ST530 – Apologetics
Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte
Winter 2016

I. Details
   A. Dates: January 11–15
   B. Times: Mon 1:00–4:30; Tue–Thu 9:00–4:30; Fri 9:00–12:00
   C. Instructor: Dr. James R. White (http://www.aomin.org)

II. Goals
   A. To survey the biblical foundations for apologetics, including the basics of a biblical epistemology (theory of knowledge and rationality).
   B. To train the student to respond in a biblical and intellectually responsible fashion to the some of the major challenges to the Christian gospel in our day.
   C. To strengthen the student’s own faith, and to equip them to strengthen the faith of other Christians, through an appreciation of Christian apologetics.

III. Course Overview
   A. Biblical Foundations for Apologetics
   B. Biblical Epistemology and Its Relevance to Apologetics
   C. Affirming the Unaffirmable: The Onslaught of the Homosexual Movement
   D. Christianity and Islam: The Modern Challenge
   E. Is the Reformation Over? Modern Roman Catholicism
   F. Home-Grown Religion: The Enigma of Mormonism

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 the professor 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 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.
      4. 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 paper (3500–4500 words, excluding bibliography) taking the form of a dialogue with a Muslim (of any persuasion: Sunni or Shiite, traditionalist or modernist, etc.).

2. You have **several options** for the dialogue paper:
   i. The first (and recommended) option is to engage in a *real written exchange* with a Muslim, e.g., via email or an internet discussion forum. You should edit the dialogue as needed to maintain clarity and conciseness (i.e., format it to make clear the flow of discussion, correct obvious errors of spelling or grammar, excise irrelevant or tangential material). If the final word count of the dialogue is less than 3500 words, you should supplement it with a critical commentary on the exchange (where you would aim to take any subsequent discussion, how you might have argued differently in retrospect, etc.).
   ii. The second option is to write an *entirely fictional dialogue* between a Christian and a Muslim. If you choose this option, you should make every effort to represent both sides of the dialogue in a realistic, fair, and challenging way (i.e., avoid “straw men”).
   iii. The third option is a combination of the first two: a *partly fictional dialogue* based on a real exchange with a Muslim ("based on a true story").

3. The paper should illustrate that you have a good understanding of the goals, principles, and methods of apologetics discussed in the lectures and readings.

4. Your paper will be graded according to the following criteria, in no particular order: realism, responsible use of Scripture, extent of research, creativity, clarity, structure and coherence, cogency of argument, evidence of critical thinking, and good writing style (inc. grammar, spelling, and punctuation).

5. The paper should include a standard bibliography citing sources used in the writing of the assignment and sources that document or further develop the points raised in the dialogue.

6. 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 appropriate 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).

7. 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).

8. You will be penalized if you do not observe the requirements and guidelines above.

9. Your paper is due on **February 26**. It should be submitted to the assistant at the main front desk on or prior to this date. Ensure that the assistant stamps the paper with the date of submission. Late submissions will be penalized.
D. Final exam.
1. The final exam is due on **February 26**. It should be completed in the library on or prior to this date. You will need to make prior arrangements with Kim Macurda (kmacurda@rts.edu) to obtain the exam paper.
2. If you live more than two hours from the Charlotte campus, you may make arrangements with Kim Macurda to take the exam off-campus with a proctor.
3. 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. Grading
A. Class attendance and participation — 10%
B. Final exam (including credit for reading assignments) — 40%
C. Writing assignment — 50%

VI. Required Reading
You should obtain copies of all four items below and read them (completely, inc. appendices) in preparation for the paper and final exam.


VII. Recommended Reading
You are not required to read the following book, but it is highly recommended as a resource for your dialogue paper.

# Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course:</th>
<th>Apologetics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor:</td>
<td>James R. White</td>
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<tr>
<td>Campus:</td>
<td>Charlotte</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>11/04/15</td>
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## MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

In order to measure the success of the MDiv curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MDiv outcomes.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>1. Creative application paper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>2. Final exam questions test knowledge and articulation of course topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>3. Biblical exegetical arguments for orthodox Christian position</td>
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<tr>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<th>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</th>
<th>Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scripture</td>
<td>Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reformed Theology</td>
<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sanctification</td>
<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<td>Desire for Worldview</td>
<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
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<tr>
<td>Winsomely Reformed</td>
<td>Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Preach</td>
<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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<tr>
<td>Worship</td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Shepherd</td>
<td>Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church/World</td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
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