04ST530 : Apologetics  
Winter 2014 : Course Syllabus  

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Texts, Required:  

Davis, “Frame in the Context of Recent Apologetics” (from *Speaking the Truth in Love*, pre-publication draft sent via e-mail)  

(Texts, Recommended: Oliphint, Scott, *The Battle Belongs to the Lord*)  

Exams:  

Final Exam distributed January 5, due by **February 7, 2014** (postmarked or e-mailed)  

Papers:  

Students will complete one of the following. Final Draft is due February 14, 2014 at midnight (by e-mail or postmark).  

#1. Apologetic Exchange: focused and annotated e-mail text of an apologetic exchange with a non-Christian. Target length (total): 3500 words. [Notes: (a) A first exchange (at least one substantive e-mail from each party) showing the potential of the contact is due on January 31. (b) Annotation/commentary should not exceed 50% of this exercise.]  

#2. Meta-Apologetic Critical Assessment: a 3000-word explanation and assessment of a source published in the last ten years (2003 or later) dealing with apologetics. The assessment should focus on methodological matters. [Notes: (a) If a Rough Draft is submitted by January 31, it will receive comments and suggestions. The Final Draft would then be due one week after the comments were returned or February 14, whichever is later. (b) Only one student may write on a particular source, so first-come, first-served.]  

#3. Apologetic Response: a 3000-word response to an attack leveled against the faith published in the last five years (2008 or later). [Notes: (a) If a Rough Draft is submitted by January 31, it will receive comments and suggestions. The Final
Draft would then be due one week after the comments were returned or February 14, whichever is later. (b) Only one student may write on a particular source, so first-come, first-served.]

**Participation:** In-class activities (debates, puzzle solutions, role-playing, etc.) will contribute to this portion of the grade, along with attendance. Attendance will be taken discretely three times each weekend (Friday evening, Saturday morning, Saturday afternoon).

**Grading:** Grades will be calculated using the following percentages:

- Final Exam………………………………………. 40%
- Paper ............................................ 45%
- Participation…………………………………… 15%

**Schedule of Topics, Readings & Assignments:**

**Jan. 10-11**  *The Apologetic Tasks* (The Biblical Imperative to Defend the Faith)
(no reading or writing assignments, but Davis, “Frame in the Context of Recent Apologetics” is recommended)

**Jan. 17-18**  *Meta-Apologetics* (Theories of Defending the Faith)
Reading: Frame (pp. 1-147) & Stackhouse (all)
Reading: Plantinga (chps 3, 5-9, 13; i.e. pp. 67-107, 135-323, 422-457)

**Jan. 24-25**  *Apologetic Challenges Answered* (Defending the Faith)
Murray (chps 1, 2, 4, 5, and three chapters to be selected by the class; i.e. 1-46, 76-134, and roughly 60 other pages as selected).

**Jan. 31**  First Exchange of e-mails due (for Apologetic Exchange option)
**Jan. 31**  (Optional Rough Draft of Meta-Apologetic or Apologetic Response paper)

**Feb. 7**  Final Exam Due (postmarked or e-mailed)

**Feb. 14**  Final Draft of Papers Due (postmarked or e-mailed)
*or 10 days after comments sent from instructor to student
### Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

#### Course: ST 530 Apologetics
Professor: William C. Davis, PhD
Campus: Atlanta
Date: January 2014

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<tr>
<th>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</th>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation</strong> (oral &amp; written)</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Course Essay (Apologetic Exchange, Meta-Apologetic Assessment, or Apologetic Response) each require students to analyze and assess current challenges to the rational viability of Christian faith commitments. Successful essays will be able to articulate command of key biblical and theological concepts and presuppositions. Required readings and class lectures provided background material and clarification of the needed concepts of presuppositions.</td>
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<td><strong>Scripture</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Classroom discussion and lectures are organized around the use of biblical texts (especially in their original languages) as sources for the content and method necessary to the defense of the faith.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Reformed Theology</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>The Reformed tradition in Apologetics is rich and subtle, but more in the practices of the tradition than in the doctrinal standards and symbols. Close attention is given to the history of Reformed practice.</td>
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<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Reformed Apologetics insists on defending faith in the Triune God of the Bible (and not just a general theism); moreover, faithful defenses of Christian faith start...</td>
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*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.*
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<th><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></th>
<th>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Lives detached from the Word of God will be apologetically inert, but the primary desire must be a desire to see the lost won and Christ’s honor defended.</th>
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<td><strong>Winsomely Reformed</strong></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>Moderate</td>
<td>The principal focus on classroom discussion and the course assignments is love for and outreach to non-Christians. Close consideration is given to the importance of ecumenical peace as part of the church being a hermeneutic of the gospel, however.</td>
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<td><strong>Preach</strong></td>
<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>The focus is dialogue with non-Christians, but some time is devoted to strategies for teaching other believers how to deal with doubt and defend the faith.</td>
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<td><strong>Worship</strong></td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>The worshipping community is the truth embodied, and thus plays a part (albeit secondary) in the study of apologetics</td>
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<td><strong>Shepherd</strong></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>Strong</td>
<td>Because effective defenses of the faith depend on love for the lost and a vital body life, the task of nurturing the local congregation gets extensive attention in classroom discussion and lectures.</td>
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<td><strong>Church/World</strong></td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Consideration of work within denominational structures focuses on the importance of dealing charitably with fellow believers who approach apologetics differently. The rubric for the Meta-apologetic Critical Assessment option among the Essays includes an evaluation of this (charity with others who disagree).</td>
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