SYLLABUS

1PT520: Church Polity

Dr. Sean Michael Lucas

Meeting times: M, 11a-12p
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Course description:
Students examine the biblical data relative to church government and the Book of Church Order. The organization and function of church courts, including discipline and appeals, are considered, and parliamentary procedure is emphasized.

Goals:
1. The student will explore the biblical and theological interrelation between ecclesiology (doctrine of the church) with polity (doctrine of church government).
2. The student will gain a basic working knowledge of the Presbyterian Church in America Book of Church.
3. The student will develop a familiarity with parliamentary procedure and experience in running meetings using them.

Required texts:
Paul Engle and Steven Cowan, eds., Who Runs the Church?: 4 Views on Church Government (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004); 978-1596381506; $16.99, paperback.

Other handouts will be given during the class. You will be asked at the end whether you read them on your final reading report.

Requirements and Grading:
1. Regular attendance and class participation (10%). As a graduate school class, it is expected that you will make every effort to attend and participate. In addition, several of our meeting times will be case study discussions; your participation will be observed and graded.
2. BCO quizzes (50%). There will be five quizzes on the BCO each worth 10% of your grade. You will find those dates when they will be given in the syllabus.
3. Reading (20%). At end of the semester, you will turn in a sheet signifying how much of the assigned portion you have read.
4. *Final exam or paper* (20%). Presbyterian students will take a final exam; non-Presbyterian students will write a paper assigned by the instructor reflecting on their tradition’s polity.

5. *Grading scale (standard RTS scale):*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97-100</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>94-96</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>91-93</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<td>88-90</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>86-87</td>
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<td>78-79</td>
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<td>75-77</td>
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<td>72-74</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>70-71</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<tr>
<td>Below 70</td>
<td>F</td>
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As part of our purpose to train servants of the triune God to walk with God in all of life, we expect godly integrity in the academic work done at Reformed Theological Seminary. God’s covenant with His people calls for honesty and a commitment to truth (as in the 9th commandment). As we live in that covenant and in community with one another, upholding truth is an essential duty. Specifically applied to academic labors, this means that we accurately represent our work to others. In other words, neither cheating nor plagiarism is tolerated.

**Schedule of Assignments**

**26 August 2013**
- Handout Syllabus

**9 September 2013**
Presbyterian Ecclesiology and Polity

Handout: Miller (elder), Girardeau (deacon), Agan/Perry (deaconess)

Readings:
Lucas, *What is Church Government?*

**16 September 2013**
The offices of elder and deacon

**BCO Quiz #1**
Handout: Breckinridge (ordination)

Readings:
L. Roy Taylor, “Presbyterianism,” with responses in *Who Runs the Church?*, 71-130
PCA BCO, preface and chapters 1-9
Miller, Girardeau, deaconess handouts
23 September 2013
The courts of the church and ordination

BCO Quiz #2
Handout: various on confessional subscription

Readings:
PCA BCO, chapters 10-17
Breckinridge handout

30 September 2013
E lecting pastors, elders, deacons and other congregational meeting matters

BCO Quiz #3

Readings:
PCA BCO, chapters 18-26
Subscription handouts

14 October 2013
Church Discipline, part one

BCO Quiz #4

Readings:
PCA BCO, chapters 27-46

21 October 2013
Church discipline, part two

Handout: paedocommunion articles

Readings:
TBD

28 October 2013
Public Worship, especially baptism, admission to sacraments, and Lord’s Supper

BCO Quiz #5

Readings:
PCA BCO, chapters 47-63
Paedocommunion articles

4 November 2013
Running a session meeting and other practical matters

Readings:
PCA Rules of Assembly Operation
Robert’s Rules Simplified

11 November 2013
Case study #1: church discipline issues
18 November 2013
Case study #2: presbytery problems

25 November 2013
Case study #3: General Assembly quandaries

2 December 2013
Case study #4: moderating a meeting

10-12 December 2013
Final exam or final paper