I. **Details**
   A. Times: Tuesdays, 9:00–12:00 (including one-hour break for chapel)
   B. Instructor: Dr. James N. Anderson
   C. Contact: janderson@rts.edu
   D. Availability: If you wish to discuss some aspect of the course, please either arrange (via email) an appointment or knock on the door of my office (in E building) if it’s open.

II. **Goals**
   A. To develop the student’s understanding of worldviews and their role in apologetics.
   B. To familiarize the student with some prominent non-Christian worldviews.
   C. To assist the student in developing robust critiques of non-Christian worldviews.
   D. To sharpen the student’s critical thinking skills in the practice of apologetics.
   E. To strengthen the student’s own faith, and to equip them to strengthen the faith of others, through an appreciation of the rational superiority of the Christian worldview.

III. **Course Overview**
   A. Biblical Foundations for Apologetics
   B. Introduction to Worldviews
      1. Identifying Worldviews
      2. Evaluating Worldviews
   C. The Biblical Christian Worldview
   D. Secular Worldviews:
      1. Naturalism
      2. Postmodernism
   E. Religious Worldviews:
      1. New Age Spirituality
      2. Mormonism
      3. Jehovah’s Witnesses
      4. Islam
      5. Pluralism
      6. Moralistic Therapeutic Deism
   F. Cultural Apologetics
   G. Case Studies

IV. **Course Requirements**
   A. *Class attendance and thoughtful participation.*
      1. As per seminary policy, you are required to attend all the lectures. If you know that you will be unable to attend class on a particular date, please inform me in advance, otherwise you may be penalized for your absence.
2. There will be opportunity for class participation and questions during the lectures.

3. You will also be expected to attend chapel from 10:00–10:30 as part of class. The preaching of God’s Word is central to Reformed ministry, and weekly chapel is an integral part of seminary training. It is a valuable opportunity to worship God in communion with fellow students, faculty, and staff, and to hear the Word preached in the context of preparation for ministry. You are encouraged to actively reflect on the connection between chapel worship and the topics discussed in this class.

4. You will be expected to use the Internet in the classroom only for appropriate class-related activities, and you will be asked to sign an honor pledge to that effect.

5. A proportion of your final grade (see below) will depend on your attendance record and your participation in the classes (thoughtful interaction with the professor and other students).

B. Reading assignments.
   1. A proportion of your final exam mark (and thus your final grade) will depend on your acknowledgment that you have completed the required reading (see below).
   2. You will be penalized for each uncompleted reading assignment.

C. Writing assignment.
   1. You should write a critical review paper (3500–4500 words, excluding footnotes) of a book which defends or promotes a non-Christian worldview. (See below for some book suggestions.)
   2. Your paper should include all of the following:
      i. An explanation of how you identified the author’s worldview from the text (you may make use of other writings from the same author in support).
      ii. A critique of the author’s worldview, using the methods illustrated in class.
      iii. A comparison of the author’s worldview with the Christian worldview, explaining why the latter does not succumb to the criticisms you have made of the former.
      iv. An explanation of any significant logical fallacies or other errors of reasoning committed by the author.
   3. Your paper will be graded according to the following criteria, in no particular order: responsible use of Scripture, responsible use of sources, creativity, clarity, structure and coherence, cogency of argument, evidence of critical thinking, and good writing style (inc. grammar, spelling, and punctuation).
   4. The paper should cite at least 6 scholarly sources (other than the book reviewed).
      i. For the purposes of this paper, a scholarly source is a book or article by a recognized expert in the field (and not aimed at a popular level for a general audience)—ideally one that has been peer-reviewed.
      ii. Wikipedia is clearly not a scholarly source.
      iii. That said, with sufficient discernment, Wikipedia can be a useful pointer to scholarly sources and is generally reliable for fact-checking on uncontroversial issues.
      iv. Please consult me if you have any doubts about whether a source is scholarly.
      v. You should not rely heavily on Internet sources. Use the library!
   5. The paper should be word-processed, not hand-written.
      i. Use a 12-point font and double line-spacing for the main text.
      ii. Use section headings where applicable to improve readability.
iii. Use footnotes (10-point font) rather than endnotes.
iv. Use a recognized scholarly style for citations (e.g., Chicago, Turabian, SBL).

6. The paper should be submitted with a title page containing all of the following: the name and year of the course; your name; the professor’s name; the title of the paper; and the exact word count for the main text of the paper (obtained from your word processor’s word-count feature).

7. You will be penalized if you do not observe the requirements and guidelines above.
8. Your paper is due on May 10. It should be submitted on or prior to this date. Ensure that the paper is stamped with the date of submission. Late submissions will be penalized.
9. Your paper will be returned to you after grading with limited feedback. Consult the document “Guide to Annotations on Graded Papers” to crack the code. If you wish to receive more detailed feedback, please email me to arrange an appointment.

D. Final exam.
1. The final exam will be taken in exam week: May 12–17.
2. The exam will consist of a combination of short-answer and short-essay questions based on all of the class material and all of the required readings. You will have two hours to complete it.
3. You may refer to an English translation of the Bible (but not one with study notes, etc.). You may not refer to any class notes or other study resources.
4. You will be asked to sign a declaration that you have not discussed the content of the exam with anyone who has previously taken the exam.
5. You will also be asked to indicate which of the required reading assignments you have completed and to sign a declaration to that effect.

V. Course Documents
A. Instructions for accessing course documents.
1. Log in to the RTS Canvas website (https://rts.instructure.com).
2. Select “Applied Apologetics” under Courses & Groups.
3. All of the course documents will be accessible from the Modules page.
A. Lecture outlines.
1. Lecture outlines will be uploaded to the course website on a weekly basis.
2. You are strongly encouraged to supplement the outlines with your own notes.
B. Supplementary documents.
1. Some of the required reading items will be available on the course website.
2. You should also consult the documents “Research Paper Checklist” and “Guide to Annotations on Graded Papers”.

VI. Grading
A. Class attendance and participation — 10%
B. Final exam (including credit for reading assignments) — 40%
C. Review paper — 50%
VII. Required Reading
You should obtain copies of all of the items below. You should have read A (not including appendices) by the third week of class (February 16) and B-E in preparation for the review paper and final exam. Each book should be read in full (including appendices) before the final exam.

B. James N. Anderson, Why Should I Believe Christianity (Christian Focus Publications, 2016). [A pre-publication manuscript will be available on the course website.]
C. Gregory Koukl, Tactics (Zondervan, 2009).

VIII. Recommended Supplementary Reading
You are not required to read any of the items below, but you may find them useful to consolidate the course material and for further study as your interests dictate. For many of these, the table of contents can be viewed on Amazon.com or Google Books.

[An interactive non-linear book (in the style of a Choose Your Own Adventure book) designed to help readers identify and critically evaluate their worldviews in comparison to other worldviews. Aimed at both Christians and non-Christians.]
[A practical introduction to presuppositional apologetics.]
[The definitive exposition of Van Til’s presuppositionalism: a combination of representative excerpts from Van Til’s writings and Bahnsen’s insightful, concise commentary. Highly recommended.]
F. James Fieser and Bradley Dowden, eds., Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy.
[A free, online, peer-reviewed encyclopedia of philosophy; contains good articles on many of the philosophical concepts discussed in the course. http://www.iep.utm.edu]
G. John Gilchrist, Facing the Muslim Challenge (Life Challenge Africa, 2002).
[A short but well-informed handbook of responses to common Muslim objections. PDF version is available online if you search for it.]
[As you might expect from the title, a primer on postmodernism. A reliable introduction but weak on critique.]
[A readable and incisive critique of typical postmodernist claims.]
[A comprehensive handbook of evidences for the historicity of the Resurrection. Evidentialist in orientation, but still invaluable for ‘moderate’ presuppositionalists.]

[An apologia for the Christian faith aimed at 21st-century Western unbelievers. Keller’s approach is eclectic, but has presuppositionalist themes; he cites Van Til and Frame as positive influences. A good example of culturally-aware apologetics.]

[Useful collection of essays on various topics relevant to applied Christian apologetics.]

[An introduction to worldviews and a critique of some major non-Christian worldviews. Nash was a Reformed philosopher/apologist who taught at RTS’s Orlando campus.]

[An updated defense of Lewis’s “argument from reason” against naturalism.]

[A defense of classical theism—including a critique of Hartshorne’s process theology.]

[A relatively accessible introduction to Van Til’s presuppositionalism. This edition features an introduction and explanatory notes by William Edgar.]

[An excellent introduction to the Qur’an and critical evaluation of its claims.]

[A free, online, peer-reviewed encyclopedia of philosophy; contains good articles on many of the philosophical concepts discussed in the course. http://plato.stanford.edu]

IX. Suggestions for Books to Review
The following are merely suggestions. You are free to choose any book you think will allow you to fulfill the paper requirements, but be sure that your chosen book does allow you to meet those requirements. You should do some research (e.g., Goodreads/Amazon reviews) before settling on a final choice.

A. Marcus Borg: *The God We Never Knew*
B. Deepak Chopra: *How to Know God / The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success*
C. John B. Cobb, Jr. & David Ray Griffin: *Process Theology: An Introductory Exposition*
D. Don Cupitt: *Taking Leave of God / The Sea of Faith*
E. Paul Davies: *The Mind of God / The Fifth Miracle*
F. Richard Dawkins: *The Selfish Gene / The Blind Watchmaker / The God Delusion*
G. Daniel Dennett: *Darwin’s Dangerous Idea / Breaking the Spell*
H. Sam Harris: *The End of Faith / Letter to a Christian Nation / The Moral Landscape*
I. Paul Harrison: *Elements of Pantheism*
J. Stephen Hawking: *A Brief History of Time / The Grand Design*
K. John Hick, *An Interpretation of Religion / God Has Many Names*
L. Christopher Hitchens: *God is Not Great*
M. Richard Holloway: *Godless Morality / Doubts and Loves*
N. Harold Kushner: *When Bad Things Happen to Good People*
O. Robert L. Millet: *A Different Jesus?*

P. Thomas Nagel: *Mind and Cosmos*

Q. Thomas Paine: *The Age of Reason*

R. Jordan Paper, *The Deities Are Many: A Polytheistic Theology*

S. Feisal Abdul Rauf: *What’s Right with Islam*

T. Stephen E. Robinson: *Are Mormons Christians?*

U. Peter Rollins: *How (Not) to Speak of God*


W. Bertrand Russell: *Why I am Not a Christian*

X. Eckhart Tolle: *The Power of Now / A New Earth*
# Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

**Course:** Applied Apologetics  
**Professor:** James N. Anderson  
**Campus:** Charlotte  
**Date:** 01/21/11

*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.

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<th>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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| **Articulation (oral & written)** | Strong | 1. Critical review/application paper  
2. Final exam tests knowledge and articulation of course topics  
3. Class discussion questions testing understanding and application |
| **Scripture** | Moderate | 1. Reviews biblical basis for presuppositional methodology  
2. Reviews exegetical arguments against cults (Jehovah’s Witnesses, etc.) |
| **Reformed Theology** | Minimal | 1. Relevance of Reformed distinctives to Christian worldview and apologetic methodology |
| **Sanctification** | Minimal | 1. Emphasizes our dependence on God in all aspects of life  
2. Ultimate purpose of apologetics to glorify God |
| **Desire for Worldview** | Strong | 1. Presuppositional methodology  
2. Holistic view of Christian faith  
3. Christian worldview shown to be foundational for all aspects of life |
| **Winsomely Reformed** | Moderate | 1. Appreciation for material from non-Reformed apologists  
2. Emphasis on humility in apologetics  
3. Person-relative approach |
| **Preach** | Minimal | 1. Critical thinking skills developed |
| **Worship** | None | |
| **Shepherd** | Moderate | 1. Importance of apologetics for evangelism  
2. Use of apologetics to edify and protect Christian believers |
| **Church/World** | Moderate | 1. Relevance of apologetics to public issues, ethics, politics, etc.  
2. Distinguishes Christian worldview from denominational distinctives |