphases: Old Testament, New Testament, Historical Theology, and Systematic Theology. The required courses for each emphasis are as follows:

### **MA - General Emphasis (65 Credits)**

*Old Testament (100-number courses) - 14 required credits*

- 111 - Hebrew I (3 credits)
- 112 - Hebrew II (3 credits)
- 120 - Methods of Hebrew Exegesis (3 credits)
- 132 - Old Testament Introduction (2 credits)

Three Credits from the following:

- 121 - Old Testament Exegesis I: Narratives (3 credits)
- 122 - Old Testament Exegesis II: Poets and Prophets (3 credits)

*New Testament (200-number courses) - 14 required credits*

- 201 - Greek I (3 credits)
- 202 - Greek II (3 credits)
- 220 - Methods of Greek Exegesis (3 credits)
- 232 - New Testament Introduction (2 credits)

Three Credits from the following:

- 221 - New Testament Exegesis I: Gospels and Acts (3 credits)
- 222 - New Testament Exegesis II: Epistles and Revelation (3 credits)

*Historical Theology (300-number courses) - 10 required credits*

- 311 - Ancient Church History (3 credits) *OR*
- 312 - Medieval Church History (3 credits)
- 313 - Reformation Church History (3 credits)
- 314 - Modern Church History (3 credits)
- 322 Research Methodology (1 credit) - to be taken in student's first semester

*Systematic Theology (400-number courses) - 11/12 required credits*

- 411 - Systematic Theology I: Prolegomena (2 credits)
- 412 - Systematic Theology II: Theology Proper (2 credits)

- 414 - Systematic Theology IV: Christology (2 credits)
- 415 - Systematic Theology V: Soteriology (3 credits)

At least two credits from the following:

- 413 - Systematic Theology III: Anthropology (2 credits)
- 416 - Systematic Theology VI: Ecclesiology (2 credits)
- 417 - Systematic Theology VII: Eschatology (2 credits)
- 421 - Introduction to Apologetics (3 credits)
- 424 - Puritan Theology (2 credits)
- 432 - Biblical Ethics (2 credits)
- 441 - Three Forms of Unity (2 credits)
- 441c - Westminster Standards (2 credits)

*General Degree Requirements - 5 required credits*

- 099 - English Grammar and Syntax (0 credits) - to be taken in student's first semester
- 701 - Nature and Method of Biblical Theology (2 credits)
- 702 - Hermeneutics (2 credits)
- 750 - Comprehensive Exam (1 credit)

*Open Electives - 10 / 11 credits*

## **MA - Old Testament Emphasis (66 credits)**

*Old Testament (100-number courses) - 20 required credits*

- 111 - Hebrew I (3 credits)
- 112 - Hebrew II (3 credits)
- 120 - Methods of Hebrew Exegesis (3 credits)
- 121 - Old Testament Exegesis I: Narratives (3 credits)
- 122 - Old Testament Exegesis II: Poets and Prophets (3 credits)
- 123 - Old Testament Exegesis III: Advanced Exegesis (3 credits)
- 132 - Old Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*New Testament (200-number courses) - 17 required credits*

- 201 - Greek I (3 credits)
- 202 - Greek II (3 credits)
- 220 - Methods of Greek Exegesis (3 credits)

- 221 - New Testament Exegesis I: Gospels and Acts (3 credits)
- 222 - New Testament Exegesis II: Epistles and Revelation (3 credits)
- 232 - New Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*Historical Theology (300-number courses) - 10 required credits*

- 311 - Ancient Church History (3 credits) OR
- 312 - Medieval Church History (3 credits)
- 313 - Reformation Church History (3 credits)
- 314 - Modern Church History (3 credits)
- 322 - Research Methodology (1 credit) - to be taken in student's first semester

*Systematic Theology (400-number courses) - 12 required credits*

- 411 - Systematic Theology I: Prolegomena (2 credits)
- 412 - Systematic Theology II: Theology Proper (2 credits)
- 414 - Systematic Theology IV: Christology (2 credits)
- 415 - Systematic Theology V: Soteriology (3 credits)

At least two credits from the following:

- 413 - Systematic Theology III: Anthropology (2 credits)
- 416 - Systematic Theology VI: Ecclesiology (2 credits)
- 417 - Systematic Theology VII: Eschatology (2 credits)
- 421 - Introduction to Apologetics (3 credits)
- 424 - Puritan Theology (2 credits)
- 432 - Biblical Ethics (2 credits)
- 441 - Three Forms of Unity (2 credits)
- 441c - Westminster Standards (2 credits)

*General Degree Requirements - 5 required credits*

- 099 - English Grammar and Syntax (0 credits) - to be taken in student's first semester
- 701 - Nature and Method of Biblical Theology (2 credits)
- 702 - Hermeneutics (2 credits)
- 750 - Comprehensive Exam (1 credit)

*Open Electives - 2 credits*



## **MA - New Testament Emphasis (66 credits)**

*Old Testament (100-number courses) - 17 required credits*

- 111 - Hebrew I (3 credits)
- 112 - Hebrew II (3 credits)
- 120 - Methods of Hebrew Exegesis (3 credits)
- 121 - Old Testament Exegesis I: Narratives (3 credits)
- 122 - Old Testament Exegesis II: Poets and Prophets (3 credits)
- 132 - Old Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*New Testament (200-number courses) - 20 required credits*

- 201 - Greek I (3 credits)
- 202 - Greek II (3 credits)
- 220 - Methods of Greek Exegesis (3 credits)
- 221 - New Testament Exegesis I: Gospels and Acts (3 credits)
- 222 - New Testament Exegesis II: Epistles and Revelation (3 credits)
- 223 - New Testament Exegesis III: Advanced Exegesis (3 credits)
- 232 - New Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*Historical Theology (300-number courses) - 10 required credits*

- 311 - Ancient Church History (3 credits) OR
- 312 - Medieval Church History (3 credits)
- 313 - Reformation Church History (3 credits)
- 314 - Modern Church History (3 credits)
- 322 - Research Methodology (1 credit) - to be taken in student's first semester

*Systematic Theology (400-number courses) - 12 required credits*

- 411 - Systematic Theology I: Prolegomena (2 credits)
- 412 - Systematic Theology II: Theology Proper (2 credits)
- 414 - Systematic Theology IV: Christology (2 credits)
- 415 - Systematic Theology V: Soteriology (3 credits)

At least two credits from the following:

- 413 - Systematic Theology III: Anthropology (2 credits)
- 416 - Systematic Theology VI: Ecclesiology (2 credits)

- 417 - Systematic Theology VII: Eschatology (2 credits)
- 421 - Introduction to Apologetics (3 credits)
- 424 - Puritan Theology (2 credits)
- 432 - Biblical Ethics (2 credits)
- 441 - Three Forms of Unity (2 credits)
- 441c - Westminster Standards (2 credits)

*General Degree Requirements - 5 required credits*

- 099 - English Grammar and Syntax (0 credits) - to be taken in student's first semester
- 701 - Nature and Method of Biblical Theology (2 credits)
- 702 - Hermeneutics (2 credits)
- 750 - Comprehensive Exam (1 credit)

*Open Electives - 2 credits*

**MA - Historical Theology Emphasis (65 credits)**

*Old Testament (100-number courses) - 11 required credits*

- 111 - Hebrew I (3 credits)
- 112 - Hebrew II (3 credits)
- 120 - Methods of Hebrew Exegesis (3 credits)
- 132 - Old Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*New Testament (200-number courses) - 11 required credits*

- 201 - Greek I (3 credits)
- 202 - Greek II (3 credits)
- 220 - Methods of Greek Exegesis (3 credits)
- 232 - New Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*Historical Theology (300-number courses) - 22 required credits*

- 311 - Ancient Church History (3 credits)
- 312 - Medieval Church History (3 credits)
- 313 - Reformation Church History (3 credits)
- 314 - Modern Church History (3 credits)
- 322 Research Methodology (1 credit) - to be taken in student's first semester

Nine additional credits from any Historical Theology course (9

credits) These nine credits may include ThM-level courses; special permission must be granted.

*Systematic Theology (400-number courses) - 16 required credits*

- 411 - Systematic Theology I: Prolegomena (2 credits)
- 412 - Systematic Theology II: Theology Proper (2 credits)
- 414 - Systematic Theology IV: Christology (2 credits)
- 415 - Systematic Theology V: Soteriology (3 credits)
- 424 - Puritan Theology (2 credits)
- 441 - Three Forms of Unity (2 credits) *OR*
- 441c - Westminster Standards (2 credits)

At least two credits from the following:

- 413 - Systematic Theology III: Anthropology (2 credits)
- 416 - Systematic Theology VI: Ecclesiology (2 credits)
- 417 - Systematic Theology VII: Eschatology (2 credits)
- 421 - Introduction to Apologetics (3 credits)
- 432 - Biblical Ethics (2 credits)

*General Degree Requirements - 5 required credits*

- 099 - English Grammar and Syntax (0 credits) - to be taken in student's first semester
- 701 - Nature and Method of Biblical Theology (2 credits)
- 702 - Hermeneutics (2 credits)
- 750 - Comprehensive Exam (1 credit)

## **MA - Systematic Theology Emphasis (67 credits)**

*Old Testament (100-number courses) - 11 required credits*

- 111 - Hebrew I (3 credits)
- 112 - Hebrew II (3 credits)
- 120 - Methods of Hebrew Exegesis (3 credits)
- 132 - Old Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*New Testament (200-number courses) - 11 required credits*

- 201 - Greek I (3 credits)
- 202 - Greek II (3 credits)
- 220 - Methods of Greek Exegesis (3 credits)
- 232 - New Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*Old or New Testament - 3 required credits*

One course from the following:

- 121 - Old Testament Exegesis I: Narratives (3 credits)
- 122 - Old Testament Exegesis II: Poets and Prophets (3 credits)
- 221 - New Testament Exegesis I: Gospels and Acts (3 credits)
- 222 - New Testament Exegesis II: Epistles and Revelation (3 credits)

*Historical Theology (300-number courses) - 13 required credits*

- 311 - Ancient Church History (3 credits)
- 312 - Medieval Church History (3 credits)
- 313 - Reformation Church History (3 credits)
- 314 - Modern Church History (3 credits)
- 322 - Research Methodology (1 credit) - to be taken in student's first semester

*Systematic Theology (400-number courses) - 24 required credits*

- 411 - Systematic Theology I: Prolegomena (2 credits)
- 412 - Systematic Theology II: Theology Proper (2 credits)
- 413 - Systematic Theology III: Anthropology (2 credits)
- 414 - Systematic Theology IV: Christology (2 credits)
- 415 - Systematic Theology V: Soteriology (3 credits)
- 416 - Systematic Theology VI: Ecclesiology (2 credits)
- 417 - Systematic Theology VII: Eschatology (2 credits)
- 421 - Introduction to Apologetics (3 credits)
- 424 - Puritan Theology (2 credits)
- 432 - Biblical Ethics (2 credits)
- 441 - Three Forms of Unity (2 credits) OR
- 441c Westminster Standards (2 credits)

*General Degree Requirements - 5 required credits*

- 099 - English Grammar and Syntax (0 credits) - to be taken in student's first semester
- 701 - Nature and Method of Biblical Theology (2 credits)
- 702 - Hermeneutics (2 credits)

- 750 - Comprehensive Exam (1 credit)

### **The MA (Religion) Comprehensive Examination**

To provide students in the MA program with an opportunity to review and draw into a comprehensive unity the material of the different courses in the curriculum, students take an exam that allows for a comprehensive evaluation of the student's total program. This exam is an open-book, take-home examination to be completed in a 72-hour period and is usually administered in the student's final semester.

The examination involves three questions. For both the MA (OT emphasis) and MA (NT emphasis) there will be one in Old Testament, one in New Testament, and one in hermeneutics. For both the MA (ST emphasis) and MA (HT emphasis) there will be one in systematic theology, one in apologetics, and one in church history. The examination must be typed, and each question answered separately in three to five pages.

The comprehensive examination will count for one semester hour of credit. It will be graded on a pass/fail basis. If a student should fail the exam, a petition for a retake examination within a three-week period may be considered. The questions of the examination aim at giving students the opportunity to demonstrate that they can apply the knowledge acquired in the MA program.

### **The MA Thesis (Optional) - 751 (2 credits)**

MA students may choose to substitute a thesis in their area of emphasis in place of another 2-credit course that falls under the department corresponding with their emphasis. This path is strongly recommended for those who intend to use the MA as a transitional degree to additional graduate studies. The student must enroll in 751 much the same as any course is enrolled in; prior approval must be obtained, however, by the student's faculty advisor. The thesis is to be submitted to the student's faculty advisor by February 1 in the final year of the student's program. If approved, some minor corrections may be required.

The MA thesis should demonstrate the student's ability to

perform satisfactory work in the following areas: (a) a sound understanding of the subject treated; (b) adequate knowledge of relevant bibliography; (c) cogency and clarity of argument and composition; and (d) the ability to conduct independent scholarly research utilizing standard research methods. The thesis must be prepared in accordance with the guidelines set forth in *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* by Kate L. Turabian (current edition) and is to be between 50-75 pages in length (excluding bibliography).

### **Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling (MABC) - 62 Credits**

The Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling (MABC) is designed to serve the church with biblical, Reformed, and experiential counselors who teach and model the wisdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The degree is designed to achieve this by forming godly and theologically grounded men and women who are able to counsel both the saved and unsaved, the church and unchurched, with the pure and powerful Word of Jesus Christ, aided by the Holy Spirit. We seek to train not only pastors, but also men and women who will work either vocationally or non-vocationally alongside pastors, under the authority of the church.

The biblical, Reformed, experiential, and practical truths of Scripture will be cultivated in students through the teaching and mentoring of professors. While the MABC is designed to graduate well-rounded students with an extensive understanding of the theology, history, and process of counseling, the four tenets we seek most to instill and form in our students are the following:

1. A firm conviction that the Bible is both the counselor's manual and the Holy Spirit's chosen means by which sinners are converted, saints are sanctified, the weak are strengthened, and the straying are brought back into the path of righteousness - for their own good, the glory of God, and the growth of his Kingdom.
2. A sincere desire to not merely apply temporary fixes or "band-aid" solutions to a counselee's surface problems,

whether physiological or circumstantial, but rather to address and seek the healing of heart issues by the means of the Word and Spirit of God.

3. A clear competency in counseling those struggling with depression, anxiety, anger, relational conflict, severe suffering, and assurance of salvation.
4. A thorough grasp of the practical framework necessary for establishing a counseling center in a local church, together with the conviction that counselors ought to exercise their Spiritual gifts under the authority and supervision of the elders and deacons of a local church.

All of the general admission requirements apply to the MABC program. Students *must* take a minimum of 50 percent of their credits of study at Puritan Reformed, show a godly walk of life, and fulfill their financial obligations to be awarded a Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling degree from Puritan Reformed.

A total of 62 credit hours must be completed with a minimum 2.3 grade average (C+) for the completion of the MABC program. All credit hours for the MABC must be completed within five years of matriculation; any exception must be approved by the president and academic dean.

The Master of Arts in Biblical Counseling requires completion of the following courses:

*Biblical Theology - 19 required credits*

- 132 - Old Testament Introduction (2 credits)
- 232 - New Testament Introduction (2 credits)
- 685 - Languages and Counseling (1 credit)
- 690 - Pentateuch and Prophets (2 credits)
- 691 - Wisdom Literature and the Psalms (2 credits)
- 692 - Counseling and the Life and Teaching of Christ (3 credits)
- 693 - Counseling with Paul and James (3 credits)
- 701 - The Nature and Method of Biblical Theology (2 credits)
- 702 - Hermeneutics (2 credits)

*Historical Theology - 6 required credits*

- 313 - Reformation Church History (3 credits)
- 322 - Reformed Theological Research (1 credit)
- 680 - Puritan Casuistry (2 credits)

*Systematic Theology - 15 required credits*

- 411 - ST I: Prolegomena (2 credits)
- 412 - ST II: Theology Proper (2 credits)
- 413 - ST III: Anthropology (2 credits)
- 414 - ST IV: Christology (2 credits)
- 415 - ST V: Soteriology (3 credits)
- 416 - ST VI: Ecclesiology (2 credits)
- 417 - ST VII: Eschatology (2 credits)

*Practical Theology - 20 required credits*

- 650 - Introduction to Biblical Counseling (3 credits)
- 651 - Biblical Change & Self Preparation (2 credit)
- 652 - Practice of Biblical Counseling (2 credits)
- 654 - Preventative Counseling (2 credits)
- 660 - Marriage and Family (2 credits)
- 661-664 - Issues in Counseling 1-4 (6 credits)
- 670 - Medical Issues in Counseling (1 credit)
- 671 - Counseling Practicum Observation (1 credit)
- 672 - Counseling Practicum Live I-II (2 credits)
- 673 - Counseling Practicum Observation (1 credit)

*Additional Degree Requirements - 2 required credits*

- 099 - English Grammar and Syntax (0 credits)
- 675 - Summer Field Internship (2 credits)

All incoming MABC students should be aware that Research Methodology (322) and English Grammar and Syntax (099) are required for completion of the program and must be taken in the first semester of study (both courses are offered in-person every fall semester and online every Spring semester).



## **The Master of Theology (ThM) - 30 credits**

This course of study expands and deepens a student's abilities in ministry. It is designed for students who possess a Master of Divinity or Master of Arts degree (or its equivalent) to help them take their learning to a higher level. It can be used as a terminal degree or as a transitional degree to additional graduate studies, particularly a PhD program in religion or theology. The Master of Theology (ThM) curriculum is designed to enable the student to:

- Exegete Scripture accurately, employing understanding of the original languages, historical contexts, and literary genres.
- Articulate the system and history of doctrine of confessional Reformed theology.
- Demonstrate advanced knowledge in the student's chosen and related fields of study.
- Demonstrate academic competence in the student's chosen discipline, including proficiency in producing scholarly work.

## **ThM Requirements**

### **Research Methodology**

All ThM students must successfully complete (B- or better) a Research Methodology course appropriate to their emphasis (BS800 for Biblical Studies emphasis students; CH/ST800 for Reformation and Post-Reformation Theology or Systematic Theology students). The Research Methodology course is offered every summer/fall semester as a modular course; it is strongly recommended that students complete this course as their first course.

### **Concentrations and Coursework Requirements**

A total of 30 credit hours must be completed with a minimum 3.0 grade point average (B) for the completion of the ThM program. The program must be completed within 6 years of matriculation; any exception must be approved by the President and Academic Dean. ThM students will choose a concentration in one of three areas: Biblical Studies, Reformation and Post-Reformation Theology, or Systematic Theology. Each of these concentrations

is designed for either ministers desiring advanced training beyond the MDiv or students desiring to pursue doctoral studies.

Students choosing a ThM in Biblical Studies must demonstrate competency in Hebrew and Greek, having completed a minimum of one year of biblical Hebrew and one year of biblical Greek. It is particularly the purpose of this concentration to sharpen exegetical skills, to learn to effectively employ the discipline of Biblical Theology for scriptural study and exposition, and to be able to defend the integrity and authority of Scripture.

The ThM degree can be earned following one of two tracks: either the ThM by classes only, or the ThM by classes and thesis. The first is designed for those intending the degree to be terminal; the second for those intending the degree to be transitional to further graduate study (such as a PhD).

All students accepted into the ThM program are first accepted into the course-based track of the ThM. In order to enter the thesis-based track of the ThM, the student, after successfully completing the Research Methodology course and at least one other course with a grade of "B" or higher, must make application to the Academic Dean by presenting a 2-page proposal of the thesis topic. The academic dean will then bring this initial proposal to the entire faculty for consideration.

All students admitted to the ThM by classes and thesis track will complete 24 credits of coursework (of which at least 18 credits, or 6 courses, must be in the student's chosen area of concentration) and a 6-credit thesis. All students admitted to the ThM by classes-only track will complete 30 credits of coursework (of which at least 21 credits, or 7 courses, must be in the student's chosen area of concentration).

A ThM student who has completed a ThM thesis may request the advisor to have an oral examination of the thesis in lieu of the ThM comprehensive examination. Subject to the approval of the advisor, the advisor will set a date for the oral defense of the thesis, form an examination committee, and submit the thesis, an abstract, and suggested questions to the members of the examination committee. Upon the completion of the oral examination, the student will receive a passing or failing grade,

which grade the advisor will report to the registrar within three business days after the completion of the oral defense of the thesis.

ThM credits can be earned as follows:

Completion of ThM-specific courses, or courses paired with the PhD program. ThM-level classes (or ThM/PhD classes) will be offered in the above-mentioned concentrations (see course descriptions below). Usually, these classes will be administered as modular courses, and will typically meet for an intensive week of classes.

The thesis: Students accepted by the faculty into the ThM by classes and thesis track will write a 100–200 page thesis on a topic related to the student's concentration, and approved by the appropriate faculty supervisor. The thesis is valued at 6 credits.

In order to maximize benefit to resident ThM students attending Puritan Reformed on scholarships, all such students are encouraged to audit one MDiv course a semester, the course to be chosen in consultation with the registrar. They are also encouraged to attend at least one practice preaching session a week and participate in the subsequent discussion. There will be no charge for auditing these courses.

Comprehensive Exam:

Each ThM student must take a comprehensive examination at the end of the program. This comprehensive exam is an open-book exam that students have 72 hours to complete. It will focus primarily on the student's particular concentration.

Residency Requirement:

At least one-half of the coursework towards the ThM must be completed through on-campus classes (modular courses qualify as on-campus courses). Up to one-half of the coursework may be completed through a combination of: 1) transfer of credit; 2) distance learning courses (i.e., courses that virtually "meet" synchronously with on-campus classes); 3) in rare cases, independent studies (a maximum of two courses can be taken as independent studies).

## Doctor of Ministry (DMin) - 30 Credits

Foundational to the Doctor of Ministry program is the academic, spiritual, and practical formation of the student. First, within the world of Reformed seminaries, Puritan Reformed is recognized by its emphasis on biblical, Reformed, experiential, and practical ministry. This recognition has led to a worldwide demand for a comprehensive Doctor of Ministry program. Secondly, Puritan Reformed is recognized for its attention to preaching (homiletics) and biblical counseling. This recognition is underscored, moreover, by the numerous inquiries received from Puritan Reformed alumni, constituents, and others since the commencement of the Doctoral (PhD) program in 2016. The DMin program combines academic rigor and integrity, and joins this with biblical piety (*pietate cum scientia conjungenda*)—in other words, it is a program designed to serve the ministry of preaching and counseling for both the academy and church.

The specific focus of the Doctor of Ministry in Homiletics of Puritan Reformed is on biblical, Reformed, experiential and practical preaching. Puritan seeks to adhere to the Reformed and Puritan tradition of homiletics, exemplified by John Calvin, William Perkins (Art of Prophesying), Petrus van Mastricht (Best Method of Preaching), Jonathan Edwards, and many others. We aim to do so by offering a Doctor of Ministry program in homiletics that is distinctive in its academics as well as its biblical piety; this will be evident in the admissions requirements, as well as the program's academic rigor, and spiritual and practical formation components.

The Doctor of Ministry in Homiletics also aims to contribute to the long-term aspiration of the seminary to establish a Global Center of Reformed Preaching. This center will capture the heart of the vision and mission of the seminary, articulate its homiletical vision, and solidify its academic and practical contribution to preaching. This center will be a place where seminary faculty, students, and stakeholders work in a collaborative environment to create rich learning and teaching experiences for the preparation and delivery of sermons. The center aims to increase

student preaching ability, build meaningful partnerships, and invite stakeholders to become members of an active learning community for biblical, Reformed, and experiential preaching. The Doctor of Ministry in Biblical Counseling is focused on biblical, Reformed, experiential, and practical counseling. Puritan Reformed seeks to adhere to the Reformed and Puritan tradition of casuistry, contemporary developments in the literature and discipline of biblical discipline. We aim to do so by offering a Doctor of Ministry program in counseling that is distinctive in its academics as well as its biblical piety. This will be evident in the admissions requirements, as well as the program's academic rigor, and spiritual and practical formation components. Puritan Reformed has partnered with the Institute of Reformed Biblical Counseling to establish counseling centers in three strategic areas in North America: Sunnyside, WA; Grand Rapids, MI; Kinnelon, NJ. Over time, this partnership will grow to include other geographical areas in North America and around the globe. These counseling centers will be places where seminary faculty, students, and local church stakeholders work in a collaborative environment to create rich learning and ministry experiences in the training and counseling of individuals from a biblical and confessional standpoint across an array of issues. This initiative seeks to build meaningful partnerships with local churches and provide resources for church leaders and lay people to be trained and transformed through biblical truth in the counseling context. To learn more about the DMin program, follow the link [here](#) to the DMin handbook.

## **DMin Requirements**

The Doctor of Ministry program is designed for pastors and preachers who are engaged in full-time ministry. The five core, required courses are modular, one-week courses to be taken on campus or from a distance. Students must complete the Doctor of Ministry study within six years of matriculation (exceptions should be approved Academic Dean); this timeframe includes, completion of all coursework, research (proposal), writing, and defense of the dissertation project. It is recommended that the

dissertation project should be published with a publisher within two years after the defense or published articles derived from the dissertation project.

The delivery of educational material via technology allows students to complete the required coursework (both residential and non-residential) within a period of four years. The resident or on-campus requirements of five (5) modular courses (week-long courses) must be completed within a period of four years. To foster involvement all students are encouraged to be on campus in August while taking the core courses, though this is not required. All DMin students *must*, however, complete at least half of their required coursework on campus.

A total of twenty-four (24) credits plus a DMin project are required for completion of the Doctor of Ministry degree. The five (5) required modular (week-long) residential courses are offered on a rotating basis in August and January, with each August two of the required courses being offered, and then the next August the other two required courses offered.

The Doctor of Ministry in Homiletics degree requires completion of the following courses:

*DMin (Homiletics) Core courses - 15 required credits*

- HOM901 - Introduction to Homiletical Studies (3 credits)
- HOM902 - Reformed Experiential Preaching I: Exegetical Considerations (3 credits)
- HOM903 - Reformed Experiential Preaching II: Reformed Historical Considerations (3 credits)
- HOM904 - Speak the Word: A Study in Oral Communication (3 credits)
- BC904 - Puritan Casuistry in Pastoral Ministry (3 credits)

The Doctor of Ministry in Biblical Counseling degree requires completion of the following courses:

*DMin (Biblical Counseling) Core courses - 15 required credits*

- BC901 - Systematic-Theological Considerations for Biblical

Counseling (3 credits)

- BC902 - Anthropology and Biblical Counseling (3 credits)
- BC903 - Counseling Issues in Marriage and Family (3 credits)
- HOM904 - Speak the Word: A Study in Oral Communication (3 credits)
- BC904 - Puritan Casuistry in Pastoral Ministry (3 credits)

*ThM/PhD elective courses - 9 required credits*

- Each DMin student must take three elective courses (9 credits). These can be ThM/PhD courses through Puritan Reformed but also can be external offerings through other institutions. Courses taken outside of Puritan Reformed should be taken at the discretion of the student advisor and the Registrar.
- Each DMin student may also seek to fulfill the three (3) of the nine (9) elective credit requirements through performing a maximum of one Directed Study (3 credits)

## **The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) - 36 Credits**

The Doctor of Philosophy degree advances a student's knowledge of a major field of theology, increases their level of theological acuity, and deepens ministry abilities. Designed for graduates of Master of Theology programs (or their equivalent), the program takes this learning to a higher level through coursework and individual theological research in areas of interest. This degree can also serve as a foundation for teaching on the level of a Master's degree (MDiv, MA, and ThM) and/or preaching. To learn more about the PhD program, follow the link [here](#) to the PhD handbook.

## **Certificate Programs**

Each of our certificate programs consists of fifteen credits of course work. Classes taken in these programs are the equivalent of classes taken at the seminary itself. Those who wish to enroll in any of these programs must complete an online application form (accessible through the seminary website). A prior bachelor's

degree is not required for our certificate programs. A certificate is granted when the following requirements have been fulfilled:

1. Completion of the course sequence with a minimum GPA of 2.00.
2. Payment of all financial obligations.

It is highly recommended that students take only one distance learning or independent study course at a time. We also recommend that students map out a schedule of when and how they intend to complete the requirements of each course. A program must be completed within eight years of its having been started.

The following five certificates are available:

### **Historical Theology**

The Certificate in Historical Theology requires the student to complete the following courses:

- 311 - Ancient Church History (3 credits)
- 312 - Medieval Church History (3 credits)
- 313 - Reformation Church History (3 credits)
- 314 - Modern Church History (3 credits)
- 322 - Research Methodology (1 credit)
- Either 424 - Puritan Theology *or* 441 - Three Forms of Unity *or* 441c - Westminster Standards (2 credits)

### **Introduction to Theological Studies**

The Certificate in Introduction to Theological Studies requires the student to complete the following courses:

- 132 - Old Testament Introduction (2 credits)
- 232 - New Testament Introduction (2 credits)
- 421 - Introduction to Apologetics (3 credits)
- 432a - Biblical Ethics (2 credits)
- 701 - Nature and Method of Biblical Theology (2 credits)
- 702 - Hermeneutics (2 credits)
- Either 424 - Puritan Theology *or* 441 - Three Forms of Unity *or* 441c - Westminster Standards (2 credits)



## **New Testament**

The Certificate in New Testament requires the student to complete the following courses:

- 201 - Greek I (3 credits)
- 202 - Greek II (3 credits)
- 220 - Methods of Greek Exegesis (3 credits)
- 221 - New Testament Exegesis I (3 credits)
- 222 - New Testament Exegesis II (3 credits)

## **Old Testament**

The Certificate in New Testament requires the student to complete the following courses:

- 111 - Hebrew I (3 credits)
- 112 - Hebrew II (3 credits)
- 120 - Methods of Hebrew Exegesis (3 credits)
- 121 - Old Testament Exegesis I (3 credits)
- 122 - Old Testament Exegesis II (3 credits)

## **Systematic Theology**

The Certificate in New Testament requires the student to complete the following courses:

- 411 - Systematic Theology I: Prolegomena (2 credits)
- 412 - Systematic Theology II: Theology Proper (2 credits)
- 413 - Systematic Theology III: Anthropology (2 credits)
- 414 - Systematic Theology IV: Christology (2 credits)
- 415 - Systematic Theology V: Soteriology (3 credits)
- 416 - Systematic Theology VI: Ecclesiology (2 credits)
- 417 - Systematic Theology VII: Eschatology (2 credits)

## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

Old Testament

New Testament

Historical Theology

Systematic Theology

Homiletics

Pastoral Theology

Missiology

General MDiv and MA Courses

Master of Theology (ThM) Courses

# COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

## MDIV, MA, AND MABC COURSE LIST

### OLD TESTAMENT

#### *111 Hebrew I (3) - Michael Barrett*

Basic knowledge of the Hebrew grammar (orthography, morphology, and syntax) and vocabulary. Knowledge of regular and irregular Hebrew verbs. Short readings of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.

#### *112 Hebrew II (3) - Michael Barrett*

Continuation of 111. More emphasis on reading from Hebrew narrative. Instruction and practice in the practical uses of Hebrew as a tool for Bible study with a view to maintaining the use of the Hebrew Bible in ministry. Prerequisite: 111 or equivalent, or special permission from the instructor.

#### *120 Methods of Hebrew Exegesis (3) - Michael Barrett*

In-depth study of Hebrew syntax. Reading and grammatical analysis of representative passages from narrative, prophecy, and poetry. Attention to aspects of grammar and syntax that are particularly significant for exegesis. Prerequisite for 121 and 122.

#### *121 OT Exegesis I: Narratives (3) - Michael Barrett*

This course will begin by proposing fundamental principles of interpretation when approaching Old Testament narratives. We will demonstrate and apply many of these principles by interpreting numerous significant passages from Genesis to Esther. Prerequisite: 111 and 112 or equivalent, or special permission from the instructor.

#### *122 OT Exegesis II: Poets & Prophets (3) - Michael Barrett*

This course will begin by proposing fundamental principles of interpretation when approaching the poetic and prophetic literature of the Old Testament. We will demonstrate and apply many of these principles by interpreting numerous significant passages from Job to Malachi. Prerequisite: 111 and 112 or equivalent, or special permission from the instructor.

*123 OT Exegesis III: Advanced Exegesis of Old Testament (3) - Michael Barrett*

This course enables students to gain further Old Testament exegetical experience through engaging in close study of selected texts from the Old Testament (e.g. Leviticus, Judges, 2 Kings, Song of Solomon, Ezekiel, Haggai & Zechariah). While based on the Hebrew text, students will use the tools of modern scholarship to engage the text. The format of the course will include a combination of lectures, seminars, and private study of the selected texts. The main focus will be on the central theological themes and interpretive issues of the writings, examined through detailed study of selected portions of the texts.

*132 Old Testament Introduction (2) - Michael Barrett*

Each Old Testament book will be considered under the headings of author, date, historical analysis, literary analysis, thematic analysis, New Testament analysis, and original message.

## **NEW TESTAMENT**

*201 Greek I (3) - Gerald Bilkes*

An introduction to the vocabulary, grammar, and syntax of New Testament Greek. Short readings of the Greek text of the New Testament.

*202 Greek II (3) - Gerald Bilkes*

Continuation of 201. More emphasis on readings from the Greek text of the New Testament. Prerequisite: 201 or equivalent, or special permission from the instructor.

*220 Methods of Greek Exegesis (3) - Gerald Bilkes*

In-depth study of Greek syntax. Reading and grammatical analysis of representative passages from narrative, prophecy, and poetry. Attention to aspects of grammar and syntax that are particularly significant for exegesis. Prerequisite for 221 and 222.

*221 NT Exegesis I: Gospels and Acts (3) - Gerald Bilkes*

An in-depth study of selections of the Gospels (Matthew-John) and Acts based on the original Greek. We will examine the art of interpreting narratives, as well as look at the distinctive approaches and messages of the various books. Prerequisite: 201 and 202 or equivalent, or special permission from the instructor.

*222 NT Exegesis II: Epistles and Revelation (3) - Gerald Bilkes, Sherif Fahim*

An in-depth study of selections of the Epistles of Paul, as well as the General Epistles and the book of Revelation, based on the original Greek. We will examine the art of interpreting epistolary discourse, as well as look at the distinctive method and message of the various books. Prerequisite: 201 and 202 or equivalent, or special permission from the instructor.

*223 NT Exegesis III: Advanced New Testament Exegesis (3) - Gerald Bilkes*

This course enables students to gain further New Testament exegetical experience through engaging in close study of the epistle to the Hebrews. While based on the Greek text, students will use the tools of modern scholarship to engage the text. The format of the course will include a combination of lectures, seminars, and private study of the selected texts. The main focus will be on the central theological themes and interpretive issues of the writings, examined through detailed study of selected portions of the texts.

*232 New Testament Introduction (2) - Gerald Bilkes*

An introduction and survey of the books of the New Testament with a focus on questions of authorship, date, historical

background, integrity, authenticity, and canonicity. The student will become acquainted with the main content and structure of each book.

## **HISTORICAL THEOLOGY**

### *311 Ancient Church History (3) - Maarten Kuivenhoven*

A study of the developing theology, ecclesiology, piety, and worship of the Christian church from the close of the apostolic age to A.D. 600. Special attention will be given to main figures in the patristic age.

### *312 Medieval Church History (3) - Maarten Kuivenhoven*

A study of medieval developments (A.D. 590-1517): the emergence of medieval Christianity, the monastic movement, missions and evangelism, challenges to the Gregorian line of the church, Eastern Orthodoxy, theological debates (e.g., predestination, Christ's bodily presence in the Supper, and atonement), the Crusades, mysticism, the subsistence or reality of ideas (e.g., realism, conceptualism, and nominalism), the rise of scholasticism, heresies (e.g., Albigensianism and Waldensianism), religious orders and their prominent theologians (e.g., Franciscans: Francis of Assisi, Bonaventure, and Duns Scotus; Dominicans: Dominic, Albert the Great, and Thomas Aquinas), the dissolution of the medieval synthesis, and forerunners of the Reformation (e.g., Thomas Bradwardine, Gregory of Rimini, John Wycliffe, and Jan Hus).

### *313 Reformation Church History (3) - Maarten Kuivenhoven*

This course traces the historic development of the Protestant Reformation from its background prior to the sixteenth century to its impact on the church and world of today. The lives and teaching of the leading Reformers will be examined along with the course of the Reformation in Germany, England, Scotland, France, and the Netherlands.

### *314 Modern Church History (3) - Maarten Kuivenhoven*

A study of prominent movements in the church from A.D. 1650 to the present, including the place of the church today amid the secularization of politics and culture. The course will focus on the consolidation of Protestant orthodoxy as well as the impact of pietism, rationalism, the evangelical revival, missiology, social reform, neo-Calvinism, and liberalism.

*322 Research Methodology (1) - Laura Ladwig, Jonathon Beeke*

This course is a study of research skills and methodology, authoritative sources, and library use designed to prepare the student to research, to write a thesis, and to engage in effective study, writing, and preaching in ministry. Attention is given to Turabian format, bibliographies, and matters of form and style in academic writing. This course is required of all incoming students in all programs, and is to be taken in the student's beginning fall semester.

*328 Covenant Theology (2) - Stephen Myers*

An examination of the scriptural teaching on covenant and related concepts as they give unity and shape to the whole of the scriptural message. Also an overview of the historical development of covenant theology, focusing especially in continental and British Reformed thinking. Attention will be paid to points of theological debate, as well as venues for homiletical presentation and ecclesiastical application of the doctrine of the covenant.

## **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY**

*411 Systematic Theology I: Prolegomena (2) - Bruce Baugus*

The first half of this course is a study in the basic areas preliminary to systematic theology, including the definition, nature, history, methods, and sources of systematic theology as well as theological encyclopedia and the spirit of Reformed theology. The second half covers the doctrine of revelation, with special emphasis on the inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of Scripture.

*412 Systematic Theology II: Theology Proper (2) - Stephen Myers*  
Considers the doctrine of God, the knowability and being of God, the names and attributes of God, the Trinity, the divine decrees, and providence.

*413 Systematic Theology III: Anthropology (2) - Bruce Baugus*  
A study of the doctrine of man, including creation, the original state of man, the covenant of works, the fall, and sin and its punishment.

*414 Systematic Theology IV: Christology (2) - Bruce Baugus*  
Considers the doctrine of the person and work of Christ: the names, natures, offices, and states of the Mediator, as well as the atonement.

*415 Systematic Theology V: Soteriology (3) - Joel Beeke*  
A study of the doctrine, nature, and work of the Holy Spirit, with a special emphasis on the Spirit's order of application of salvation (*ordo salutis*): union with Christ, calling, regeneration, conversion, repentance, faith and assurance, justification, adoption, sanctification, perseverance, and glorification.

*416 Systematic Theology VI: Ecclesiology (2) - David Kranendonk*  
A study of the doctrine of the church, with focus on the attributes and marks of the church, the nature and necessity of ecclesiastical offices, and the means of grace, including preaching and the sacraments. Considers scriptural principles for the organization of the New Testament church, analyzes various systems of polity, and compares church governments.

*417 Systematic Theology VII: Eschatology (2) - Jonathon Beeke*  
A study of the doctrine of the last things, including a treatment of the eschatological nature of the biblical message; death, immortality, and the intermediate state; the signs of Christ's second coming, His return, and millennial views; the resurrection, final judgment, and heaven and hell.

*421 Introduction to Apologetics (3) - Bruce Baugus*



An introduction to the concepts and principles of apologetic theories and how they cohere with their theoretical assumptions, with emphasis on understanding a biblical apologetic and its relationship to special revelation and the Christian world view. The student will learn how to apply the concepts of apologetics to contemporary attacks on the Christian faith and how to evaluate systems of apologetics by both internal and external criteria.

#### *424 Puritan Theology (2) - Joel Beeke*

An in-depth examination of some major themes of Puritan theology, including the Puritan view of Scripture, meditation, election, predestinarian grace, spiritual adoption, assurance of faith, sanctification, conscience and casuistry, church and worship, evangelism, and eschatology. Concluding lectures address the Puritan lifestyle that resulted from Puritan theology.

#### *432 Biblical Ethics (2) - Bruce Baugus*

An examination first of the theories of obligation and the theories of value from a philosophical perspective. Next a biblical theology of obligation and value along with their implications for decision making in personal and church life. Also, an examination of the underpinnings, method, and outworking of an ethics of the Word, with special focus on problems arising from modern medical technology (fertility, living wills, organ transplants). A thorough orientation on the Ten Commandments as the divine standard in all ethical matters.

#### *441 The Three Forms of Unity (2) - David Kranendonk*

A study of the development, content, importance, and value of the Three Forms of Unity, with a focus on the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort.

#### *441c The Westminster Standards (2) - Jonathon Beeke*

The primary purpose of this course is to help the confession-ally literate become confessionally fluent. The first part of the class will treat the history of the Westminster assembly (1643- 1653) and select theological topics. The focus of the second part of the class

will be an engagement with the texts that Presbyterians adopt as their confessional standards. Thus readings, assignments, and lectures will explore the Westminster assembly, Confession of Faith, and catechisms. Participants will be equipped to defend our confessional standards from the Scriptures, and lectures will visit the historic contexts of these classic documents.

## **HOMILETICS**

*511 Homiletics I: Sermon Preparation, Construction, & Delivery (3)*  
- Joel Beeke and Gerald Bilkes

An introduction to the field of homiletics. Special attention is given to the principles of homiletics as well as to material and formal homiletics, including the steps from the origin of a text and sermonic ideas to their gestation, the methods of study required for preparation, and the relation of all this to completion and delivery of the sermon in a worship service. Stress falls on how to proclaim and apply narrative, doctrinal, and ethical texts biblically, doctrinally, practically, and experientially.

*512 Homiletics II: Reformed Experiential Preaching (2)* - Joel Beeke

Defines and explains both the discriminatory and applicatory dimensions of Reformed experiential preaching. Examines how major Reformers, English Puritans, Dutch Further Reformation divines, and two great preachers from each of the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries emphasized the experiential dimension of vital Christianity in their sermons, then addresses the question: How can Reformed ministers best preach experientially today?

*513a Homiletics III: Sermon Preparation for Special Occasions (2)*  
- Joel Beeke and David Kranendonk

This course focuses on preparation for speaking on special occasions such as baptism, confession of faith, the Lord's Supper, weddings, funerals, installation of office-bearers, inaugural and farewell messages, and dedication and anniversary services.

*513b Homiletics III: Sermon Preparation for Special Services (1) - Joel Beeke and David Kranendonk*

This course focuses on pulpit preparation for the celebration of Advent weeks, the birth of Christ, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Prayer days, Passion weeks, Christ's crucifixion, Christ's resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost, Reformation day, and Thanksgiving day.

*514 Homiletics IV: Preaching from the Heidelberg Catechism (3) - David Kranendonk*

Examines the pros and cons of catechetical preaching; then teaches thematic preaching via each of the 52 Lord's Days of the Heidelberg Catechism.

*521 Practice Preaching I-V (5) - staff*

Each student delivers a sermon each semester for five semesters to a small group of peers and staff personnel for discussion and evaluation with respect to exegetical, homiletical, and experiential content. Delivery, structure, and relevance of the sermon are also critiqued.

## **PASTORAL THEOLOGY**

*613a Catechetics - James Beeke*

The course first examines the meaning, character, purposes, importance, and history of catechetics. It emphasizes practical skills, methods, and applications for teaching catechism classes in an effective manner, including how to view, teach, discipline, and set an example for catechism students. Followed by a study of and practice in various methods appropriate to the church's ministry to youth.

*613b Youth Ministry - Maarten Kuivenhoven*

This course is one of two which emphasize practical skills, methods and applications for effectively teaching children and teens in catechism classes or other settings. Specifically, youth ministry deals with the history, the theological foundation, youth

ministry as related to culture,  
different models of youth ministry and the future of youth  
ministry.

*614 The Christian Minister & His Ministry (3) - Joel Beeke*

A practical course on the life of the minister (stressing his qualifications and his relationships) and the work of the ministry (stressing the pastor as preacher, teacher, evangelist, visitor, worship leader, manager, and peacemaker). This course also studies the principles and practices of Christian leadership and administration.

*616 Worship & Liturgy (2) - Eric Moerdyk*

A study of the principles and practices of Christian worship and liturgy in the church. This course focuses on a biblical- theological perspective, a historical overview, an analysis of the elements of worship, the preparation and leading of worship, and the history and content of the Dutch Reformed liturgy as printed in The Psalter.

*620: Field Studies I (1): - Gerald Bilkes, David Kranendonk, Jo de Blois*

A practical program enabling students to become familiar with several forms of ministry toward particular groups in society, including ministries in jails, nursing homes, homeless shelters, family care centers, and addiction groups, as well as connect with police services. Ministry observation, personal reflections, and group discussions are key course components.

*621: Field Studies II (1): - Gerald Bilkes, David Kranendonk, Jo de Blois*

Building on course 620, this program enables students to become more familiar with and serve in a ministry that reaches a particular group in society. Ministry, reflection, discussions, and readings are aimed at spiritual, ministerial, emotional, and relational growth.

*622 Church Polity: The Church Order of Dort (2) - Bartel Elshout*

A study of the biblical principles of church government relating to the institutional life of the church, with emphasis on the Church Order of Dort (1619).

*629 Ministry Practicum: Long-term Internship (3)*

The student resides in the locality of a pastor from one to three months, allowing him to settle into the church, become part of its body, and develop relationships with its members. The student is required to prepare and preach sermons each Sabbath and to be involved in all aspects of a pastor's work and responsibilities.

*650 Introduction to Biblical Counseling (3) - Mark Kelderman*

A broad overview of biblical counseling in the context of current Christian and secular counseling approaches beginning with the history of soul care or biblical counseling from the early church until today. Accentuates the Scriptural basis for biblical counseling. Provides biblical foundation for counseling and necessary context and building block for the rest of the MABC program. Examines the relationship between special and general revelation, and biblical counseling and psychology. Outlines various models of biblical counseling including the "7 dominant domains" developed by IRBC.

*651 Biblical Change and Self-Preparation (2) - Mark Kelderman*

Presents the biblical understanding of how true change is effected in the heart and life of a counselee. This course includes an emphasis on conflict resolution, together with points on human personality and physiology. Also overviews both the initial and lifelong requirements for being an effective counselor. Conversion, ongoing sanctification, and the maintenance of skills and tools are emphasized, together with an emphasis on Holy Spirit's necessity for effective counseling. Any personal issues that would stand in the way of being able to be an effective counselor will be addressed.

*652 Practice of Biblical Counseling (2) - Mark Kelderman*

Provides an overview of the counseling process from start to finish, together with a "starter-set" of counseling pre-interview,

counseling interview, and counseling homework tools and forms. Uses role-playing and case models to illustrate each stage.

*654 Preventative Counseling (2) - Robert Burrelli/Jim Newheiser*  
Equips the counselor with scriptural principles and practical methods for counseling children, teens, young adults, singles, married couples, and seniors as they approach key decision points in their lives. This includes career choices, lifestyle decisions, soul care, child training, typical adolescent issues, singleness, and end of life preparation and planning. It also provides material to help prevent depression, suicide, and other sinful or harmful life choices. Further, it gives the principles and framework for students to teach counseling to their local churches. The purpose of this course is to enable counselors to take a proactive - rather than reactive - stance to potential problems in their church.

*661 Relational Issues in Counseling (2) - Jim Newheiser/Robert Burrelli*  
An overview of the biblical understanding of marriage and family, together with its common counseling situations. Marriage and divorce, romantic relationships, singleness, children and students are topics addressed.

*662 Sexual Issues in Counseling (1) - staff*  
Description forthcoming

*663 Abuse Issues in Counseling (1) - Darby Strickland*  
Issues dealing with abuse in marriages and how to deal with this within the church by helping victims will be addressed. A section will be devoted to ministering to the abuser as well. Sexual, verbal, physical, emotional, and other domestic abuse will be covered thoroughly.

*664 Major and Minor Mental Issues in Counseling (2) - Robert Burrelli*  
This course addresses more severe mental struggles such as panic, bipolar, manic, Alzheimer's, delusional psychosis, and

schizophrenia. By carefully looking at the body and organic changes we can come alongside counselees to help them see God's help and hope no matter what weakness He places on us. It also offers guidance for those who will be ministering to those in long term care.

*670 Medical Issues in Counseling (1) - John Hamersma/Aaron Plattner*

A presentation of the relationship between contemporary medicine and biblical counseling taught by a medical doctor and psychiatrist who clearly follows a biblical counseling model. They will explain how the body works in layman language. End of life issues, birth control, and other issues will be addressed. Practical examples and applications will be made on issues such as depression, bi-polar and other severe mental challenges.

*671 Practicum: Observation A (1) - Mark Kelderman*

The first practicum requires students to observe and analyze a standard set of counseling videos, actively engaging their newly learned counseling theory and. This is to familiarize students with application of standard biblical counseling techniques and material.

*672 Practicum: Live (1) - Mark Kelderman*

The second practicum moves students from standard videos to real life counseling scenarios occurring at the seminary. This is to introduce students to the less predictable and highly varied nature of counseling, and to bring into play both their hearts and their minds as they provide input into the current difficulties of a live counseling situation.

*673 Practicum: Observation B (1) - Mark Kelderman*

The third practicum will engage students beyond course 671 with further counseling theory and methodology in observation and analysis of a standard set of counseling videos. This is to solidify students with application of standard biblical counseling techniques and material.

*675 Summer Internship (2) - Mark Kelderman*

This internship will be done in cooperation with another Biblical Counselor, preferably certified by ACBC or IRBC (other counselors can be approved on an individual basis). Ideally this would include 100 hours of live counseling observed or co-counseled and 20 hours of primary counseling with a counselee with the supervisor present. Post-counseling debriefing sessions would need to take place between the supervisor and the student regularly. Additionally, during this period, the student should work with one counselee individually from start to finish through a counseling issue. The student will give updates on that counseling situation to his/her supervisor or the seminary who in turn will provide help by giving feedback to the student as they progress through this counseling scenario. This internship will take place during the summer after a student has completed his/her first year in the MABC program or, if necessary, it can be completed after the second year of training.

*680 Puritan Casuistry (2) - James La Belle*

This course provides a broad overview of the theory and practice of biblical counseling in the church from the 1st Century through today, with focus on the particulars of the mid-20th Century biblical counseling movement.

*685 Languages and Counseling - Jo de Blois*

A basic overview of linguistics (Greek and Hebrew language structure, etc.) together with training in modern language analysis tools. Learning to use language toolbox to properly apply scripture to counseling situations.

*690 Counseling from the Pentateuch and the Prophets (2) - Tim Yates*

An overview of counseling themes in the writings of Moses and the prophets, together with specific applications from key stories and prophecies.

*691 Counseling from Wisdom Literature and the Psalms (2) - Robert Burrelli*



An overview of counseling themes in the book of Job, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes, together with specific applications from key passages.

*692 Counseling and the Life and Teaching of Christ (3) - Tim Yates*

An overview of the counseling method and material of Christ, as provided in the gospels and key passages from Isaiah and the pastorals. This course provides a picture of Christ as both the ultimate example for biblical counselors and the final solution to all counseling problems.

*693 Counseling with Paul and James (3) - Gerald Bilkes*

A survey of the counseling method and material of Paul and James. This course not only ties together questions concerning the place of faith and the place of works in the life of a believer, but also presents to students two differing but highly effective models of counseling.

## **MISSIONOLOGY**

*631 Foundations of Reformed Missions (2) - Brian DeVries*

An introductory survey of the theology, history, and methods of Christian missions with special emphasis on biblical foundations, culture issues, and recent trends.

*632a Evangelism - Bartel Elshout*

A study of the mission of the local church by evangelism and church planting in North America with special emphasis on evangelistic preaching, congregational witness, urban ministry, and many practical considerations.

*632b Church Planting - staff*

A study of the mission of the local church by church planting in North America with special emphasis on evangelistic preaching, congregational witness, urban ministry, and many practical considerations.

*634 Encounter with World Religions (2) - Brian DeVries*

A study of the biblical principles of Christian encounter with non-Christian religion and a survey of each of the major religions in the world including Islam, Hinduism, Animism, North American cults, and religious expressions in a modern/postmodern context. Special emphasis will be given to elenctics, culture, and evangelistic approach.

*635 Intercultural Gospel Communication (2) - Brian DeVries*

An application of anthropological and sociological insights to issues in Reformed missiology, with special attention to the fundamentals of world view and culture, differences among societies, intercultural communication, and teaching God's unchanging Word in different contexts.

*637 Contemporary Studies in Missions (2) - Brian DeVries*

Missiological analysis of selected topics dealing with significant issues related to mission or evangelism today.

## **GENERAL MDIV AND MA COURSES**

*099 English Grammar and Syntax (0) - Jonathon Beeke*

An introduction to English grammar & syntax. This course is designed to prepare students for the original language classes, to give students the skills needed to write well and to analyze their own writing, and to acquaint students with the Puritan Reformed Style Guide and its requirements for proper citation. This course is required of all incoming MDiv and MA students and is to be taken in the student's beginning fall semester. Students are able to test out of all or portions of this course.

*101 Latin (3) - David Noe*

An introductory Latin language course designed to prepare students for further studies in Latin.

*102 Latin (3) - David Noe*

An intermediate Latin language course designed to prepare students for further studies in Latin.

*701 Nature and Method of Biblical Theology (2) - Gerald Bilkes*

Introduction to the history, nature and methods of Biblical Theology and the discipline's place and contribution to exegetical theology. Illustrations of the applications of the methods of Biblical Theology from both the Old and New Testaments.

*702 Hermeneutics (2) - Gerald Bilkes*

An overview of the history of biblical interpretation. A study of the principles and methods of the grammatical-historical and theological interpretation of Scripture. A treatment of the principles and practice of biblical typology, delineated from its excesses.

*750 MA Comprehensive Exam (1) - faculty supervisor appointed*

*751 MA Thesis (2) - faculty supervisor appointed*

## **MASTER OF THEOLOGY (ThM) COURSES**

### **BIBLICAL STUDIES**

*BS/CH/ST802 Introduction to Reformed Spirituality and Piety - Stephen Myers*

"For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." (Psalm 84:10) Such is the cry of the new hearts that God gives to His people, and it is this regenerate cry that has given rise to the spirituality and piety of God's people, both in theological reflection and in practice. In the present course, students will be introduced to this spirituality and piety as they were expressed and developed in the Reformation and Post-reformation periods (ca. 1500-1750). Beginning with an

examination of the foundational precursors of this spirituality and piety, the course will proceed to consider the development that occurred in these areas throughout the Reformation and Post-reformation periods. In this examination, attention will be given to the distinctive contributions of individual theologians, the broader dynamics of specific reform movements, and the emergence of prominent themes across reformed spirituality and piety.

*BS/CH/ST804 Introduction to Contemporary Theology - Bruce Baugus*

This course familiarizes students with major themes and contours of contemporary thought and their significant influence on the theological disciplines and contemporary culture. Enriched by interdisciplinary contributions from other Puritan Reformed faculty, students will explore and assess the wide impact of philosophical developments from the post-enlightenment era to the present, such as post-Enlightenment critiques of religion, hermeneutics of suspicion, psychological anthropology, critical thought, paradigm/conceptual framing, post-structuralism/deconstruction, post-postmodernism, and other contours of contemporary Western thought, on theology and culture.

*BS/CH/ST866 Reformed Covenant Theology - Stephen Myers*

An examination of the scriptural teaching on covenant and related concepts as they give unity and shape to the whole of the scriptural message. Also an overview of the historical development of covenant theology in continental and British Reformed thinking. Attention will be paid to points of theological debate, as well as venues for homiletical presentation and ecclesiastical application of the doctrine of the covenant.

*BS800 Research and Methodology - Daniel Timmer*

This course introduces the student to the history, epistemological foundations, and primary methods of biblical study since the Renaissance, and especially since the Enlightenment. Representative trends and interpreters are examined in detail,

with an emphasis on the roles of history and epistemology. Lectures and discussion will develop a biblically-faithful model for academic Biblical Studies that integrates methodological, analytical, and anthropological facets and lays the foundations for constructive interaction with a wide variety of approaches. Seminars dedicated to critical reviews of significant monographs, and especially the final course paper, will stress the integration of these facets in analysis of the work of others and in the formulation of the student's own arguments and conclusions. The course also succinctly addresses crucial issues in research methodology that directly relate to the program's goal that "students demonstrate an advanced competence in theology . . . and a mastery of relevant primary and secondary sources. . ."

*BS801a Language and Exegesis: Old Testament (3) - Michael Barrett*

Reinforcement and development in the grammatical and syntactical principles of exegesis, and application through the analysis of selected passages in the Old Testament with a special emphasis on the practical use of biblical languages in sermon preparation.

*BS801b Language and Exegesis: New Testament (3) - Gerald Bilkes*

Reinforcement and development in the grammatical and syntactical principles of exegesis, and application through the analysis of selected passages in the New Testament with a special emphasis on the practical use of biblical languages in sermon preparation.

*BS802 The World of the Bible (3) - Michael Barrett*

A study of ancient near eastern and biblical history, including the cultures, religions, and peoples preceding and contemporary with Israel from the Exodus to the post-exilic era, including the inter-testamental period and the first century Mediterranean world. Includes the discussion of key archaeological discoveries that are relevant to providing information crucial to the historical context of the books of the Bible, which is vital data in the overall

exegetical process.

*BS803a Issues in Old Testament Biblical Theology (3) - staff*

Course offerings include:

- 803a-01: Typology
- 803a-02: Theological Anthropology vis-à-vis Identity, Empire, and Idolatry

*BS803b Issues in New Testament Biblical Theology (3) - Gerald Bilkes*

This course examines issues underlying the discipline that articulates the claims and content of the New Testament in a theological fashion,

conjoined with that of the Old Testament. We will focus on the intersections of the discipline of New Testament Theology with questions of method, social sciences, ethics, and learn from some recent articulations of New Testament Theology. We will also examine certain problem areas in New Testament theology such as the New Perspective on Paul, coherency and diversity in the New Testament, and divergent method in New Testament Theology. We will also review and evaluate some of the major developments in the discipline (per Gabler, Wrede, Schlatter, Baur, Bultmann, Cullman, Kasemann, Dunn, Wright, Schreiner, Marshall, etc.).

*BS806 Distinctive Ideas in the New Testament (3) - Gerald Bilkes*

Development of key New Testament themes or concepts from a biblical-theological perspective, such as conversion, stewardship, missions, parables, and key theological words.

*BS807 Issues in Old Testament Studies (3) - staff*

Current course offerings include:

- 807-01: Biblical Theological Interpretation in Postmodern Contexts

*BS808 Issues in the New Testament Use of the Old Testament (3) - Benjamin Gladd*

A study of the different types of Old Testament quotations and

allusions occurring in the New Testament. Consideration is given to textual issues as well as the hermeneutical principles employed by the New Testament writers.

*BS809 Readings in Old Testament Studies: Reading and Interpreting the Hebrew Text (3) - staff*

Directed reading in various schools of thought and theories involved in Old Testament scholarship (past and present), and evaluation on the basis of the absolute authority of Scripture with a view to defending Scripture against critical attacks.

*BS810 Readings in New Testament Studies (3) - staff*

Course offerings include:

- 810-01: New Testament Scholarship
- 810-02: Rhetoric and Reception History in New Testament Interpretation
- 810-03: Synoptic Gospels
- 810-04: Johannine Literature
- 810-05: Luke-Acts
- 810-06: Pauline Literature
- 810-07: Epistle to the Hebrews
- 810-08: Non-Pauline Epistles
- 810-09: Revelation

*BS811 The History and Preservation of the Biblical Text (3) - Michael Barrett*

Studies in the history, theories, and praxis of textual criticism with a view to affirming the reliability of the Masoretic Text for the Old Testament and Majority Text for the New Testament.

*BS812 Directed Research (3) - staff*

Subject to approval by the administration, the student will submit an outline of a topic of special interest in the general field of biblical studies, including the course requirements and how the objectives of the course will be achieved. The requirements should include a detailed bibliography, the number of pages to be read, a description of a research paper, and the number of

scheduled meetings with the directing professor.

*BS813 Biblical Aramaic - Michael Barrett*

A study of the basic grammar of Aramaic and reading of the Aramaic passages in the Old Testament. In addition, the reading of selected extra-biblical texts from the Targums, Qumran, and Elephantine.

*BS814 Introduction to the Septuagint - Michael Barrett*

Selected readings from the Septuagint as well as instruction regarding the Septuagint's value and use for both Old and New Testament studies.

*820 Issues in Hebrew Linguistics - Reiner de Blois*

In this course we will study the structure of meaning of Biblical Hebrew from a cognitive linguistic perspective. We will analyze the Hebrew texts of the Old Testament and look for the semantic structure behind the individual words. Rather than basing ourselves on existing dictionaries, which are strongly influenced by philology and etymology, we will let the Biblical text speak for itself wherever possible, and look for semantic patterns between the linguistic elements. We will study the difference between lexical meanings and contextual meanings and assign domains to theme. We will discover together how a study of Biblical Hebrew poetry helps us reconstruct the different cognitive frames and categories that must have existed in the minds of the speakers of the language. We will study Hebrew metaphors and discover how different categories and frames can be mapped onto one another. Finally, we will discover how the semantic structure of the language can be used to establish the meaning of words in cases where the context provides insufficient handles for doing that.

*821 Issues in Old Testament Interpretation - staff*

Course offerings include:

- 821-01: Pentateuch
- 821-02: Historical Books
- 821-03: Poetry & Wisdom Literature



- 821-04: Major Prophets
- 821-05: Minor Prophets

*832 Issues in New Testament Interpretation - staff*

Course offerings include:

- 832-01: The Four Gospels
- 832-02: The Pauline Epistles

*837 Issues in New Testament Studies - staff*

## **REFORMATION AND POST-REFORMATION THEOLOGY**

*CH/ST800 Research and Methodology - Adriaan Neele*

This course is a study of research skills and methodology, authoritative sources, and library use designed to prepare the student to research, to review the development of a thesis statement, and to engage in effective study, writing, and preaching in ministry. Attention is given to Turabian format, bibliographies, and matters of form and style in academic writing.

*CH801 Introduction to Reformation and Post-Reformation Studies - Jonathon Beeke*

This course offers an introduction to the Reformation and Reformed orthodox periods of the Protestant church (ca.1500-ca.1750). The course explores the relationship of Medieval, Reformation, and post-Reformation church history, including issues such as problems associated with periodization, methodological considerations, medieval influences on the Reformation and post-Reformation periods, and the development and codification of Christian doctrine in the Protestant tradition. This course is not intended to be a survey course as this is already assumed; as such, more attention will be given to select primary sources and figures from the periods in question with the intent of reading and situating these texts and figures within their historical context. Finally, matters and issues of continuity and discontinuity pertaining to the intellectual thought of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century continental

Europe will be considered, with special focus on implications for polemics, doctrinal formulation, biblical exegesis, and praxis of the Protestant church.

*CH/ST810 Historical Figures and Thought - staff*

Course offerings include:

- 810-01: Augustine
- 810-02: Thomas Aquinas
- 810-03: John Calvin
- 810-04: Luther and Lutheran Orthodoxy
- 810-05: William Perkins
- 810-06: Francis Turretin
- 810-07: John Owen
- 810-12: Petrus Van Mastricht
- 810-13: Wilhelmus à Brakel
- 810-15: Jonathan Edwards

*CH820 Documents, Doctrines, and Eras - staff*

Course offerings include:

- 820-01: Forerunners of the Reformation
- 820-02: The English Reformation
- 820-03: The Westminster Assembly
- 820-04: Puritan Theology in England
- 820-05: Post-Reformation in England
- 820-06: The Theology of the Thirty-Nine Articles
- 820-07: Illustrative Texts of England's Long Reformation
- 820-08: Dutch Further Reformation
- 820-09: Synod of Dort
- 820-10: Heidelberg Catechism
- 820-11: John Knox and the Scottish Reformation
- 820-12: Scottish Presbyterianism / Theology
- 820-13: American Presbyterianism
- 820-14: North American Church History
- 820-15: The 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century Baptists
- 820-16: Calvinistic Baptist History in England and America
- 820-17: Revival in the Reformed Tradition
- 820-18: Reformed Moral Theology

- 820-19: Adam and Christ in History and Theology
- 820-20: Doctrine of Scripture
- 820-22: The Trinity in Reformed Orthodoxy
- 820-23: The Twofold Kingdom of Christ in Reformed Theology

*CH830 Exegesis, Practice, and Preaching*

Course offerings include:

- 830-01: Reformed & Reformed Orthodox Approaches to Scriptural Interpretation
- 830-02: Puritan Piety and Practical Divinity
- 830-03: Post-Reformation Homiletics
- 830-04: Homiletics in the Dutch Tradition

*BS/CH/ST802 Introduction to Reformed Spirituality and Piety - Stephen Myers*

"For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." (Psalm 84:10) Such is the cry of the new hearts that God gives to His people, and it is this regenerate cry that has given rise to the spirituality and piety of God's people, both in theological reflection and in practice. In the present course, students will be introduced to this spirituality and piety as they were expressed and developed in the Reformation and Post-reformation periods (ca. 1500-1750). Beginning with an examination of the foundational precursors of this spirituality and piety, the course will proceed to consider the development that occurred in these areas throughout the Reformation and Post-reformation periods. In this examination, attention will be given to the distinctive contributions of individual theologians, the broader dynamics of specific reform movements, and the emergence of prominent themes across reformed spirituality and piety.

*BS/CH/ST804 Introduction to Contemporary Theology - Bruce Baugus*

This course familiarizes students with major themes and contours

of contemporary thought and their significant influence on the theological disciplines and contemporary culture. Enriched by interdisciplinary contributions from other Puritan Reformed faculty, students will explore and assess the wide impact of philosophical developments from the post-enlightenment era to the present, such as post-Enlightenment critiques of religion, hermeneutics of suspicion, psychological anthropology, critical thought, paradigm/conceptual framing, post-structuralism/deconstruction, post-postmodernism, and other contours of contemporary Western thought, on theology and culture.

*BS/CH/ST866 Reformed Covenant Theology - Stephen Myers*

An examination of the scriptural teaching on covenant and related concepts as they give unity and shape to the whole of the scriptural message. Also an overview of the historical development of covenant theology in continental and British Reformed thinking. Attention will be paid to points of theological debate, as well as venues for homiletical presentation and ecclesiastical application of the doctrine of the covenant.

*CH872 Directed Research - staff*

Subject to approval by the administration, the student will submit an outline of a topic of special interest in the general field of Reformation or Post-Reformation theology, including the course requirements and how the objectives of the course will be achieved. The requirements should include a detailed bibliography, the number of pages to be read, a description of a research paper, and the number of scheduled meetings with the directing professor.

## **SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY**

*CH/ST800 Research and Methodology - Adriaan Neele*

This course is a study of research skills and methodology, authoritative sources, and library use designed to prepare the student to research, to review the development of a thesis statement, and to engage in effective study, writing, and

preaching in ministry. Attention is given to Turabian format, bibliographies, and matters of form and style in academic writing.

*BS/CH/ST802 Introduction to Reformed Spirituality and Piety - Stephen Myers*

"For a day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." (Psalm 84:10) Such is the cry of the new hearts that God gives to His people, and it is this regenerate cry that has given rise to the spirituality and piety of God's people, both in theological reflection and in practice. In the present course, students will be introduced to this spirituality and piety as they were expressed and developed in the Reformation and Post-reformation periods (ca. 1500-1750). Beginning with an examination of the foundational precursors of this spirituality and piety, the course will proceed to consider the development that occurred in these areas throughout the Reformation and Post-reformation periods. In this examination, attention will be given to the distinctive contributions of individual theologians, the broader dynamics of specific reform movements, and the emergence of prominent themes across reformed spirituality and piety.

*BS/CH/ST804 Introduction to Contemporary Theology - Bruce Baugus*

This course familiarizes students with major themes and contours of contemporary thought and their significant influence on the theological disciplines and contemporary culture. Enriched by interdisciplinary contributions from other Puritan Reformed faculty, students will explore and assess the wide impact of philosophical developments from the post-enlightenment era to the present, such as post-Enlightenment critiques of religion, hermeneutics of suspicion, psychological anthropology, critical thought, paradigm/conceptual framing, post-structuralism/deconstruction, post-postmodernism, and other contours of contemporary Western thought, on theology and culture.

*CH/ST810 Historical Figures and Thought - staff*

Course offerings include:

- 810-01: Augustine
- 810-02: Thomas Aquinas
- 810-03: John Calvin
- 810-04: Luther and Lutheran Orthodoxy
- 810-05: William Perkins
- 810-06: Francis Turretin
- 810-07: John Owen
- 810-12: Petrus Van Mastricht
- 810-13: Wilhelmus à Brakel
- 810-15: Jonathan Edwards

*CH/ST820 Documents, Doctrines, and Eras - staff*

Course offerings include:

- 820-03: The Westminster Assembly
- 820-04: Puritan Theology in England
- 820-12: Scottish Presbyterianism / Theology
- 820-18: Reformed Moral Theology
- 820-19: Adam and Christ in History and Theology
- 820-20: Doctrine of Scripture
- 820-22: The Trinity in Reformed Orthodoxy
- 820-23: The Twofold Kingdom of Christ in Reformed Theology

*BS/CH/ST866 Reformed Covenant Theology - Stephen Myers*

An examination of the scriptural teaching on covenant and related concepts as they give unity and shape to the whole of the scriptural message. Also, an overview of the historical development of covenant theology in continental and British Reformed thinking. Attention will be paid to points of theological debate, as well as venues for homiletical presentation and ecclesiastical application of the doctrine of the covenant.

*ST881 Prolegomena - Stephen Myers*

The first half of this course is a study in the basic areas preliminary

to systematic theology, including the definition, nature, history, methods, and sources of systematic theology as well as theological encyclopedia and the spirit of Reformed theology. The second half covers the doctrine of revelation, with special emphasis on the inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of Scripture.

*ST882 Theology Proper - Stephen Myers*

The doctrine of God stands at the center of all Christian theology. In this course, we will consider the aspects of that doctrine: the knowability and being of God, the names and attributes of God, the Trinity, the divine decrees, providence, and good and evil angels.

*ST883 Anthropology - Stephen Myers*

A study of the doctrine of man, including creation, the original state of man, the covenant of works, the fall, and sin and its punishment.

*ST884 Christology - Stephen Myers*

Considers the doctrine of the person and work of Christ: the names, natures, offices, and states of the Mediator, as well as atonement.

*ST885 Soteriology - Stephen Myers*

Considers the doctrine of salvation and the doctrine of the Holy Spirit.

*ST886 Ecclesiology - Stephen Myers*

A study of the doctrine of the church, with focus on the attributes and marks of the church, the nature and necessity of ecclesiastical offices, and the means of grace, including preaching and the sacraments. Considers scriptural principles for the organization of the New Testament church, analyzes various systems of polity, and compares church governments.

*ST887 Eschatology - Stephen Myers*

A study of the doctrine of the last things, including a treatment of the eschatological nature of the biblical message; death,

immortality, and the intermediate state; the sign's of Christ's second coming, His return, and millennial views; the resurrection, final judgment, and heaven and hell.

*ST889 Issues in Retrieval or Reception Theology - staff*  
Course description is forthcoming.

*ST892 Issues in Philosophical Theology - Bruce Baugus*

This course is an exploration of the question of God in contemporary discourse from a distinctively "Continental" philosophical perspective. The course affirms that the question of God cannot successfully be suppressed - neither by modernity and its offspring, nor by the distractions of contemporary technological culture - as is observed within the philosophical traditions of Continental European philosophy and its so-called "theological turn," or the "turn to the religious". The course studies various issues at stake in the discussion of God, the means by which the witness of God arises and confronts man, and the theological-philosophical system of concepts and language by which we speak of God. Ultimately, if God has revealed Himself and spoken, it is the task of a philosophical theology to explore the grounds of this "language" and "content," both from the side of humans and from the perspective of divine revelation.

*ST890 Directed Study - staff*

Subject to approval by the administration, the student will submit an outline of a topic of special interest in the general field of systematic theology, including the course requirements and how the objectives of the course will be achieved. The requirements should include a detailed bibliography, the number of pages to be read, a description of a research paper, and the number of scheduled meetings with the directing professor.

THESIS REQUIREMENTS:

*TH951 Thesis (6) - staff*

100-200 page paper—faculty supervisor appointed (required of



those accepted into the ThM by classes and thesis track).

## **DOCTOR OF MINISTRY (DMIN) COURSES**

### **BIBLICAL COUNSELING**

*BC901 Systematic-Theological Considerations for Biblical Counseling - Jared Poulton*

This course focuses on issues of revelation and its role in the counseling process, both from the counselor's and counselee's perspective; a thorough study of theology proper, specifically the attributes of God, and the practical implications in relation to counseling; and soteriology will also be considered with a focus on regeneration, repentance, faith, justification, and sanctification as foundational to the understanding of the counselee. The role and understanding of general revelation and common grace in relation to Biblical Counseling will also be explored.

*BC902 Anthropological Considerations for Biblical Counseling - Nick Kellogg*

Anthropology is increasingly the focal point of counseling, particularly with issues regarding human sexuality. Contrary to many contemporary anthropological models, this course seeks to understand the counseling process from a Reformed, biblical, and confessional viewpoint. In its scope, this course will address the nature and extent of sin, the image of God, human sexuality both gender and orientation, as well as the person and work of Christ in the redemption of sinful humanity. Proper understanding of people, both body and soul, is essential to effectively minister to counselees.

*BC903 Counseling Issues in Marriage and Family - Jared Poulton*

This course will cover issues in counseling related to marriage and family such as premarital counseling, conflict in marriage, divorce, parent-child relationships, bereavement counseling and other issues related to marriage and family. The focus will be on bringing the whole counsel of God to bear on the human

relationships within marriage and family.

*BC904 Puritan Casuistry in Ministry - James La Belle*

At the heart of the Puritan preaching and pastoral ministry was the practice of casuistry or dealing with cases of conscience, a form of biblical counseling. This course examines the major contributions of Puritan casuistry in the preaching and counseling of William Perkins, Richard Baxter, William Ames, and many others. Particular attention is given to the diverse types of hearers of the Word, the wide array of spiritual problems that lay at the heart of so many cases of pastoral counseling and preaching, as well as the scriptural and pastoral response to such categories of spiritual need.

*HOM904 Speak the Word: A Study in Oral Communication - John Currie*

This course addresses how to be an effective communicator of the Word; learn how to articulate ideas clearly, argue logically, listen carefully, and unify groups of people under a common goal. Authentic and effective communication skills are a must for effective speakers and communicators of the Word.

## **HOMILETICS**

*BC904 Puritan Casuistry in Ministry - James La Belle*

At the heart of the Puritan preaching and pastoral ministry was the practice of casuistry or dealing with cases of conscience, a form of biblical counseling. This course examines the major contributions of Puritan casuistry in the preaching and counseling of William Perkins, Richard Baxter, William Ames, and many others. Particular attention is given to the diverse types of hearers of the Word, the wide array of spiritual problems that lay at the heart of so many cases of pastoral counseling and preaching, as well as the scriptural and pastoral response to such categories of spiritual need.

*HOM901 Introduction to Homiletical Studies - Adriaan Neele*

This course is an introduction to the studies of homiletics and

includes an overview of primary sources from the Patristic era to the 21st century of homiletical handbooks, preaching, and sermons, and an overview of twentieth-century scholarship. Attention will be given to the classical canons of rhetoric (*inventio, dispositio, elocutio, memoria, and pronuntiatio*), as well as transitional moments of homiletics, and trajectories of continuity and discontinuity will be discussed. Attention will be given to the classical structure of the sermon, including Exordium, Narratio, Propositio, Confirmatio, Confutatio, and Conclusio, as well as a discussion of the grand and plain style of preaching (William Perkins, *The Art of Prophesying*), the development from explicatio to applicatio, Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana* IV, ca 425 and Andreas Hyperius, *De formandis concionibus sacris*, 1573 (*Practice of Preaching*, 1577), and the intersection of preacher, audience, psychology, affections, and communication. Furthermore, attention will be given to Dutch tradition of homiletics, such as catechetical preaching T. Hoekstra, *Gereformeerde Homiletiek* (1926), G. Wisse, *Homiletiek, Verklaring en toepassing van het Woord Gods* (1930/80), and K. Dijk, *De Dienst der Prediking* (1955)—translation will be offered in class. In addition, the course will survey the New Homiletics, Expository Preaching, Text-driven Preaching, and the Art Homily as well as *Reformed Preaching* by Joel R. Beeke (2018) and *That which we have seen. Phenomenology and Homiletics* (2023) by the course instructor. The course proposes that contemporary relevant preaching must be biblical and historically informed. The course design considers both the theoretical aspect of homiletics (PhD emphasis) and the practical dimension of homiletics (DMin emphasis).

### *HOM902 Reformed Experiential Preaching I: Exegetical Considerations - Gerald Bilkes*

This course is an introduction to the way in which exegesis gives preaching its experiential character and impetus. The conviction of this course is that all faithful preaching in its very essence is experiential, as preaching is for faith (Rom. 10:14), and faith is full-orbed, “not just a certain knowledge whereby I hold for truth all that God has revealed to us in His Word, but also an assured

confidence, which the Holy Ghost works by the gospel in my heart, that not only to others, but to me also, remission of sin, everlasting righteousness and salvation are freely given by God, merely of grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits" (Heidelberg Catechism, Lord's Day 7; A 21). God speaks in preaching. His claim reaches the hearer. It gives life from spiritual death as the Spirit uses the Word of God. Thus preaching by definition is experiential, though many strip from the Word its experiential character. The method of the course is to examine how servants of the Word have mined the text for the experiential in the understanding of what preaching is, the preparation for preaching, the exposition for and in preaching, the application in preaching, and moment and context of preaching, and the reception and echo of preaching. The aim is to grow the range and consciousness of sonority of experiential listening to and preaching the text.

*HOM903 Reformed Experiential Preaching II: Reformed Historical Considerations - Joel Beeke*

This course will examine Reformed experiential preaching, defined and described, addressing this question: what is Reformed experiential preaching? It will observe the major elements of Reformed experiential preaching and the experiential preacher in his life and ministry. It will then illustrate Reformed experiential preaching by looking at those who have embodied it; preachers such as Zwingli, Bullinger, Calvin, Perkins, Sibbes, Goodwin, Bunyan, Teellinck, à Brakel, Edwards, Davies, M'Cheyne, and Lloyd-Jones. After such considerations, attention will be paid to how the Reformed experiential preacher can consider such historical figures in his ministry today.

*HOM904 Speak the Word: A Study in Oral Communication - John Currie*

This course addresses how to be an effective communicator of the Word; learn how to articulate ideas clearly, argue logically, listen carefully, and unify groups of people under a common goal. Authentic and effective communication skills are a must for effective speakers and communicators of the Word.

## **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

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# **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

## **Academic Calendar**

The normal academic year consists of two 14-week semesters (fall and spring) and usually a few weeks of interim courses in the winter and summer. Normally, the fall semester begins the Tuesday before Labor Day; the spring semester begins the last Tuesday in January. Traditionally, the academic calendar is as follows:

- Last Tuesday Before Labor Day: Fall Classes Begin
- Thanksgiving Day and following Friday: No classes
- Second week of December: Final Exams
- First and second weeks of January: Winter Interim
- Third Tuesday of January: Spring Classes Begin
- Fourteenth week of the calendar year: Spring Break
- First week of May: Final Exams
- End of May and early June: Summer Interim

More detailed academic calendars are available on the seminary's website.

## **Seminary Hours of Operation**

The seminary is open Monday to Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM. Most classes are taught Tuesday through Friday to accommodate student and faculty weekend travel; other classes are taught as modules that may include Mondays or evenings. The William Perkins Library hours are posted on the seminary's website.

## **Grading System**

Puritan Reformed employs a common set of marks to indicate student achievement in a course. The course syllabi detail specific requirements for each level of achievement. The following criteria are used in assigning a final grade:

- A - Excellent; superior achievement of course objectives.

- B - Good; commendable achievement of course objectives.
- C - Satisfactory; acceptable achievement of course objectives.
- D - Poor; marginal achievement of course objectives.
- F - Failure to advance in the course to the extent necessary for credit to be given.
- W - Withdrawal; official permission granted to withdraw from the course after the final date for dropping a course.
- P - Pass; adequate achievement of course objectives, but no grade points given.
- AU - Audit; no grade points given.
- I - Incomplete; a temporary extension granted as defined in the "Policy for Incompletes."

Grades have been assigned the following numerical values for the purpose of computing the grade point average:

Percentage	Grade	Grade Points
95-100	A	4.0
91-94	A-	3.7
88-90	B+	3.3
84-87	B	3.0
81-83	B-	2.7
78-80	C+	2.3
74-77	C	2.0
71-73	C-	1.7
68-70	D+	1.3
64-67	D	1.0
61-63	D-	0.7
0-60	F	0.0

Grade points per subject are determined by multiplying the grade points assigned to the letter grade earned, times the number of credit hours assigned to the course. A student's semester and cumulative grade-point average are computed by dividing the total grade points earned by the number of attempted hours.

## **Grade Reports and Appeals**

Every student has access to an unofficial copy of his or her transcript through Populi, the seminary's online student

management system. Any discrepancy between the transcript and the student's personal record must be brought to the attention of the seminary registrar. Students have a period of six months from the final date of the semester to appeal any grade recorded on their transcript within that same semester. After this six-month period, grades will be considered final.

### **Academic Probation**

At the end of each academic term, a student who fails to maintain the minimum GPA for his or her program (MDiv/MABC = 2.3; MA = 2.7; ThM/DMin = 3.0; PhD = 3.5) will receive a notification from the registrar warning the student of the drop in performance, even if the student's cumulative GPA meets the minimum requirement. The student should take this warning seriously and endeavor to raise his or her average to acceptable standards during the following term. A student whose GPA falls below the minimum requirements for graduation will be placed on academic probation and will be given two semesters to raise his or her average to the minimum, or to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the registrar and Academic Dean that significant progress is being made to raise the average to the minimum standard. If sufficient progress is not made, the student will be terminated from the program. Funding sources such as the Puritan Reformed Scholarship Committee and/or church support will be promptly notified when a student receiving funds is terminated from a program.

### **Definition of Full-time Status**

Full-time status is determined by a minimum number of hours of coursework to be taken per semester. For MDiv, MABC, and MA students, at least 12 hours must be taken per semester (or 24 hours per academic year) in order to maintain full-time status; for ThM, DMin, and PhD students, a minimum of 6 hours must be taken per semester (or 12 hours per academic year) in order to maintain full-time status.



## **Enrollment in Courses**

Enrollment periods for winter/spring courses and summer/fall courses are established as defined in the academic calendar. All returning students are required to enroll in their desired courses during these two registration periods; most semester-length and modular courses can be enrolled in through Populi, Puritan Reformed's online student software. Late enrollment will be penalized at 5% of the total tuition costs. Enrollment in Independent Study courses must be administered by the registrar and are not subject to the late enrollment fee.

## **Visiting Student Status and Auditing Courses**

Students not enrolled in a degree program at Puritan Reformed are yet able to take classes for credit at the seminary; they can do so as visiting students. A maximum of 15 credits may be taken as a visiting student at the MDiv/MA level, and a maximum of 6 credits may be taken as a visiting student at the ThM/PhD level. If a prospective student wishes to either audit a class or take it for credit, he or she must first submit an online condensed application; instructions regarding this mini application can be obtained from the registrar. Classes may be audited at the cost of \$60 per credit hour.

Students who have taken a course which they subsequently wish to audit, may do so free of charge providing there is sufficient room in the class and permission is granted by the instructor. Regular students are not able, however, to first audit a course and then take this course for credit.

## **Distance Learning Program**

Our distance learning program aims to bring the Reformed tradition of biblical, experiential, and Christ-centered theology to as many as are interested, regardless of location. Puritan Reformed desires to train future leaders around the world who will serve the church and society with hearts and minds that have been trained for ministry. All MA courses can be taken without coming to the seminary. These courses are the same courses taught in our seminary by our professors.

The credits earned can be applied to our traditional degrees. Puritan Reformed uses an online course management system to engage students, facilitate interactions between students, and to distribute course materials.

Tuition for distance education courses is the same as the normal seminary tuition. If it is necessary to drop or withdraw from a course, the refund policy as described in the "Tuition Refund for Dropped/Withdrawn courses" will apply. Should a certificate or visiting student decide to pursue a master's degree, he or she must still go through the application process.

## **Tuition and Fees**

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary is committed to providing affordable, solid seminary training to its students for the good of the church. Students are charged \$275 per credit hour (\$60 per audited hour). The tuition rate is subject to change by approval of the faculty.

Students are invoiced for tuition costs at the beginning of each semester; there are four payment due dates corresponding to the four semester invoicing periods:

- for all courses within the fall semester, tuition is due September 30.
- for all courses within the winter interim, tuition is due January 30.
- for all courses within the spring semester, tuition is due February 28.
- for all courses within the summer interim, tuition is due August 30.

Special fees include the following:

- Application fee: \$50 (non-refundable)
- Accepted student deposit: \$100 (confirming accepted student's decision to enroll and is applied towards student's tuition)
- Distance Education fee: \$75 .00/course
- 30-day extension for independent study courses: 20% of the course's tuition cost (can only be applied two times per

independent study course)

- Late enrollment fee for returning students: 5% of total semester tuition cost.
- Graduation fee of \$75 .00 to be charged in student's final semester. This fee is applied even if the student does not attend the graduation ceremony.

If payment of tuition and fees is not received prior to the beginning of the following semester, or if an approved payment plan is not in place, the student may be prohibited from enrolling in further courses.

The low cost of education at Puritan Reformed is part of the seminary's commitment to reach out to others to provide a solid ministerial training for the good of the universal church of Christ Jesus.

Students should also be aware that Puritan Reformed has chosen to not administer VA benefits. Puritan Reformed does not accept any government funding, including the GI Bill. The seminary believes that receiving government funds could result in regulatory burdens that could potentially jeopardize or compromise biblical principles. In its place, scholarship funds are available for qualifying applicants who are veterans.

## **Student Spouse Discount**

All spouses of degree-seeking, Puritan Reformed students are allowed to take courses for credit or audit, free of all tuition charges. In either case, a student spouse must go through the application process either as a visiting student (recommended for spouses wanting to audit courses or take a maximum of 15 credits for a grade) or as a degree-seeking student. Should a spouse apply for a degree program, he/she will be assessed on his/her own merit; the status of said applicant as a student spouse will not be considered when the admissions committee arbitrates a decision.

While a spouse's tuition will be covered, Puritan Reformed still requires that a student spouse pay any fees that accrue throughout the process of pursuing a degree with Puritan Reformed. Such fees include but are not limited to: distance

education fees, an application fee, a graduation fee, late-enrollment fees, or fees related to course withdrawal. All fees are expected to be paid before a spouse continues to audit or take courses for credit.

Which student spouse receives free tuition will be determined by which student accumulates the smallest tuition invoice in a six-month period. For example, if a male ThM student takes 6 credits between the months of August and December, while his wife (as a visiting student) takes 8 credits, he will receive the free tuition while she will be invoiced for all 8 credits.

### **Tuition Refund of Dropped/Withdrawn Courses**

A student dropping or withdrawing from an individual course may receive the following refund on tuition:

For traditional semester-length (including distance education) and independent study courses:

- Within two weeks, an 80% refund is granted
- Within four weeks, a 60% refund is granted
- Within six weeks, a 50% refund is granted
- After six weeks, no refund is granted.

For modular or intensive courses:

- Within 3-4 weeks prior to the first day, an 80% refund is granted
- Within 2-3 weeks prior to the first day, a 60% refund is granted
- Within 1-2 weeks prior to the first day, a 50% refund is granted
- Within 0-1 week prior to the first day, no refund is granted.

For scholarship students, the above drop/add policy applies.

### **Final Examinations**

Final examinations are given during an announced exam week at the conclusion of each academic term. If applicable, exams for all courses will be administered during each course's regularly appointed timeslot for that semester. Students are expected to

take examinations at this time. Excuses for absence from a final examination and requests to reschedule an exam are to be presented to the professor prior to the scheduled time of the examination unless unforeseen circumstances make prior notice impossible.

## **Commencement and Placement**

A student will be allowed to graduate only after all the program requirements have been met and a graduation checklist form has been completed and submitted to the registrar. Only in rare situations, and with approval of both the Academic Dean and the registrar, may a student participate in commencement exercises with incomplete coursework. In such cases the student will not be awarded a diploma until all program requirements have been fulfilled. Each student who is eligible to receive a degree is expected to participate in the commencement unless he or she has compelling reasons for being absent. In such cases, a student will receive the degree *in absentia*. The date for commencement exercises will typically be the first Friday evening after the last final exam of the spring semester. Seminary regalia will be made available for graduating students.

Faculty and administration happily provide any assistance or necessary paperwork, records, and letters of recommendation to a student who needs them for entrance into another graduate program or a position for which they are qualified.

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

Drop/Add Policy

Withdrawal from Course(s) Policy

Withdrawal from Seminary Policy

Transfer of Credits

Retake Policy

Policy for Assignment Extensions

Late Submission of Course Assignments Policy

Policy for Incompletes

Plagiarism Policy

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

Distance Learning Policies

Independent Study Policies

Policy for Enrolling in a Directed Study

## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

### **Drop/Add Policy**

A student is able to drop or add a course within an established "grace" period as set in the academic calendar. After the drop/add deadline, a student may no longer enroll in a course. If a student drops a course within this period, the dropped course does not appear on the student's transcript. The drop/add deadlines are as follows:

- for fall, winter, spring, and summer semesters - 7 days after the start of each semester (these deadlines will be noted in the academic calendar).
- for all independent studies - 7 days after enrollment date.
- for all modular courses - first day of course (a student adding a modular class must attend the first day of that class).

The student should be aware of the tuition refund concerning dropped/withdrawn courses as established in the section entitled "Tuition Refund of Dropped/Withdrawn Course(s)."

### **Withdrawal from Course(s) Policy**

After the Drop/Add deadline, a student may withdraw from a course(s) with the permission of the registrar. The student will be assigned a "W" (withdrawn) on his or her transcript. Written petitions to withdraw from a particular course are to be made by the student to the registrar; furthermore, petitions for withdrawal must be made within the following deadlines:

- for fall, winter, spring, and summer semesters - 6 weeks after the start of each semester. These deadlines will be noted in the academic calendar.
- for all independent studies - 6 weeks after enrollment date.
- for all modular courses - second day of course.

Withdrawal under any other circumstance or withdrawal after the withdrawal deadline will result in a failing grade "F" for the course. Exceptions will apply only if approved by the Academic Dean or

registrar.

The student should be aware of the tuition refund concerning dropped/withdrawn courses as established in the section entitled "Tuition Refund of Dropped/Withdrawn Course(s)."

### **Withdrawal from Seminary Policy**

A student planning to withdraw from the seminary should report this intention to the registrar in writing and is responsible for unpaid bills to the seminary and bookstore. Should such a student desire to return to the seminary within one academic year of withdrawing, he should notify the registrar and normally need not reapply.

### **Transfer of Credits**

A student seeking transfer credit on the basis of master's level course work pursued at another institution should present to the registrar prior to registration an official transcript of the previous work, syllabi of the applicable courses, and a catalog from the other institution containing course descriptions of the work for which credit is requested. Work that has received a "C" or lower, as well as work completed more than 10 years prior to the request will normally not be accepted for transfer. After confirming equivalency of course status with the appropriate professor of the relevant course(s), credit may be granted by the registrar for up to 50 per cent of the program being completed. No credit will be given for coursework completed at the bachelor's level, though language courses may be waived by successfully passing a language placement exam. In the event that courses completed at the bachelor's level clearly duplicate courses prescribed in the student's degree program at Puritan Reformed, permission may be given to substitute other equivalent courses. Such substitutions do not reduce the total number of credits required for the completion of the student's degree program.



## **Retake Policy**

In a course in which a student has received a failing grade, permission may be granted by the professor to take a re-examination or resubmit an assignment of sufficient quality to raise the grade to a passing grade. Such work must be completed within one month after notification of the failing grade. If the grade is raised to a passing grade, the student receives credit for the course but receives a 0.0 GPA for the course.

Students are permitted to repeat a course in which a grade was earned. When a course with an earned grade of an "F" is repeated, both the failing and second grade figure into the cumulative grade-point average. If a student repeats a course that has been passed, both grades will be shown on the transcript, but only the first grade will factor into the student's GPA.

## **Policy for Assignment Extensions**

The syllabus for every course designates the dates assignments are due and the penalty that will be imposed on unexcused late submissions. Extensions may be granted on the following basis: The student requesting an extension must submit in writing the reason for his/her inability to meet the deadline of the assignment before the scheduled due date. This request will be submitted to a committee consisting of the Academic Dean, the Registrar, and the Dean of Students. This committee, in consultation with the professor of the course, will consider the validity of the request. If the committee determines that the student's explanation is valid, it will grant an extension. The professor will have the discretion to set a new due date for the project, although the extension would not normally exceed three weeks after the original date. Only one extension will be granted. If the request for an extension is not granted, the project will be subject to the penalties set for unexcused late submissions.

## **Late Submission of Course Assignments Policy**

In all courses in which theses, papers, reports on assigned readings, or other special assignments are required, either in place of or in addition to a final examination, these written

materials must be submitted on or before the date set by the professor in charge.

A student is expected to complete all work within the term. In special circumstances, however, a student may request an incomplete (I), provided that he or she is in agreement with the professor for that course. The incomplete will be removed from the transcript upon completion of the course providing it is within the time frame as expressed in the "Policy for Incompletes."

Each instructor may deal with late assignments as he sees fit. The standard procedure, however, is that for every day late the student will be penalized by a drop of 0.7 grade points (thus, two days late would reduce the grade by 1.4 grade points, or for example, reduce the grade from an A- to a C+).

A student cannot submit the same or similar assignments for more than one requirement at the seminary, unless the instructor explicitly approves this. Neither can a student use work done for another institution (e.g., undergraduate work) to fulfill assignments in courses at the seminary. If you have questions about a possible overlap of work, please check with your instructor.

### **Policy for Incompletes**

Upon approval of the extension committee, students who are granted an incomplete (I) are required to make up or complete their work within the allotted extension time (typical extensions range from one to four weeks, but in no case can an extension exceed twelve weeks after the final day of the semester in which the course was taken [spring, summer, fall, or winter]). If the work is not completed by the extension deadline, which is restricted to twelve weeks, the "I" will be changed to an "F." A student who makes up his work within the required time will receive a grade determined by the instructor. Exceptions to this policy are at the discretion of the Academic Dean.

### **Plagiarism Policy**

Plagiarism is an academic crime that is never acceptable. In serious cases, it is a flagrant sin against the eighth and ninth

commandments, and the seminary cannot tolerate it in any of its forms.

There is often confusion among students as to what constitutes plagiarism. At its basic level, plagiarism is taking another person's intellectual property and presenting it as if it were one's own. Practically speaking, it usually involves taking basic units of language (words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs)—or even thoughts and ideas—without properly accounting for them in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations must be indicated by the use of quotation marks and a footnote citation.

It is perhaps easiest to explain with examples. Note the following paragraph taken from Gerald F. DeJong, *The Dutch Reformed Church in the American Colonies*, Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America No. 5 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 228:

"In contrast to some of the English colonies, New Netherland was not founded as a place of refuge for the religiously oppressed, but was established for the specific purpose of extending the Dutch commercial empire. Nevertheless, the religious needs of the settlers were not overlooked. Numerous letters and other documents of this period attest to the fact that the divines in Holland kept a watchful eye on what transpired across the Atlantic and from an early date fostered the Dutch Reformed Church there. By the time New Netherland fell to the English in 1664, eleven Dutch Reformed congregations had been organized on American soil, all but two of which were located in the colony of New York. The conditions confronting the churches were those of the wilderness frontier: communities were generally isolated, living conditions were harsh, ministerial salaries were irregularly paid, and most of the people were of a rough and boorish background. Nevertheless, despite primitive conditions, most of the ministers were well educated and dedicated men."

The following points, including improper and proper examples of citation from the above paragraph, must be understood concerning plagiarism:

Plagiarism includes undocumented copying of whole phrases.

*Wrong:* "Numerous letters and other documents of this period attest to the fact that the divines in Holland kept a watchful eye on what transpired across the Atlantic and from an early date fostered the Dutch Reformed Church there." (missing footnote and page reference)

Plagiarism includes undocumented copying of the essential substance of a sentence, even though one changes some words.

*Wrong:* "While the English colonies may have been started as a haven for religiously persecuted people, the Dutch colonies were founded for commercial purposes."

*Right:* "As Gerald DeJong argues, unlike their English counterparts, the Dutch colonies were founded for commercial purposes." (footnote and page reference)

Plagiarism includes copying of a phrase or phrases of another author, even if they are in one's own sentence.

*Wrong:* "Dutch theologians did not ignore the developments across the Atlantic, but kept a watchful eye on what transpired in the colonies."

*Right #1:* "As Gerald DeJong has documented, Dutch theologians did not ignore the developments across the Atlantic, but followed events in the colonies from afar." (footnote and page reference)

*Right #2:* "Dutch theologians did not ignore the developments across the Atlantic, but followed events in the colonies carefully." (footnote)

Plagiarism does not include repeating things that are common knowledge, which you might find in a dictionary or encyclopedia, and that anyone could have formulated in that specific manner. These things need not be documented, unless you are doing so

at length, or you are including definite specifics of your source author. In such a case, you should simply have an opening footnote stating that you are leaning heavily on a particular source.

*Right:* It is unnecessary to footnote: "New Netherland fell to the English in 1664."

The best way to avoid unintentional plagiarism is to do your research in a methodical way, making adequate notes of your sources so that ideas do not make their way into your mind without you being able to trace them. Follow this general rule: if in doubt, footnote (although one should take care not to over-document).

In implementing this policy, our school recognizes different degrees of plagiarism, including gross plagiarism and plagiarism by improper citation.

*Gross plagiarism* consists of the failure to cite a source in the paragraph where its content is used (even if that source is cited elsewhere in the project). This is a significant violation of academic integrity, as it intentionally misrepresents the intellectual property of another writer as one's own.

*Plagiarism by improper citation* consists of the failure to follow the principles of right citation given above, though the source is cited in the paragraph where it is used. For example, this occurs when quotation marks are not placed around phrases that are exact quotations of the source. Or, this occurs when the source's content is only slightly changed or paraphrased by replacing certain words instead of being communicated in the student's own words. This is still an academic violation.

*Any instance of plagiarism*, whether gross plagiarism or plagiarism by improper citation, will result in the student being spoken to by the professor and/or academic dean, and the incident being recorded in the student's permanent record with the seminary.

If it is deemed that the plagiarism is a case of plagiarism by improper citation, the plagiarism does not affect a substantial part of the project (i.e., it is not lengthy), and there is no pattern of repeated and intentional plagiarism on the part of the student,

the professor may opt to penalize the plagiarism simply with a grade reduction on the project or by requiring the student to rewrite the project properly.

However, if deemed to be a case of gross plagiarism, or plagiarism that affects a substantial part of the project, or that this case and others show a pattern of repeated plagiarism by the student despite being instructed on this matter, this is a serious offense to be disciplined as follows:

1. First offense: The student receives a failing grade for the project.
2. Second offense: The student receives a failing grade for the project and is suspended for one year. Re-admittance to study at the seminary requires the approval of the president of the seminary in consultation with faculty and the Board of Trustees (BOT).
3. Third offense: The student is expelled from the seminary and will not be permitted to graduate with a degree. Expulsion will proceed as determined by the faculty committee with the president and approved by the BOT.

Scholarship students who withdraw or are expelled as a consequence of plagiarism or any other discipline are required to reimburse the seminary 75% of the total funds received in scholarships.

All cases of plagiarism must be referred to the academic dean, who will then consult with the full-time faculty. Each case will be dealt with individually and may not go exactly according to the above-named steps. In the case of an exceptionally serious offense (blatant, intentional, and lengthy) the first step may be skipped. All second and third offenses—and exceptionally serious first offenses—of plagiarism will be reported, as decided by the president in consultation with the full-time faculty, to the local church consistory (session or council) of which the student is a member, and to the BOT for any additional action. The president, in consultation with the full-time faculty, is to exercise discretion in this area, and the student retains the right to appeal to the BOT.

## Plagiarism: Artificial Intelligence (AI) Policy

In the interest of complete transparency, a student is to acknowledge any use of AI tools performed for any assignment throughout their time at Puritan Reformed (just as he/she would with any other resource). While AI tools may be used to assist students in research (as one might use a search engine or an encyclopedia), and as an aid in proofreading (as one might use a thesaurus or spelling and grammar checker embedded in a word processing program), AI tools **must not** be used to generate the original content of any assignment. Generative AI tools must not be used, therefore, to produce a thesis, outline, argument, argument flow, preliminary draft, or final draft of any graded work (including oral presentations and sermons) for any course at Puritan Reformed. Doing so is the equivalent to submitting someone else's work under your name and is considered plagiarism; infractions will therefore be penalized as such (see above for an explanation of the penalties for plagiarism).

Furthermore, generative AI is not recognized as a trustworthy source of information and is not, therefore, an appropriate authority to cite. While discouraged as a reliable reference source, should you choose to take any text directly from an AI generator, this should be specified within quotation marks just as one must do so when quoting any other source. Here are a few examples of proper and improper AI use as it may be found throughout the paper writing process:

### *During the Research Process*

*Proper Use:* The three figures that I've compared and contrasted in this paper were provided to me through putting the following prompt into ChatGPT: "Who were five influential sixteenth century figures that helped shape seventeenth century Puritanism?"

*Improper Use:* I was helped in formulating a thesis and outline of this paper through putting the following prompt into ChatGPT: "What were three contextual factors that promoted the popularity of the Puritan movement in English theology after the death of Queen Elizabeth?"

### *During the Writing Process*

*Proper Use:* (footnote) I was wrestling with how to communicate these ideas in English, so I used DeepL to help rewrite the previous two sentences. My original two sentences were as follows: "(insert original wording of the two sentences here)."

*Proper (but not recommended) Use:* (footnote) I took this information from ChatGPT with following prompt: "Who were Oliver Cromwell's chaplains throughout the English Civil War?" While this is technically proper use, it is not recommended for a graduate-level research paper given that AI is not considered a trustworthy source of information (similar to using Wikipedia for your research papers).

*Improper Use:* (footnote) For this introduction, I am indebted to the content created for me by ChatGPT when I put in the following prompt: "How did William Perkins's *A Golden Chaine* influence the experimental character of Puritanism?" After receiving an answer to this prompt, I put the answer in my own words as the introduction to the paper, which is why I did not use quotation marks in the paragraph above.

When AI tools are used and cited properly, the course professor reserves the right to deduct the student's grade in a manner according to the student's dependence upon AI tools to produce the assignment. It is prudent, therefore, that dependence on AI tools that make substantial changes to a student's content or prose be avoided, especially if this is for significant or large sections of a paper. While a professor may deduct a student's grade for proper AI use and citation, in any case of AI use without citation is discovered, the professor will fail the assignment and the assignment will be recorded on the student's record as an instance of gross plagiarism.

Students for whom English is a second language, if studying within a context where English is the understood medium for research and writing (i.e., through the Grand Rapids campus), should not rely on AI resources to translate the entirety of their



assignments. That is, ESL students studying through the Grand Rapids campus are not able to first produce their assignments within their primary language and then use AI resources to translate these assignments into English. Rather, the student's work, original to that student, must be conducted in English as the target language. As illustrated in the above example of proper use, however, using AI to rewrite relatively brief parts of the assignment is acceptable (although even here the student must provide the original wording in a footnoted source).

### **Distance Learning Policies**

The seminary offers a number of asynchronous course offerings that can be found in the semester schedule under the "online courses" section. Any Puritan Reformed student is also able to take an on-campus course from a distance with the use of live-stream capabilities. In order to do so, a student must inform the Registrar before the course start date of his/her plans. Students must plan to take the course through a consistent medium throughout the entire course offering. If a student knows, for instance, that she will be gone for the last 6 weeks of course lectures and would like to live-stream at that point, she must inform the Registrar. Courses taken through the live-stream medium do not count towards a degree program's residency requirements (i.e. - both synchronous and asynchronous course offerings count as distance courses).

Any use of live-stream capabilities to attend course lectures will result in a student being charged the course distance fee of \$75. Exceptions to this rule can be granted at the discretion of the Registrar in cases of unforeseen and irregular circumstances, such as sickness of a student or family member.

The distance learning student is subject to all the same requirements, deadlines, and penalties as set by the instructor for the on-campus students in the course instance.

### **Independent Study Policies**

Any student who desires to take any course as an independent

study must email the Registrar with his request. In order to enroll in an independent study, the student and over-seeing professor must agree to a syllabus that establishes the requirements and deadlines of the course. A maximum of 15 credits of independent study courses can apply towards the MA and MDiv degrees, whereas a maximum of 6 credits of independent study courses can apply towards the ThM degree. A student who has received approval to enroll in an independent study will be billed \$275 per credit hour for the course, as well as a non-refundable distance learning fee of \$75.00. On the date the Registrar enrolls the student, the student is considered to have begun the class and will have exactly 6 months (26 weeks) to complete the course

Should the student fail to meet the deadlines as established by the syllabus, the student will be charged a 30-day course extension, assessed at 20% of the course(s) tuition cost. A maximum of two 30-day extensions are allowed; if the course is still incomplete after this time, the student will receive an "F" for the course. Should the student request to be withdrawn from the course before the extensions expire, however, a "W" may be granted with the approval of the Academic Dean.

The seminary's policies concerning dropping and withdrawing from a course are effective on the date of enrollment. The refund policy for a dropped/withdrawn course is as follows:

- Within two weeks, an 80% refund is granted
- Within four weeks, 60%
- Within six weeks, 50%
- After six weeks, 0%

Notification of a dropped course should be provided by submitting a written statement to this effect (email is fine) to the Registrar. The appropriate refund will be sent promptly. If a student fails to notify the Registrar of a dropped or withdrawn course within the established deadline, an "F" will be noted on the student's transcript and no refund will be granted; exceptions must be approved by the academic dean. No independent study may exceed 26 weeks in duration.

## **Policy for Enrolling in a Directed Study (PhD and ThM)**

Students may apply for a directed study once the following two criteria are met: 1) the student has completed three (3) courses; and 2) the student has obtained a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.50. PhD students may apply for a maximum of two (2) directed studies, whereas ThM students may apply for a maximum of one (1) directed study. In no case may the combination of directed studies and independent studies exceed two (2) courses.

### **Process for Requesting a Directed Study:**

First, a registered student in the PhD or ThM programs should request the appropriate form from the registrar if he or she is interested in enrolling in a directed study. The student should NOT first contact the individual professor but make the request either to the registrar or academic dean. After initial approval is given, the student must then work with the overseeing professor (who must be a residential faculty member) to develop an approved syllabus. The syllabus should clearly outline reading requirements (with page numbers), a schedule of meetings between the professor and student, specific assignments with clear due dates, and a relevant bibliography. As much as possible, the syllabus should follow the standard guidelines and workloads as spelled out in the creation of syllabi guidelines. The student is encouraged to contact the registrar for this information or model the drafted syllabus after another syllabus from a previously taught course.

When the drafted syllabus has been agreed upon by the professor and student, it must be submitted to the academic dean. Once approved, only then will the student be enrolled in the directed study.

A directed study is an opportunity for a student to student in depth a subject area that is not covered by one of the offered courses. This is different than an independent study, which uses the recordings and syllabus of a previously taught course.

## **GENERAL STUDENT POLICIES**

Attendance

Student Life and Conduct Campus Employment

# **GENERAL STUDENT POLICIES**

## **Attendance**

Each student is expected, barring lawful reasons, to attend every class for which he is registered. Absences caused by illness or other justifiable causes will be permitted to a limited extent. Students should not accrue more unexcused absences than the number of course credit hours. Should absences endanger the student's performance in class, the instructor will counsel the student. Further absences will normally result in either the reduction of course grades or expulsion from the course. Unexcused absences may also result in the student being placed on academic probation.

## **Student Life and Conduct**

Our students represent a wide range of ages, previous employments, church backgrounds, and nationalities. The wide variety enriches the atmosphere and culture of the seminary while providing students with many perspectives and occasions for "iron to sharpen iron," to assist each other, and to bear each other up in prayer and support. Chapel is held weekly during the spring and fall semesters to allow for student fellowship and mutual spiritual learning, worship, and prayer.

As a community of future leaders of the Christian church, the seminary seeks to maintain high standards of integrity in all areas of life, including academic work, ministry, and church and community relationships. Given these objectives, the seminary faculty and governing committees expect students to live according to high standards of faith and to use wise judgment in matters pertaining to personal conduct. Students are expected to show maturity in Christ, love for one another, pronounced patterns of devotion and service, and the responsible use of Christian liberty. All members of the seminary community are expected to act in accordance with local, state, and federal laws

at all times, whether on or off campus.

The seminary is a smoke-free environment, and is committed to being an institution free of the use of illegal drugs and of the abuse of alcohol. All faculty, staff, and students are required as a condition of employment and/or enrollment not to use illegal drugs or to abuse alcohol. Behavior that is immoral, illegal, or disruptive will result in dismissal.

This standard of behavior is expected to extend into the academic lives of students as well, prohibiting all forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism. Plagiarism is an academic crime that is never acceptable; in serious cases, it is a flagrant sin against the eighth and ninth commandments and the seminary cannot tolerate it in any of its forms. There is often confusion among students as to what constitutes plagiarism; students are required to abide by the guidelines and principles presented in the Academic Catalog. If other cases of academic dishonesty are discovered (e.g., a student cheats on a quiz or test), the process of discipline as outlined in the plagiarism section of this catalog will be followed for each offense:

1. First offense: The student receives a failing grade for the assignment.
2. Second offense: The student receives a failing grade for the assignment and is suspended for one year. Re-admittance to study at the seminary requires the approval of the president of the seminary in consultation with faculty and the Board of Trustees (BOT).
3. Third offense: The student is expelled from the seminary and will not be permitted to graduate with a degree. Expulsion will proceed as determined by the faculty committee with the president and approved by the BOT.

### **Campus Employment Policy**

Students employed by the seminary must have permission from their academic advisor. To commence or continue in seminary employment, students must maintain the cumulative minimum GPA required in their program.

## **STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES/INFORMATION**

Library

Seminary Bookstore Student Housing Food Bank

Puritan Reformed Journal

Student Society Scholarships

Contact

## **STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES/INFORMATION**

### **Library - The William Perkins Library**

The Williams Perkins Library has about ninety-two thousand titles. Nearly two hundred current periodical subscriptions further support the research needs along with fifteen subscription databases providing primary and secondary source material. Students have access to databases remotely via proxy authentication. Two in-home databases are unique to Puritan Reformed: a Puritan Studies Database that is the definitive database on Puritanism's secondary literature. BRS (Bible Reference Search) is a Scripture index allowing users to identify material dealing with specific Scripture references.

Individually lighted and wired study carrels, group study space, and quiet study space make the library an attractive and efficient place to read and write.

The William Perkins Library shares an online library catalog through a cooperative effort with neighboring Cornerstone University Library and Kuyper College. This provides faculty and students with access to the combined collections of 500,000+ volumes. Students can borrow materials from these three libraries at no cost. The William Perkins Library is also part of OCLC which means that its holdings are indexed in the massive WorldCat database.

### **The Puritan Research Center**

The seminary houses the Puritan Research Center in a special climate-controlled room equipped with a Halon fire suppression system. The Puritan Research Center is the culmination of a dream that is decades old and offers exciting possibilities for promoting the appreciation of Reformed and Puritan literature around the world. The Center's aim is to assemble the largest possible collection of resources on the Puritans, including antiquarian books (mostly from the seventeenth century) and modern reprints



of Puritan writings, and secondary source materials on the Puritans such as books, dissertations, articles, and book reviews.

Presently, the collection of Puritan writings is one of the best in the world. Its specialty is a rare collection of antiquarian material, of which numerous titles have only a few known copies in the world. Other volumes are special collector's items due to their former ownership or condition. For example, the Center is home to The Works of William Perkins, a three-volume set once owned by Charles Spurgeon, bearing his Pastor's College seal, and later acquired by Arthur W. Pink, whose penciled notations appear throughout. The oldest book in the collection is a title by John Knox that was printed in 1560. For more information about the William Perkins Library, visit the seminary's website or contact the Library staff at (616) 432-3415.

### **The Bookstore**

A Puritan Reformed bookstore is housed in the seminary building, serving as a bookstore for seminarians and to the public. All of RHB's titles are sold at discounted prices; in addition, many of the books in the seminary bookstore are previous owned books, allowing buyers to find great prices on older and newer books. Most of the required textbooks are included in their stock.

### **Student Housing**

The seminary has a welcoming committee established for assisting students in finding suitable accommodations for their time in Grand Rapids. The seminary owns sixteen apartments and two homes on adjacent lots that can be rented by seminary families or by several single students. Off-campus accommodations are available as well; single students may be able to room with a local family, or students may join together to rent an apartment. The welcoming committee can help you find a living arrangement that best suits your needs. Please contact Chris Hanna ([chris.hanna@prts.edu](mailto:chris.hanna@prts.edu)), for further information.

### **The Pantry**

Students can seek assistance from a food bank housed on the

property of the seminary where they can obtain free groceries that have been donated from local grocery stores, etc. This option can save qualifying students and their families thousands of dollars per year. Students should contact the president of the student society for food bank applications.

## **Student Society**

The Puritan Reformed Student Society is a student-led campus group that exists to enrich Puritan students' lives while they attend Puritan Reformed. The society has a fourfold mission: to promote Christian growth; to offer Christian fellowship and recreation; to encourage theological reflection, and to foster intellectual development. To accomplish this, the society sponsors spiritual, theological, and philosophical discussions; plans various fellowship and recreational events; and provides opportunities that allow students to take advantage of the rich resources available in the seminary and greater Grand Rapids community. On-campus students are elected to serve in this society. The society is designed to draw the student body closer together through active participation in events that are separate from the classroom setting.

## **Puritan Reformed Journal**

Puritan Reformed began publishing its own bi-annual journal in 2009. The subscription price per year for individuals and institutions is \$25.00 in the United States, \$37.00 in Canada (payable in U.S. funds), \$45.00 in foreign countries (surface mail). Back issues may be purchased at \$13.00 per copy. Visit The Bookstore for more information, at 2965 Leonard St., N.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49525; email: [ann.erich.lee@prts.edu](mailto:ann.erich.lee@prts.edu). Manuscripts and book reviews may be submitted through the seminary website, or sent to the editors, Dr. Joel Beeke and Dr. Jonathon Beeke at 2965 Leonard St. N.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49525; telephone (616) 432-3403; email [joel.beeke@prts.edu](mailto:joel.beeke@prts.edu)

## **Scholarships**

The seminary's Scholarship Fund collects funds to be distributed as scholarships for students demonstrating financial need and academic potential. Our focus is to help students whose sending church/denomination does not have the resources to finance the student's seminary education. The purpose of this needs-based scholarship program is to provide a medium for donors to give funds specifically for the support of seminarians, and for students to receive funds to assist with their theological education, both to God's praise (Col. 3:23-24).

In order to apply for scholarships, interested students must be accepted into a degree program and meet all of the requirements as listed by the individual scholarship. The Scholarship Committee meets every other month throughout the year. After a student is accepted, they can request a scholarship application and submit it to the seminary no less than two months prior to the beginning of a semester (June 1 deadline for those applying for the fall semester, November 1 deadline for the spring semester). To be considered for a scholarship, both new and returning students must submit the scholarship application by the semester deadlines. The Scholarship committee meets bi-monthly (NB: receipt of a scholarship one year is not a guarantee that the student will receive a scholarship the following year).

### Need-based scholarships - for MDiv, MA, and ThM students

#### THE PERKINS SCHOLARSHIP

\$4,500 | (8 available)

Eight (8) annual scholarships of \$4,500 for any male MDiv student from North America pursuing ordained ministry.

#### THE OWEN SCHOLARSHIP

\$2,000 | (2 available/year)

Two (2) annual scholarships of \$2000 for any MA student from North America.

#### THE BRADSTREET SCHOLARSHIP

\$4,000 | (2 available/year)

Two (2) annual scholarships of \$4000 for any female student in

the MA or ThM programs.

#### THE FLAVEL SCHOLARSHIP

\$16,000 | (1 available/year)

One (1) annual scholarship of \$16,000 for any MDiv, MA, or ThM student with a physical or sensory disability (e.g., visually impaired).

#### THE RUTHERFORD SCHOLARSHIP

(amount and number varies/year)

A variety of annual scholarships (amount varies) for any international student desiring to enter into the MDiv, MA, or ThM program.

#### T. S. ARTHUR JOHNSON MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

\$7,500 | (1 available/year)

One (1) annual scholarship of \$7,500 for any student from the UK admitted to any degree program (MA, MDiv, ThM, or PhD).

#### Matching or Merit-based Scholarships

#### THE SIBBES SCHOLARSHIP

\$3,000 | (3 available/year)

Three (3) matching annual scholarships up to \$3000 each. The Sibbes Scholarship is awarded to any MDiv, MA, or ThM student whose church agrees to financially support their studies.

#### THE GOODWIN SCHOLARSHIP

\$2,000 | (7 available/year)

Seven (7) merit-based annual scholarships of \$2000. Recipients must demonstrate a strong potential for ministry, possess at least a GPA of 3.50, and submit an additional 1000-word essay.

#### CHURCH MATCHING SCHOLARSHIP FOR DMIN STUDENTS

Up to \$1950.00/year

In support of our newest program (DMin), multiple church-matching scholarships are available up to a maximum of \$1950.00 per year. This Church Matching Scholarship is

awarded to a DMin student whose church agrees to financially support their studies. If awarded, this scholarship could provide up to one-half of the DMin tuition cost, with the student's church providing the other half of the DMin tuition cost.

*For more information and/or for the scholarship application please contact our registrar.*

## **Contact**

If you are interested in applying for seminary studies, we welcome your interest in Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. For additional application forms, current course schedules, donations, and upcoming events, please visit our website at: [www.prts.edu](http://www.prts.edu). Our Admissions Director and other staff members can be reached via phone at (616) 432-3400 or via email at [info@prts.edu](mailto:info@prts.edu).

To be placed on the "Puritan Reformed Update" mailing list or schedule a seminary presentation, contact Chris Hanna at (616) 432-3407. Our federal ID number for tax-exempt status is 20-2394341; the seminary is registered as a non-profit institution with the US Internal Revenue Service, permitting us to write receipts for federal tax deductions by our US donors. Canadian donors are encouraged to send their gifts via the Burgessville Heritage Reformed Church, attention Puritan Reformed, 685 Main Street P.O. Box 105, Burgessville, Ontario N0J 1C0 or contact [developmentCanada@prts.edu](mailto:developmentCanada@prts.edu) For written inquiries, please send mail to:

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary  
2965 Leonard Street, NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525 USA

Directions to Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, 2965 Leonard Street, NE, Grand Rapids, Michigan:

- From the north: Follow US-131 South to I-96 East. Follow I-96 East to exit 36 (Leonard Street). Turn left from the exit ramp onto Leonard Street eastbound. Proceed through first traffic light to 2965 Leonard Street on left.
- From the south: Follow US-131 North to I-196 East (Gerald R.

Ford Freeway). Take exit 38 (East Beltline Avenue); turn left onto East Beltline Avenue. Proceed north to Leonard Street (third traffic light). Exit to the left immediately after light to loop south and turn right onto westbound Leonard Street. Proceed to 7th driveway on the right - 2965 Leonard Street.

- From the east (Lansing): Follow I-96 West to exit 38 (East Beltline Avenue). Turn right from exit ramp onto East Beltline Avenue. Proceed to Leonard Street (2nd traffic light) . Exit to the left immediately after light to loop south and turn right onto westbound Leonard Street. Proceed to 7th driveway on the right - 2965 Leonard Street.
- From the west (Chicago, Holland): Follow I-196 East to exit 38 (East Beltline Avenue); turn left onto East Beltline Avenue. Proceed north to Leonard Street (third traffic light) . Exit to the left immediately after light to loop south and turn right onto westbound Leonard Street. Proceed to 7th driveway on the right - 2965 Leonard Street.

See the website for a map of the area.

**APPENDIX The Call to the Ministry**

## **APPENDIX: The Call to the Ministry**

Entering any calling in life should be a serious matter for prayerful consideration, searching of God's Word, and keen observation of providential leadings. This is particularly true of the calling to the ministry, as a minister is called to be God's ambassador to man. This appendix seeks to outline foundational concepts of the ministerial calling and of ministerial training. We commence with a scriptural study on God's standards for the ministry based on 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

### **A Scriptural Study on God's Standards for the Ministry**

Note: All words studied below are taken from 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 unless otherwise noted. To benefit more fully from this section, please open to and read these portions of Scripture as you follow these brief word studies.

#### **Positive Qualifying Traits**

- 1) Desire [1 Tim. 3:1] (*orego* = "desire," *epithumeo* = "desireth")– The first word for desire signifies a mental effort of stretching out for something and longing after it, the stress being placed upon the thing desired. The latter is from the same root as the word that Jesus used in describing the desire He had to partake of the last supper with His disciples and that Paul used when describing his earnest yearning to depart to be with Christ. It signifies desiring earnestly, with the stress being on the inward impulse of the soul rather than on the object desired. Thus, Paul is stating that the call to ministry involves an inward desire for a work which is desired.
- 2) Blameless [1 Tim . 3:2] (*anepileptos*) [1 Tim . 3:10, Titus 1:6-7] (*anenkletos*)–Both words translated blameless necessitate true conversion, for any believer or office-bearer can only be regarded blameless in Christ Jesus. The latter word is the same as that used in 1 Corinthians 1:8 where the believer will be presented blameless by Christ in the day of the Lord. It



means to be unprovable in the righteousness of Christ. The former word means: not open to censure, without reproach.

- 3) Husband of one wife [1 Tim. 3:2] is an attributive genitive and is similar to an adjective which includes not only a command against polygamy, but also against being flirtatious. In other words, the married brother called to the office of ministry should exhibit a morally blameless conduct in the marriage state and be dedicated wholly to his wife.
- 4) Vigilant (*nephalios*)—In 1 Timothy 3:11 and Titus 2:2 this word is rendered “sober.” Its root, *nepho*, signifies being free from intoxicants and is used in association with watchfulness. It infers self-control and self-denial.
- 5) Sober [1 Tim. 3:2] (*sophron*) denotes being of a sound mind; hence self-controlled, sober-minded, temperate, discreet, prudent, and sensible.
- 6) Of good behavior [1 Tim. 3:2] (*kosmios*) signifies being orderly, decent, modest—also inwardly; honorable, virtuous, respectable.
- 7) Given to hospitality [1 Tim. 3:2] (*philoxenos*) means hospitable—literally, a lover of caring for strangers.
- 8) Apt to teach [1 Tim. 3:2] (*didaktikos*) means skillful in teaching. The goal of this is shown, for example, in 2 Timothy 2:2 where the Spirit emphasizes the importance of Timothy teaching the principles of Christianity to others who, in turn, will teach still others.
- 9) Patient [1 Tim. 3:3] (*epieikes*) derives from the root meaning clemency, gentleness, equitable, fair, moderate, forbearing, not insisting on the letter of the law. There is a definite legal sense in this word as one looking “humanely and considerately” at the facts of a case, redressing any excessive requisites of justice.
- 10) One that ruleth (*proistemi*) well his own house, having his children in subjection (*hupotage*) with all gravity (*semnotes*) [1 Tim. 3:4]/ having faithful (*pistos*) children not accused of riot (*asotia*) or unruly (*anupotaktos*) [Titus 1:6]
  - a) *proistemi*: rule, have in subjection
  - b) *hupotage*: obedient, submissive to parental rule
  - c) *semnotes*: decency, orderliness, performing one’s duties

- well, dignity, being honorable, venerable
- d) *pistos*: trusting, believing (can also signify in the spiritual sense)
  - e) *asotia*: wastefulness, recklessly extravagant, given up to licentiousness or excessive drinking
  - f) *anupotaktos*: not obedient or subject to rule (i.e., uncontrollable)
- 11) A good report (*maturia*) of them that are without (*exothern*) [1 Tim. 3:7]
- a) *maturia*: not only witness but by evidence, so a corroborated report (i.e., their life gives proof to the good reputation they have in the world; their life is not just surface or show)
  - b) *exothern*: from without (i.e., from outside of the church)
- 12) Faithful [2 Tim. 2:2] (*pistos*)—worthy to be believed; reliable; a believer of the gospel
- 13) A lover of good men [Titus 1:8] (*philagathos*)—a promoter of virtue; loving that which is good
- 14) Just [Titus 1:8] (*dikaios*)—righteous, a state of being right; right conduct; justified by God
- 15) Holy [Titus 1:8] (*hosios*)—consecration to God and purity from defilement, stemming from a right relationship with God
- 16) Temperate [Titus 1:8] (*enkrates*)—self-control; chaste; not loose in morals
- 17) Holding fast the faithful (*pistos*) Word (*logos*) as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort (*paralaleo*) and to convince (*elegcho*) the gainsayers (*antilego*) [Titus 1:9]
- a) *pistos*: sure, true
  - b) *logos*: here meaning God’s Word
  - c) *paralaleo*: literally to call near; to entreat, to invoke, implore, console
  - d) *elegcho*: to admonish, convict, convince, rebuke, reprove
  - e) *antilego*: those that deny, contradict, or oppose the truth

### Negative Disqualifying Traits

- 1) Not given to wine [1 Tim. 3:3] (*paroinos*)—addiction to wine or drunkenness

- 2) No striker [1 Tim. 3:3] (*plektes*)—not quarrelsome or pugnacious (not given to fighting, not argumentative)
- 3) Not greedy of filthy lucre [1 Tim. 3:3] (*aischrokerdes*)—not greedy of gain
- 4) Not a brawler [1 Tim. 3:3] (*amachos*)—not fighting; i.e., not contentious
- 5) Not covetous [1 Tim. 3:3] (*aphilagruros*)—not a lover of money; free from the love of money
- 6) Not a novice [1 Tim. 3:6] (*neophutos*)—literally, newly planted; a new convert, inexperienced
- 7) Not self-willed [Titus 1:7] (*authades*)—not self-pleasing; not dominated by self-interest and inconsiderate of others; strongly asserting his own will (opposite of #9 above)
- 8) Not soon angry [Titus 1:7] (*orgilos*)—not prone to anger; not easily provoked to anger; not hot-tempered

## Conclusion

These twenty-five qualifications (seventeen of a positive nature; eight of a negative nature) form a formidable and humbling list. Two cautionary notes are in order here.

First, though this list represents a summary list which every minister must strive to live up to by the grace of God, Paul does not intend to state that all ministers must have all these qualities perfectly or be equally strong in each of them. For example, if a minister has one of several children still under his care at home that is not as controlled as the child should be, this does not mean that he is automatically disqualified for the ministry. Rather, Paul directs Timothy that these are the qualities—both positive and negative—he is to look for when he seeks to establish the ministry in different localities.

Secondly, Paul also does not state that all these qualities are of equal weight. For example, to be a brawler might be considered more of a detriment to the ministry than to not possess a substantial degree of hospitality. Paul's point is not that we ought to expect to find perfect men; every minister will have a number of faults and weaknesses, which will be hindrances in his

ministry to a smaller or greater degree. Nevertheless, here is a clear scriptural guide of qualities that the called minister must have in some measure and must be pursuing. For example, if a minister may at times display a temper, God does not mean that he should automatically be rejected for the office of ministry on this ground alone. Two questions would first have to be asked about his temper: First, is it of such a serious degree and persistent nature that it would be a serious impediment to the ministry? If so, the church had better wait to receive such a man for office until he has gained more maturity in controlling his temper. If not, he may be accepted for theological study, but be cautioned to pray for more maturity in this area. Secondly, does he realize his problem and is he praying and striving against it? These would be good signs and would tend to minimize the impediment itself.

### **How Our Forefathers Viewed the Ministerial Call**

We have provided below seven (two in detail) clear outlines that various forefathers provided of the ministerial call. Taken together, these accounts underscore the scriptural qualifications listed above and serve as helpful guides.

- A. *From "The Christian's Reasonable Service" by Wilhelmus à Brakel (1635- 1711; a Second Reformation divine and leading representative of practical Reformed orthodoxy in the Netherlands)*

#### Internal Call

Regarding the necessary internal call to the ministry, he writes, "An extraordinary, divine declaration is not an element of this internal commission. God does not do this, or does so only on very rare occasions, and thus one need not wait for this" (vol. 2, p. 121).

He lists the following as elements of an internal call:

- 1) Knowledge of the office—what it consists of and requires of us in abilities and example
- 2) Aptitude for this work
  - a) Fundamental knowledge of divine truth
  - b) Experience of divine truths in the heart

- 3) An extraordinary love for
  - a) Christ
  - b) The church
  - c) Souls
- 4) Willing to deny all that is of the world
  - a) Honor
  - b) Material goods
  - c) Even life itself
- 5) A great desire for the work (1 Tim . 3:1)
- 6) Continual stirrings to give oneself to the Lord
- 7) Concern about whether or not one is called
  - a) Anxiety when ulterior motives are perceived
  - b) Struggles with heaviness of the work and sense of inability
  - c) Nevertheless, the stirrings (see a) will overcome all else, helping to clear the sincerity of the desire before the Lord

### External Call

The following considerations are given by à Brakel regarding the external call by means of the church:

- 1) This calling is also not extraordinary in nature
- 2) The church always retains this authority to call, even calling men from her midst and initiating them into this service.
- 3) Examination of prospective ministers by the church
  - a) Performed by elders gathered at classical or synodical meetings
  - b) Examination of life, doctrine, and ability was made (2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Tim. 5:22; 1 Tim. 3:10)
  - c) Successful completion of examination led to commission

### Examination of Call

Brakel's questions for examination (or self-examination) of prospective ministers:

- 1) Have I been sent of God, or did I run myself?
- 2) Do I know what pertains to this office?
- 3) Was I convinced that I had some aptitude for this as far as external knowledge is concerned, and am I likewise spiritually acquainted with the experience of:
  - a) Regeneration

- b) Faith
  - c) Hope
  - d) Love
  - e) Holiness
  - f) God's dealings with the soul
  - g) Spiritual warfare
  - h) The various conditions of the soul in order to bring forth old and new things out of the treasure of my heart to address everyone according to his condition, and particularly to give everyone publicly and privately his portion by way of personal experience, and to speak from heart to heart
- 4) Do I have a special love to preach Christ, to be instrumental to the conversion of souls, and to promote the welfare of the church?
  - 5) Was I continually stirred up in my soul to accept this work?
  - 6) Has it been my concern whether or not the Lord has sent me, and have I prayed much in order to know this?
  - 7) Have I at times been desirous not to be engaged in this work, considering the magnitude of this task and my inability?
  - 8) Were those desires to draw back repeatedly conquered by love for this work, or was I frequently put at ease and confirmed in my intention?
  - 9) Have I been troubled by ulterior motives which time and again disappeared by perceiving my sincere motive in the presence of the Lord?
  - 10) Did I perceive a frame of heart by which I was willing to deny myself by parting with material goods, honor, and my life for the Lord Jesus and His church? Or did I only pursue honor and prestige, the acquisition of material goods by which to improve my temporal circumstances, and which outside of this office, would have been poor and insignificant?
  - 11) Had I advanced in my studies to such a degree that I [simply judged that I] of necessity had to proceed?
  - 12) Did I ever really examine myself concerning these matters, or did I merely run without such self-examination?

### Qualifications for the Ministry

Brakel lists the following as qualifications for the ministry:

- 1) Learning (2 Tim. 3:15; Mat. 13:52; 1 John 1:1, 3)
  - a) Hebrew and Greek most essential; Latin, helpful
  - b) Knowledge of philosophy or natural wisdom is helpful (liberal arts education)
  - c) Thorough knowledge of theology an absolute requirement (1 Tim. 4:15)
  - d) Wisdom in using both kinds of knowledge and an aptitude in presenting it in a manner beneficial to others
  - e) Thorough study of Scripture (1 Tim. 4:13)
  - f) Considerable personal experience of religion through the work of the Holy Ghost
- 2) Apt to teach (1 Tim. 3:2)
- 3) Grave, but not pretentious, surly, stern, nor immature
- 4) Excel in love for Christ, His cause, and His sheep; for the congregation's spiritual welfare, resulting in much prayer for them (1 Thes. 3:10)
- 5) Self-denial—a willingness to sacrifice all for the Lord (Acts 20:24; 21:13)
- 6) Diligence (see 1 Tim. 3:1-2) due to the weight and multiplicity of his duties
- 7) Be an example (Phil. 3:17; 1 Cor. 11:1; 1 Tim. 4:12)

*B. From "The Christian Ministry" by Charles Bridges (1794-1869; sound English commentator, author, and pastor—a prominent member of the evangelical party in the Anglican church)*

In Bridges's day, the church asked ministerial applicants, "Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this office?"

### Examination of Call

Bridges provides the following guideline for self-examination for those who believe they are being called to the ministry. If the calling is from above, the Holy Spirit will influence the heart in the following ways:

1. Enlighten the heart under a deep impression of the worth of

souls

2. Constrain the soul by the love of Christ to “spend and be spent for Him”
3. Direct the conscience to a sober, searching, self-inquiry (self-examination)
4. Prompt a regular study of the Word
5. Instill fervent prayer in reference to this great matter
6. Cause a careful observation of the providential indications of the Master’s will in this calling

### Marks of a Ministerial Calling

According to Bridges, scriptural marks of a calling to the ministry include the following:

1. A desire for the work
  - a. As exhibited in Jesus’ ministry (Prov. 8:31; Psalm 40:8/ Heb. 10:5-9; John 4:32-34)
  - b. As exhibited in the disciples (1 Tim. 3:1)
  - c. Being something beyond the general Christian desire to promote the glory of God (Jer. 20:9; Isa. 6:8)
  - d. Rising above all difficulties, taking pleasure in sacrifices for the work’s sake, and quickening to a readiness of mind, all tempered by a consciousness of our unfitness and unworthiness for the work
  - e. A “considerate” desire, involving a matured calculation of the cost made over some time
  - f. A “disinterested” desire—i.e., a pure intention, uninfluenced by love of literature, desire for ease from our secular calling, desire for esteem or respectability, desire for worldly comfort
  - g. Aiming for nothing but souls, rather winning one soul to Christ than a world to ourselves
  - h. Devoting all our talents to the service of God—“to live, to labour, and to possess nothing, but for Jesus Christ and His Church”
  - i. Personal and consistent piety is not a mark, of itself, that indicates this calling, but should be a general



mark of every Christian

2. A competent measure of ministerial gifts
  - a. As exhibited in Jesus' ministry (Ps. 45:7/Isa. 11:2-4, 42:1, 61:1; John 3:34)
  - b. Not only "faithful men" are called but also those "faithful men which shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim . 2:2; cf. 1 Tim. 3:2; 2 Tim. 2:24; 2 Cor. 3:6)
  - c. Not necessarily extraordinarily gifted men, yet not lacking necessary gifts
  - d. Conscientiously improving our natural gifts through prayer and study
3. Providential guidance—Bridges suggests a few examples of how the Lord might providentially direct to this calling:
  - a. Providentially disposing of a person's circumstances, thoughts, inclinations, and studies to this end
  - b. The disappointment of his plans for a future course in life or the closing of providential avenues to other callings
  - c. Unlooked-for openings in the church
  - d. Some particular crises in the individual sphere or family circumstances
  - e. The judgment of Christian friends, and especially of experienced ministers
  - f. He concludes this consideration of providential dealings by stating, "One or more of these may prove the 'word behind him saying—This is the way, walk ye in it.'"

### Qualifications for the Ministry

In a separate chapter, Bridges lists these ministerial qualifications:

1. Holiness (Titus 1:8)
  - a. self-denial
  - b. love to the Savior and souls of men
  - c. blameless consistency of conduct
  - d. experienced (not a novice [newcomer] to experimental matters)

2. Acquaintance with scriptural and doctrinal knowledge “beyond a bare sufficiency for personal salvation” (Mal. 2:7; Mat. 13:52)
3. The ability to communicate and apply this knowledge to others (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Cor. 4:1)—to be able to speak “in a manner suitable to the dignity of the pulpit, and yet plain to the weakest capacity”
4. Clear thinking, ability to arrange matter, aptitude of expression, familiar and appropriate illustration

C. *From “Letters of John Newton” (1725-1807)—renowned Anglican clergyman and hymn writer .*

Newton asserted the call to the ministry to include the following three requisites:

1. A warm and earnest desire to be employed in the ministry.
2. “Besides this affection, desire, and readiness to preach, there must in due season appear some competent sufficiency as to gifts, knowledge, and utterance.”
3. An “opening in Providence, by a gradual train of circumstances pointing out the means, the time, the place, of actually entering upon the work.”

D. *From “Lectures to My Students” by Charles H. Spurgeon (1834-1892), renowned English Baptist preacher.*

Spurgeon affirmed his agreement with Newton’s three points, but set out his own view in the following points:

1. “An intense, all-absorbing desire for the work.” This desire must be: (a) thoughtful; (b) unselfish; (c) continuing.
2. “There must be aptness to teach and some measure of the other qualities needful for the office of a public instructor.”
3. “After a little exercise of his gifts...he must see a measure of conversion-work going on under his efforts.”
4. His “preaching should be acceptable to the people of God.”

E. *From “The Thought of the Evangelical Leaders” by Rev. J. Venn (1759-1813)— Anglican clergyman*

1. The call of the Spirit, which consists in His giving a man grace, and a desire, accompanied by great humility and diffidence.
2. Some external fitting.
3. A legal designation of the church.

*F. From "Discussions: Evangelical and Theological, vol . 2" by Dr. Robert L. Dabney (1820-1898)—conservative southern Presbyterian theologian*

After defining the call to the ministry as "an expression of the divine will that a man should preach the gospel," Dabney provides the following particulars:

1. "A call to preach is not complete until the Holy Spirit has uttered it, not only in the Christian judgment of the candidate himself, but in that of his brethren also."
2. The Spirit will employ the principles of Scripture to instruct him and his brethren as to the divine will in this matter.
3. God will make known His will also through "outward circumstances and qualifications viewed in the light of Scripture truth."
4. "He must have a hearty and healthy piety, a fair reputation for holiness of life, a respectable force of character, some Christian experience, and aptness to teach."
5. "An abiding and strong desire for this special work."
6. A sense of the needs of the church.
7. "Prayer must be fervently and incessantly offered."

*G. From "Preaching and Preachers" by Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1900-1981)— pastor of London's Westminster chapel, prolific author; regarded by many conservatives as the greatest 20th-century Reformed preacher*

Dr. Lloyd-Jones affirms the following regarding the ministerial call:

1. "A call generally starts in the form of a consciousness within one's own spirit."
2. It is "accentuated through the influence of others."

3. It “develops and leads to a concern about others.”
4. “There should also be a sense of constraint.”
5. “A sense of diffidence, unworthiness, inadequacy.”
6. He must be “sent by the church.”

Dr. Lloyd-Jones states that the church must look for the following qualifications:

1. A man who is “filled with the Spirit.”
2. He must have “knowledge of the Truth and his relationship to it.”
3. He must have a good “character”: godliness, wisdom, patience, gentle, etc.
4. He must have an understanding of people and of human nature.
5. He must have natural intelligence and ability
6. He must have “the gift of speech.”

#### *H. Conclusion: Essential Elements of the Ministerial Call*

Summarizing all of the above (i.e., the scriptural qualifications of section 2 and our forefathers’ assessments of the ministerial call in this section), we may conclude that the ministerial calling is a holy calling which necessarily involves the following:

1. Holy life—Prerequisite to the call itself, and flowing out of genuine conversion, there must be attributes of godliness manifest in the called brother’s life, such as are found in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 (see section 2 above). He must also be exercising these principles of godliness in his family relationships.
2. Holy desire—Wholehearted desire for the work of the ministry worked by the Holy Spirit through Scripture and providence. Some of God’s servants are called more through the application of specific texts or scriptural passages; others are called more through intervening acts of providence, directing them and burdening them with an intense commitment towards and desire for the ministry. In either case, one’s call must be in conformity to Scripture and be strengthened by the timing and circumstances of providence which bring the

brother to a point where he can no longer refrain from giving himself to the work of the ministry.

3. Holy motivation—The call must be motivated by a love for the glory of God, the proclamation of the gospel in Christ Jesus, the burden of and love for souls, and the need of the church.
4. Holy compulsion—There must be a growing sense of Spirit-worked compulsion for this work: “Woe unto me if I preach not the gospel!” This compulsion will involve a sense of self-denial and an earnest desire to live wholeheartedly to God.
5. Holy fitness—There must be some measure of ministerial and (in the experience of one’s own misery, deliverance, and gratitude), some knowledge of Scripture, some knowledge of doctrinal and spiritual matters, some gift of prayer, some awareness of human nature and understanding of people.
6. Holy struggles—The ministerial call will not be worked out without strife and continual self-examination. Intense struggles concerning the ministerial call are commonplace:
  - a. struggles with surrendering to the work,
  - b. with the weightiness of the work,
  - c. with Satan’s devices aimed to thwart the call,
  - d. with one’s unworthiness for and inability to do that work,
  - e. with the need for confirmation of the call itself.
7. Holy confirmation—The inward call is confirmed (a) commonly by the approbation of God’s people, speaking gifts, some aptness to teach, some spiritual maturity, and (b) always must be confirmed by a congregation’s actual call to the brother who has completed his seminary training. Question 1 of our minister’s ordination form asks: “Whether thou feelest in thy heart that thou art lawfully called of God’s Church, and therefore of God Himself, to this holy ministry?” The call of the church is also part of the brother’s call to the ministry. Thus, the call is a gradual process which does not culminate until the brother’s ordination; in fact, this call is in process of being fulfilled throughout his entire ministerial life.
8. Holy Spirit—It ought to be noted that although this list may be helpful in listening to and evaluating a ministerial call, the call itself cannot be reduced to a mere list of items. In the final

analysis, the call is the work of the Holy Spirit in each one of the points listed above. He alone must and will fulfill the ministerial call He plants and nourishes in His own time and way.