ST530 – Apologetics
Reformed Theological Seminary, Charlotte
Winter 2019

I. Details
   A. Dates: January 28–February 1
   B. Times: Mon 1:00–4:30; Tue–Thu 9:00–4:30; Fri 9:00–12:00
   C. Instructor: Dr. James N. Anderson
   D. Contact: janderson@rts.edu
   E. 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 survey the biblical foundations for apologetics, including the basics of a biblical epistemology (theory of knowledge and rationality).
   B. To familiarize the student with the major schools of apologetic methodology: their basic rationales, their representative thinkers, and their distinctive approaches to prominent issues in apologetics.
   C. To present a defense of Reformed presuppositional (worldview) apologetics: its biblical and theological warrant, its philosophical cogency, and its practical effectiveness.
   D. To familiarize the student with prominent issues in apologetics and how they can be addressed from a Reformed presuppositional perspective.
   E. 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. Survey of Contemporary Approaches to Apologetics
   C. Reformed Presuppositional Apologetics: Principles and Practice
   D. Issues in Apologetics (1): The Existence of the Biblical God
   E. Issues in Apologetics (2): The Divine Inspiration of the Bible
   F. Issues in Apologetics (3): The Resurrection of Jesus Christ
   G. Issues in Apologetics (4): The Problem of Evil and Suffering
   H. Issues in Apologetics (5): Science and Scripture

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. Since this is an intensive one-week course, attendance is particularly important; missing one day of class entails missing up to seven lectures.
      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. Please consult Appendix A regarding the RTS Charlotte policy on classroom technology usage.

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 either a non-Christian or a Christian who is struggling with the intellectual aspects of their faith.
   2. You have several options for the dialogue paper:
      i. The first (and recommended) option is to engage in a real written exchange with either a non-Christian or a Christian with doubts or intellectual anxieties, e.g., via email, social media, 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 apologist and either a non-Christian or a Christian with doubts or intellectual anxieties. If you choose this option, you should aim 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 hybrid of the first two: a partly fictional dialogue based on a real exchange with either a non-Christian or a Christian with doubts or intellectual anxieties (“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 dialogue paper is due on March 15. It should be uploaded to the course website as an Adobe PDF document on or prior to this date (look for the link on the Modules page). Late submissions will be penalized.

D. Final exam.
   1. The final exam should be completed by March 15. Please consult Appendix B regarding the exam process.
   2. The format of the exam will be a series of short-answer questions plus two longer essay questions. You will have 3 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 Canvas website (https://rts.instructure.com) using your Self-Service username and password.
      2. Select Apologetics from the Courses menu.
      3. All the course documents will be accessible from the Modules page.
   B. Course outline.
      1. Other than the syllabus, the course outline is the most important document. You will need a copy (either electronic or printed) in front of you throughout the class.
      2. You are strongly encouraged to supplement the outline with your own notes.
      3. The outline will be uploaded to the course website the week before class.
   C. Supplementary documents.
      1. Some of the required and recommended readings (see below) will be available on the course website.
      2. You should also consult the documents “Research Paper Checklist” and “Guide to Annotations on Graded Papers” before you start the writing assignment.

VI. Grading
   A. Class attendance and participation — 10%
   B. Final exam (including credit for reading assignments) — 40%
   C. Writing assignment — 50%
VII. Required Reading
You should obtain copies of all of the items below. You should try to read A before class begins. You should certainly have read A–G (completely, including appendices) in preparation for the paper and final exam.

G. John M. Frame, “How to Write a Theological Paper,” Appendix F in *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God* (P&R, 1987). [A copy of this will be made available on the course website.]

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.

A. History of Apologetics / Methodology in Apologetics
   3. William Lane Craig, *Reasonable Faith: Christian Truth and Apologetics* (Crossway, 3rd edition, 2008). [Craig is arguably the best-known and most sophisticated representative of the classical approach today. This is his main text on apologetic method and practice.]
   5. William Edgar and K. Scott Oliphant, eds., *Christian Apologetics Past & Present: A Primary Source Reader* (Volume 1, To 1500) (Crossway, 2009). [An excellent selection of primary source readings on Christian apologetics from the apostolic era to the close of the Middle Ages, with helpful commentary by two WTS professors.]
[Another excellent selection of primary source readings on Christian apologetics from the Reformation to the present day, with helpful commentary by two WTS professors.]

[An insightful treatment of epistemology (theory of knowledge) from a biblical perspective by a Reformed theologian. Very relevant to apologetics, but also to other areas of biblical and theological study. Highly recommended.]

[An influential work by a leading classical apologist; covers both methodology and application.]

[An up-to-date defense of Van Tilian presuppositional apologetics (although Oliphint prefers the label “covenantal apologetics”) with helpful illustrations of its practical application. Good emphasis on the relationship between apologetics and biblical theology.]

[A defense of the classical approach and critique of the presuppositional approach from three Reformed scholars, dedicated (without evident irony) to Cornelius Van Til. John Frame’s critical review of the book appears as an appendix in AGG.]

[A good selection of readings representing a range of approaches to apologetics.]

[One of Van Til’s most influential works on presuppositional apologetics. This edition features an introduction and explanatory notes by K. Scott Oliphint.]
rational. Part 2 contains contemporary versions of the traditional arguments for God’s existence.]

   [Eighteen short chapters penned by leading evangelical scholars responding to the claims of the New Atheists and other contemporary critics.]

   [A collection of essays offering a sophisticated and comprehensive critique of metaphysical naturalism. A number of the arguments could be fairly described as presuppositional in thrust.]

   [A heavyweight volume offering state-of-the-art formulations and defenses of the traditional theistic arguments.]

9. William Lane Craig and Chad Meister, eds., *God is Great, God is Good: Why Believing in God is Reasonable and Responsible* (InterVarsity Press, 2009).
   [Another collection of essays responding to the New Atheists. Not all contributors write from an evangelical perspective. Includes an interview with Antony Flew following his ‘conversion’ from atheism to theism (or something close to theism).]

    [A generally reliable introduction to the basic teachings of Islam followed by a critical evaluation from an evangelical Christian perspective.]

    [A collection of essays that together offer a comprehensive case (presuppositional in part, evidential in part) that miracles are possible in principle, that miracle claims can be rationally believed, and that the major miracle claims of the Bible are true.]

    [A short but well-informed handbook of responses to common Muslim objections. PDF version is available online if you search for it.]

    [Exactly what it says on the tin. A cumulative-case approach to defending the Christian worldview by a leading evangelical philosopher.]

    [An up-to-date handbook of evidences for the historicity of the Resurrection. Evidentialist in its methodological 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.]
   [A prequel to *The Reason for God* which aims to open up the modern skeptic to a serious intellectual consideration of Christianity. Keller argues that culturally, emotionally, and intellectually, Christianity makes more sense than secularism.]

   [A gem of a book by an evangelical Oxford professor debunking myths about the (alleged) conflict between Christianity and science.]

   [Lewis’s influential apologia for the existence of God and the identity of Jesus Christ. Various editions available.]

   [Lewis’s influential response to the problem of evil—a mixed bag of biblical insights and unbiblical ideas. Various editions available.]

   [Lewis’s classic defense of miracles (and supernaturalism more broadly); includes an insightful refutation of metaphysical naturalism.]

   [A useful collection of essays on prominent issues in Christian apologetics, but with very little attention given to methodological concerns.]

   [A superb defense of the integrity of the Bible in response to the common Muslim accusation that Jews and Christians have corrupted their scriptures. Also documents the contradictions, alterations, and dubious textual history of the Qur’an.]

   [A knowledgeable and insightful treatment of the relationship(s) between science and biblical theology, from a Reformed perspective.]

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

   [A well-informed, lay-level defense of the reliability of the Gospels, clearing away the common objections and misconceptions. A useful resource to give to skeptics.]

   [A popularization of Alvin Plantinga’s apologetics. Well-argued and engagingly written, but mostly defensive in orientation.]

   [Stokes argues, quite effectively, that atheists need to take their atheism more consistently; although they routinely appeal to science and morality, their own worldview is inconsistent with such appeals. Plantinga in orientation.]

   [An engaging scholarly critique of the Qur’an by a Reformed Christian apologist with decades of experience in debating Muslims. Highly recommended.]
C. Reference Works

   [A comprehensive reference work with a wide range of scholarly contributors.]

   [An online, peer-reviewed encyclopedia of philosophy; good articles on many of the philosophical concepts discussed in the course. http://www.iep.utm.edu]

   [An online, peer-reviewed encyclopedia of philosophy; good articles on many of the philosophical concepts discussed in the course. http://plato.stanford.edu]
Appendix A: RTS Charlotte Classroom Technology Usage

RTS Charlotte recognizes how essential it is for students to have reliable, campus-wide access to the internet. For that reason, we have made Wi-Fi available for our student body, not only in the library and student lounges, but also in the classrooms. We know that students need to use the internet to download class materials, access files on the Cloud, and locate other important information. However, we also recognize that internet access in the classroom provides opportunity for abuse and misuse. Some students have unfortunately used their internet access to engage in many activities that distract them from the classroom lectures (e.g., surfing the web, checking sports scores, playing games). Not only does such activity hamper a student’s own seminary education, but it distracts other students who can easily view the screens of nearby students. In addition, donors and classroom guests (who often sit in the back) can see this inappropriate internet usage, which reflects poorly on RTS. Classroom etiquette includes leaving cell phones turned off, refraining from surfing the Internet or playing computer games or other distracting activities. In addition, students must respect standards set by individual professors regarding the use of technology during their class.

In order to address this issue, we must appeal to the integrity of the students as ones who are preparing for a lifetime of ministry to Christ and his church. We expect each student to take personal responsibility for proper classroom technology usage and to encourage others around them to do the same. All RTS-Charlotte students are accountable to the policies stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Catalog and are therefore expected to use technology in the classroom only for appropriate class-related activities. Student conduct is under the supervision of the Dean of Students.
Appendix B: RTS Charlotte Student Instructions for Final Exams for Intensive Classes

1. Install the LockDown Browser application on the computer you intend to use for exams, prior to sitting for the exam, using this link:
   http://www.respondus.com/lockdown/download.php?id=998253613
   - This link is ONLY for RTS students and covers both Mac and Windows applications.
   - Be sure that you are able to login to your Canvas account from the LockDown Browser before scheduling a time to take your exam.
   - The LockDown Browser application is already installed on the computers in the RTS Charlotte library. (Note that if you elect to use the library computers, your proctor must still be present throughout the duration of the exam.)

2. Make arrangements with a proctor to supervise the exam within the date timeframe set by the professor. The proctor cannot be a family member, current RTS student (current = taken a class within the past year but not yet graduated), or member of the library staff.

3. The proctor must observe student taking exam and ensure that there are no devices or resources available other than the computer being used for the exam.

4. Access the exam during the date window specified for that midterm:
   a. Start the LockDown Browser application using a wired or known reliable WiFi connection. We do not recommend using restaurant or coffee shop WiFi to take exams.
   b. Login to your Canvas account using your Self-Service username and password. If you need to reset your Self-Service password, you may do so at https://selfservice.rts.edu
   c. Navigate to the exam. You will not be able to access the exam with a standard web browser. For additional details on using LockDown Browser, review this Student Quick Start Guide (PDF).
   d. Time clock will begin once you open the exam.
   e. Exam must be completed in one sitting. You may not exit and return to exam later.
   f. The exam will contain questions requiring the proctor contact information, an honor pledge, and certification that your proctor was present during the entire exam period.

5. The proctor must confirm completion at the end of the exam by emailing proctor.charlotte@rts.edu, including the Course Name & Student Name in the email subject line. There is a question in the exam which will prompt you to ask your proctor to send this email.

6. Proctors may be contacted to verify information regarding exam administration.

7. In the rare case of a technical issue (for example, if internet service goes out during exam), the proctor should contact the course TA. While the TAs may not be immediately available, the date and time of the email will document when the issue was reported. Please have your TA’s contact information available for your proctor before opening the exam. Once you open the exam using the LockDown Browser, you will not be able to access other programs on your computers.
## Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course:</th>
<th>Apologetics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Professor:</td>
<td>James N. Anderson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campus:</td>
<td>Charlotte</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td>01/21/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>1. Creative application paper 2. Final exam questions test knowledge and articulation of course topics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>1. Emphasizes connection between Reformed theology and apologetic methodology 2. Reformed approach to theodicy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<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>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Justification</td>
<td>1. Creative application paper 2. Final exam questions test knowledge and articulation of course topics</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scripture</th>
<th>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.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reformed Theology</th>
<th>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Justification</td>
<td>1. Emphasizes connection between Reformed theology and apologetic methodology 2. Reformed approach to theodicy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sanctification</th>
<th>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Justification</td>
<td>1. Emphasizes our dependence on God in all aspects of life 2. Ultimate purpose of apologetics to glorify God</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Desire for Worldview</th>
<th>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>Strong</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Winsomely Reformed</th>
<th>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.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Justification</td>
<td>1. Appreciation for material from non-Reformed apologists and scholars 2. Emphasis on humility in apologetics 3. Person-relative approach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Preach</th>
<th>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Justification</td>
<td>1. Role of apologetics in preaching 2. Critical thinking skills developed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Worship</th>
<th>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Justification</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shepherd</th>
<th>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.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Justification</td>
<td>1. Importance of apologetics for both evangelism and counseling 2. Use of apologetics to edify and protect Christian believers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church/World</th>
<th>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rubric</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mini-Justification</td>
<td>1. Relevance of apologetics to public issues, ethics, politics, etc. 2. Distinguishes Christian worldview from denominational distinctives</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>