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1. Introduction

1.1 Welcome

LET ME extend to you a very warm welcome to RTS Dallas! We are thrilled God has called you to begin advanced study of Scripture, theology, and the church of Christ in preparation for a lifetime of service to His kingdom. We hope to make your adjustment to the seminary life as easy and pleasant as possible. This Student Handbook is designed to help you know what to expect at RTS Dallas and what is expected of you. Please read it carefully and keep it for future reference. The Student Handbook contains useful pointers, policies, and procedures designed to help you settle in and stay on track.

Faculty and staff are accessible. All administrators and faculty members have office hours. Feel free to contact the appropriate person when you have a question, a suggestion, or a need. We are here to assist you. At RTS Dallas, we desire to be a place where close, cordial relationships can be developed between students, faculty, and staff in the Spirit and love of Christ.

Please be patient during your first few weeks and months on campus. While the workload is substantial and challenging, you will be able to master the assignments with diligence, hard work, and fervent prayer. Refuse to let temporary discouragements tell you otherwise. Remember, we do everything in the presence of the Lord and for his glory.
Chapter 1. Introduction

We want your life at RTS Dallas to be characterized by four commitments:

a) a commitment to the truth of the Scriptures and their application to all of life
b) a commitment to thorough academic work offered to the Lord as your immediate vocation
c) a commitment toward genuine loving relationships with God and one another, reflecting the self-sacrificing love of our Savior for us
d) a commitment to minister to the larger community and to the church as God provides the opportunity.

1.2 RTS Purpose Statement

The purpose of RTS is to serve the church in all branches of evangelical Christianity, especially the Presbyterian and Reformed family, by preparing its leaders, with a priority on pastors, and including missionaries, educators, counselors, and others through a program of theological education on the graduate level, based upon the authority of the inerrant Word of God, the sixty-six books of the Bible, and committed to the Reformed faith as set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms as accepted by the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America as its standard of doctrine at its first General Assembly in 1789. This program shall be characterized by biblical fidelity, confessional integrity, and academic excellence, and committed to the promotion of the spiritual growth of the students. The breadth of this ministry will include multiple campuses and extensions as led by the Lord.

1.3 RTS Vision Statement

Reformed Theological Seminary exists to glorify the Triune God and to serve His Church in all branches of evangelical Christianity, especially Presbyterian and Reformed Churches, by providing Reformed graduate theological education that is globally accessible. RTS equips students for ministry, primarily through pastoral preparation, to be servant leaders marked by "A mind for truth, a heart for God.”

RTS Dallas participates in and applies the institutional purpose of RTS by forming generations of Christian leaders marked by a spirit of semper reformanda, which means “always reforming.” These kinds of leaders are nurtured in the Word of God and empowered by the Spirit of Christ to reform the church and transform the world. In this way, we hope to contribute to the Church’s role in making Christ’s invisible kingdom visible “on earth, as it is in heaven.”

1.4 Accreditation

Reformed Theological Seminary is accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS-COC).

Reformed Theological Seminary is accredited by ATS to award the following degrees: Master of Divinity, Master of Arts, Master of Arts (Biblical Studies), Master of Arts (Religion), Master of Arts (Theological Studies), Master of Arts (Christian Counseling), Master of Arts in Counseling, Master of Arts in Marriage and Family Therapy and Counseling, and Doctor of Ministry.
1.5 History

**RTS Dallas** is accredited by ATS to offer the Master of Divinity and the Master of Arts (Theological Studies) degrees. The coursework, credits and degree earned at Reformed Theological Seminary may or may not be transferable to another institution. It is at the sole discretion of the receiving institution which credits, if any, will be accepted.

The Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada:
The Commission on Accrediting
10 Summit Park Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15275-1103
Telephone: 412.788.6505
www.ats.edu

Reformed Theological Seminary is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools to award masters and doctorate degrees.

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools:
The Commission on Colleges
1866 Southern Lane, Decatur, GA 30033-4097
Telephone: 404.679.4500
www.sacscoc.org

1.5 History

The turbulent 1960s had an impact not only on American politics but also on American churches. After a season of intense prayer during a meeting in a Memphis hotel room, five concerned pastors, led by Dr. Sam Patterson, gave birth to the idea of starting a new seminary committed to the authority of the Scriptures.

Reformed Theological Seminary first opened its doors in Jackson, Mississippi, in the fall of 1966 with 14 eager seminary students. Times have changed and the vision has grown. Today, with its strong history and expanding presence, RTS is one of the largest, thriving, cutting-edge seminaries in North America with more than 2,000 students across its multiple locations: Atlanta, Charlotte, Dallas, Houston, Jackson, Memphis, Orlando, New York, Washington D.C., and Global (located in Charlotte).

Over the past 50 years, RTS has educated more than 7,000 ministers, teachers, missionaries and counselors who have taken the Gospel of Jesus Christ to more than 55 countries through more than 46 denominations reaching millions of men, women and children with that good news. For the complete RTS story, see *A Mind for Truth, A Heart for God. The First Fifty Years of Reformed Theological Seminary*, by church historian, librarian, and faculty member John Muether.
2. Student Life

2.1 Spiritual Life

2.1.1 Community Commitments

As you begin—or continue—your seminary career, we invite you to join us in committing to:

1. The truth of Scripture in its full expression and in the breadth of its application to all of life (2 Tim. 3:16–17).
2. Sharing of the truth of Scripture with each other in hard work and personal service (1 Thess. 2:8).
3. A significant and thorough application to academic work offered to the Lord as our immediate vocation (2 Tim. 2:15–16).
4. A genuine and supportive friendship with each other, reflecting the self-sacrificing love of our Savior for us (1 John 3:11, 16–18)

2.1.2 Personal Commitments

The Apostle Paul wrote Timothy: “Watch your life and doctrine closely . . .” (1 Tim. 4:16a). Your personal walk with the Lord merits your first and continuing concern. If your studies (even of Scripture and theology) overtake your personal devotion and formation in relational accountability, you can become dry and bitter. Be on guard against this, and cultivate specific disciplines during this time that will bear much fruit under the later (and greater) demands of ministry in the kingdom! John Frame’s, *Studying Theology as a Servant of Jesus*, contains valuable advice on this subject.
2.1.3 **The Lord’s Day**

The Lord’s Day is set aside for your worship with a local congregation and for your rest. You are urged to participate actively in a local church. This will be a valuable and indispensable element in your seminary experience. Some congregations accept students into affiliate membership; others will urge you to transfer your membership to that congregation. Either way, you will find great value in associating with a particular congregation throughout your seminary days. Take some time the first few months to determine where you will attend, and then commit yourself to faithfully attend and serve. For a list of area churches that students, faculty and staff attend, please contact the Student Life Office. Faculty, staff, and students attend many congregations and will gladly help introduce you to the life of those church bodies, especially if you are new to the area.

Observance of the Lord’s Day also means that you should rest from studying (as from other labors) as part of the good rhythm of keeping the Sabbath. Please do not call faculty or staff at their homes concerning academic or other Seminary–related matters on the Lord’s Day. The Seminary is closed on Sunday. Emails sent to faculty and staff will be answered on Monday.

2.1.4 **Chapel**

Chapel is an important part of community life and is held every Thursday from 11:15am-12:00pm during the Fall and Spring semesters. Seminary policy as adopted by the faculty states: “All regular students are expected to attend the chapel services. Other members of the academic community are urged to attend when possible.”

2.1.5 **Personal & Corporate Prayer**

Opportunities for prayer—some organized, some spontaneous and individual—occur regularly. We vigorously encourage you to take advantage of them and to institute such practices regularly with your seminary classmates and faculty.

2.1.6 **Pursuing Relationships**

Friendships are an important part of seminary life and, we pray, one of the great legacies of your time here. You will be making friendships that will last your entire life. They will be a source of encouragement for the days ahead. So pursue people while you are here. In particular, we encourage you to get to know people in other degree programs. We encourage you to form friendships with students from other nations. You have an extraordinary opportunity to build international friendships that may become the basis for future ministry partnerships. Finally, pursue our staff and faculty. They will reach out to you. Reach out to them. Pursue them outside the classroom.

2.1.7 **Study (as a Spiritual Activity)**

Studying and preparing for class is your primary responsibility before God during your seminary days. Preparation for ministry is a consecrated activity. Commit yourself to preparing thoroughly and
approaching your study as a devotional service of worship.

2.2 Student Services

2.2.1 Financial Aid

The decision to enroll in Seminary is a step of faith and, for many students this step has been taken without full assurance of complete financial support. Such a step is challenging. Although RTS is generous in its financial aid, the Seminary asks students to treat their awards as confidential information. The online financial application is available at www.rts.edu. If you have questions about Financial Aid or Scholarships please contact the Director of Admissions. He is available to discuss possible ways to meet your financial needs.

Financial Aid is awarded annually in the form of need–based grants, need–based partnerships with particular ministries, or merit–based scholarships. Applications for financial aid must be submitted to the Admissions Office using the online form referenced above. Preference will be shown to full time students and applications received by March 1st. All students who desire to be considered for Financial Aid must complete an Online Financial Aid Application each Spring Semester for the following academic year. Please visit www.rts.edu for more information.

2.2.2 Work Study

Many students work on campus in work study positions. These normally consist of a maximum of 20 hours of work each week on campus in such places as the Library, assistants to faculty, the Admissions Office, maintenance, or as Teaching Assistants (TAs), or other areas. Positions are based upon availability, and therefore, are not guaranteed for any student.

Before you accept a work study job, you must understand that this is a commitment that must be honored. The Seminary depends on work study students to do necessary, critical work. Most of the departments on campus see their work study students as vital contributors to the overall mission of RTS and therefore expect a measure of dependability regardless of the pressure of studies, exams, or other responsibilities.

Time sheets for reporting hours worked under the Work Study program are due at the end of each month on the date posted. It is the student’s responsibility to complete the time sheet, obtain the signature of his/her supervisor, and turn it in to the Campus Administrator. Payment will not be made for work if time sheets are turned in over one month late.

Appropriate and considerate attire is required when performing work study duties in offices or in the library.

2.2.3 Working while in Seminary

Since there are a limited number of jobs on campus, students often seek work opportunities off-campus as well. Check the bulletin boards in the Student Commons (next to the kitchen) and in the Admissions area for announcements regarding employment opportunities. There may be opportunities not only for you but also for your spouse.
Chapter 2. Student Life

Contact the Director of Admissions for advice regarding full-time job opportunities upon graduation from seminary. To search for both part-time and full-time ministry positions, go to www.rts.edu and click on Resources, then Vocational Services.

2.2.4 Insurance

There are at least two measures you can take to protect yourself from overwhelming financial problems:

1. Medical Insurance. The Seminary requires that medical insurance be maintained by all full-time students and their families. This will protect you from the financial disaster that can come through catastrophic illness. In order to register each Fall and Spring Term, each student must show proof of coverage under a personal policy or coverage under a parent’s or spouse’s policy. Failure to comply with this standard may lead to a hold on your student account. If you need more information please contact the Student Life Office for a list of options.

2. Life Insurance. Although life insurance is not required of Seminary students, it is a wise precaution and highly encouraged.

2.2.5 Students with Special Needs

The Dean of Student Development handles the coordination of needed accommodation for students with disabilities and special needs. This includes students with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and non-native English speakers. If you need assistance, please contact the Seminary at the beginning of the semester. We will do all we can to accommodate your special needs when we know about them in advance.

2.2.6 Student Images

Students consent to and understand their image may be used in promotional and/or academic materials as needed by the institution. These materials include, but are not limited to, printed publications, electronic platforms, and social media. With the exception of images created for inclusion within the Student Directory, students may request their image not be used by submitting a written request to the Director of Student Services prior to the image’s production.

2.2.7 Student Activities Fees

Students taking more than three hours are charged a Student Activities Fee at the beginning of the Fall and Spring Semesters. This fee helps form the budget which the Student Life Coordinator and the Student Cabinet oversee and distribute to foster community within RTS. Some of the activities include the Fall & Spring Conferences, Picnics, Christmas Party, Graduation Banquet, and Women of RTS events.

2.2.8 Posting Policy

The location for campus-wide announcements, posters, etc. is on the bulletin boards in the dining area. All announcements and advertisements posted on campus must be approved by the Admissions Office.
before posting on doors, bulletin boards, etc. Postings involving job opportunities, items for sale, and other requests not specifically in reference to student activities **MUST** be posted only in the approved bulletin boards. RTS also reserves the right to remove postings that do not conform to the policy and to remove posting, which have been up an appropriate length of time. For more exposure for your posting, consider joining the RTS Dallas Facebook page. If you have any questions, feel free to contact Peter Yoder in the Admissions Office.

**2.2.9 Women’s Ministry**

Women students and wives of students are offered a variety of growth opportunities, fellowship activities, community ministries, and good food. For detailed information on events or to offer input and ideas, please see Student Life Coordinator.

**Women of RTS.** The purpose of the Women of RTS program is to provide a course of training that will help prepare women for life in the ministry, to promote joy and confidence in their callings to serve Christ for the furtherance and strengthening of His kingdom, and to promote fellowship among all women on campus, married and single. Women of RTS is led jointly by a team composed of students’ wives, student women and the Student Life Coordinator. Together this team leads a program of fellowship, prayer, and teaching. Teaching is done by faculty members, faculty wives, and occasional outside speakers. Student testimonies and music are also part of the program. Small groups give student wives the opportunity to get to know and pray with one another.

**The Women’s Retreat** is an annual event for all women of the seminary community (students, wives, faculty and administration) designed to provide fellowship, inspiration, unity, and training. The event may be held at a nearby retreat facility where a guest speaker highlights the weekend. The nominal fee would include lodging and meals.

**2.2.10 Student Council**

Information concerning student organizations can be found in the seminary catalog. The aims, membership, and programs of the Student Council are listed there. Specific information about meeting dates and programs will be put in student mailboxes or displayed on bulletin boards. Every student is urged to participate in these organizations.

1. The Student Council provides leadership for student activities and represents the student body to the faculty. The council consists of representatives of the senior, middler, and junior classes. If you have matters of concern related to seminary life, bring them to the Student Council.
2. Student Conferences. Students may sponsor a conference during the year such as a Missions Conference, Spiritual Life conference, and/or retreat. Recommendations concerning dates, themes, and speakers for these conferences are presented to the faculty for approval through Dr. Don Fortson. All full-time students are encouraged to attend.
2.3 Academic Life

2.3.1 Academic Advising & Concerns

Several curricula have been developed to meet a wide range of student needs for basic and advanced preparation for Christian service in any field. The catalog – available online only at www.rts.edu/site/academics/courses/catalog.aspx – is designed to acquaint you with various program requirements and academic policies. In addition, there are planning sheets for each degree located outside the Registrar’s office. These are excellent tools for mapping out your course schedule. You should plan your curriculum in close consultation with the catalog, and the Registrar.

If you should have an issue in one class, consult with that professor. If it is, or becomes, a wider matter, speak with your campus’s registrar or Academic Dean.

2.3.2 Registration

All class registration is completed online via Self Service. Please see the link in the bottom right corner of the home page at www.rts.edu. Your RTS student ID number is what you need to get started. You will be prompted to set up a new user name and password at that point. If you do not know your RTS student ID number, please contact the Registrar’s Office.

2.3.3 Class Attendance & Classroom Etiquette

Students should be respectful of professors, attend all class periods, and hand in assignments on time. You will find different methods of presentation from different faculty members. Your task will be to adapt to various methods of presentation in order to learn well. Part of this process involves learning to learn. Decide what kind of notes you need for each class in order to comprehend the material. Classroom etiquette also includes leaving cell phones turned off, refraining from surfing the Internet, playing computer games, texting, and communicating with your neighbour during lectures.

Recording class sessions is permitted with each professor’s prior approval. Recordings are to be used solely for personal study and spiritual edification and are not to be distributed privately or publicly in any manner. The video recording of RTS courses by students is prohibited. The video recording of RTS courses by students is prohibited. Please remember that lectures and syllabi are the intellectual property of the professors. Distribution may be considered piracy.

2.3.4 Extended Absences

If you must be absent from any course for an extended period of time (more than a week), you must obtain prior approval from the Academic Dean. Requests for extended absence must be made in writing. If you need special consideration during any course, consult individually with each professor involved. If you need to withdraw for any reason, please notify the Registrar.

2.3.5 Tests & Examinations

Tests and examinations, other than final examinations, are developed and administered according to each professor’s requirements. Most professors indicate their testing schedule at the beginning of each
semester. This does not preclude unscheduled examinations. Ask your professor what the policy is and the kind of response expected on examinations and then be prepared to respond accordingly.

All course finals are expected to be taken during the respective block time assigned to the class during the semester. Example: if Greek II meets weekly on Wednesdays from 1-4pm, then students are to take the Greek II final on Wednesday of finals week from 1pm to 4pm. Students who are unable to take the final during its allotted time must receive an exception from their professor to take it during one of the times set aside for proctored exams. These times should be made available the first day of class and be displayed during the semester in the student commons. If a student is unable to take the exam during one of time slots set aside for proctored exams, then that individual is responsible to establish with the professor a time slot to take the exam.

2.3.6 Plagiarism

Research papers require borrowing other people’s ideas and words. However, the source of such borrowing must be acknowledged properly so that your ideas are clearly distinguished from ideas that you borrowed. If the source is not acknowledged properly, your work is plagiarism. For an excellent summary on what constitutes plagiarism, see Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (rev. by Wayne C. Booth, etc.; 9th ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Pres, 2018), pp. 81-83 (section 7.9). Consult library staff for help in proper citation of sources.

Plagiarism includes word-for-word copying, lifting terms, restatement of someone's argument or line of thought, etc.—all without acknowledgment of source. Plagiarism also includes giving a source partial credit when more is taken from that source than indicated.

Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, is very serious. All plagiarism cases are referred to the Academic Dean for resolution. Consequences may include some of the following:

- Repeat the assignment and receive a maximum of a D on the assignment
- Receive an F on the assignment
- Receive an F in the course
- Expulsion from the seminary

2.3.7 Extension Time for Papers & Other Academic Work

Deadlines for papers or other academic work must be observed. You may request an extension of time by consulting with your professor and/or the Academic Dean. Requests must be approved by the professor of the class and the Academic Dean. Students who request extensions on work handed in late should expect a reduction in their grades. Having all work completed on time is seen as an important part of training for ministry. You must familiarize yourself with the process and time limits for requesting extensions. If you have any questions, please speak with the Registrar. International students and/or students with disabilities that affect completion of assignments or tests please contact both faculty and the Dean of Student Development at the beginning of the semester in order to receive appropriate assistance. Please see section on Students with Special Needs.
Grades are posted online via Self Service approximately five weeks after the last exam of any semester. Students with unpaid account balances will not receive grades until all obligations to the Seminary are fulfilled.
### 2.3.9 Study Habits

It is estimated that an average student at RTS will spend two hours in concentrated study for each hour of class time. This ideal is held in tension with the realities of life. Students who aim for this ratio tend to see the benefits at the end of the semester.

Each student must make difficult decisions regarding how much he/she wants to earn a high grade versus healthy relationships with family and friends. Work hard. Study well. But care for yourself and your family in the process.

### 2.3.10 Field Education

Field Education is theological education in which classroom learning is tested and applied in the life and ministry of the church. The purposes of Field Education are:

1. To help Master of Divinity students test, exercise, and improve their gifts and skills
2. To equip them with firsthand experiences in the area of their calling
3. To encourage their theological reflection on the various tasks of pastoral ministry

All Master of Divinity students at RTS are required to have 400 hours of Field Education during their time in seminary. Many students have had very valuable previous ministry experience before beginning their studies; nevertheless, the seminary expects students to have field education experience under the oversight of both faculty and trained supervisors as a part of the seminary curriculum. This experiential education in the ministry context is an essential component of the seminarian’s personal growth and preparation for ministry.

The 400 hour requirement may be met through a 9 to 12 month part-time internship (10-15 hours per week), a summer intensive (40 hours per week) or other possible arrangements negotiated between the student, church and Field Education Director. The field experience credit may be earned as a summer
student assistant to a pastor, a student supply in a vacant pulpit, a pastoral internship of nine to fifteen months, a missionary internship, a campus ministry internship, work with a para-church organization, ministry in a national park, youth ministry, evangelistic ministry in a local church, nursing home chaplaincy, hospital chaplaincy, jail ministry, teaching home Bible classes, or other similar ministries.

Please consult the Field Education Guidelines available on the website.

2.3.11 Spouses Taking Classes

Spouses of full-time, degree-seeking students (MDiv and MATS) may audit courses without charge. No application to RTS is necessary.

Spouses of full-time, degree-seeking students (MDiv and MATS) may also enroll for credit without charge after first completing the application process and gaining admission to RTS.

Upcoming classes are found under the Academics tab at www.rts.edu. Not only do these courses provide opportunity for spiritual growth, they can also help you become better acquainted with professors and others in the Seminary family. RTS graduates may audit (for free) any course they have previously taken and received credit for.

2.3.12 Financial Policy

All tuition and fees are due on the first day of class. Those who are depending on financial support from churches, organizations, individuals, etc. should be prepared to meet financial obligations when due, whether or not such funds have been received. Students taking eight hours or more and who are financially unable to pay all tuition and fees at registration, may be allowed to make payments in one-third increments, subject to the late payment fee as follows:

Fall and Spring semesters only: 1/3 tuition and fees at registration; 1/3 tuition and fees on the first day of each of the two following months.

A late payment fee of 1% per month (12% annual) will be charged to students whose accounts are past due and/or are not paid in full at registration. Students will not be permitted to register for a new semester, graduate or receive transcripts unless all financial obligations to the seminary have been settled, including library debts. (RTS Catalog, p. 49)

If the payment plan is needed, you must receive permission from the financial aid director to pay your current semester’s tuition in installments. Once permission is granted you will need to fill out the “Payment Plan Agreement” form. However, the enforcement of this policy, (placing a “STOP” on your Self Serve account), will prevent you from registering for another semester while still allowing you to download and access important course information for the current semester. Once you have satisfied your tuition balance, please e-mail Bentley Crawford (bcrawford@rts.edu) and he will take the “STOP” off your account. Bentley Crawford is the Student Billing Administrator for the Dallas Campus. If you need to contact him, he can be reached at 1-877-923-1717 or bcrawford@rts.edu.
2.3 Academic Life

2.3.13 Drop/Adds

Students may drop/add courses via Self Service until the drop or add deadline. After the term begins, there is a fee for each course dropped or added. Thus, it is recommended that you finalize your schedule before the first day of the term. After the drop/add deadlines, special permission is required from the Academic Dean to drop or add a course. Tuition is usually not refunded for courses dropped after the deadline. See appropriate term schedule for important academic dates. See the most recent Schedule of Fees for the current drop/add fee.

2.3.14 English Bible Exam

Master’s level students at RTS Charlotte must pass the English Bible Exam (EBE) in order to graduate (a grade of C/80% is needed to pass). Contact the Registrar to take this exam.

The guidelines for fulfilling this requirement include the following:

1. The EBE is required to be taken as an exit exam during the student’s senior year (as measured by degree hours toward the MA or M.Div.). During a student’s senior year, he can take it as many times as necessary to pass. See “Graduation Requirements” below for more details and deadlines.
2. Although study guides were permitted in the past, as of the 2002-2003 academic year, students are not allowed to consult a study guide in preparation for the EBE. Use of a study guide to prepare for the EBE will be considered a violation of the RTS Honor Code.
3. The best method for preparing for the EBE is for the student to familiarize himself with:
   a) the broad flow of biblical history,
   b) the main themes and historical setting of the books of the Bible,
   c) the location (book and chapter) of significant biblical events, and verses, and
   d) the life and historical circumstances of significant biblical characters.


2.3.15 WCF Shorter Catechism

The Westminster Confession of Faith’s Shorter Catechism is to be memorized as a part of the M.Div. requirements. You may memorize the Catechism in Old English or Modern English. Dr. Douglas Kelly has written a Modern version. Copies of both versions are available in the RTS bookstore. Students are strongly encouraged to memorize the catechism during the summer months, and may start at any time during the course of study at RTS. The catechism exams may be taken in thirds; 1-36, 37-72, 73-107. See “Graduation Requirements” below for more details and deadlines. Contact the Registrar to take this exam.

2.3.16 Graduation Requirements

RTS only has one graduation ceremony in May. However, students may graduate in either December or May. The procedure and requirements for graduation are detailed below.
Chapter 2. Student Life

1. Students intending to graduate during our regular May graduation must make application for graduation during their final fall semester. This application can be made with the Registrar. Please note that a 2.0 average is required in order to graduate. A graduation fee of $200 is required.

2. The student should set up an appointment with the Registrar to “audit” the student academic record, confirming all course work is in process.

3. Graduation requirements:

   **May Graduates:**
   - Catechism exams must be completed by all potential May M.Div. graduates by the Spring Break Deadline.
   - English Bible Exam must be taken by all potential May graduates by the Spring Break Deadline.
   - Graduation exception forms must be turned in by the Spring Break Deadline. A graduation exception allows students to “walk” at May graduation if they have a 3.0 GPA, one course and/or one exit exam remaining and have paid all tuition and fees in full.
   - Deadlines for these requirements is Spring Break week. If any part of the above requirements are not received by Friday at 4:00 p.m. of Spring Break week, the student will be assessed a $250 fine. After receiving the fine, students will have until the last business day in April to complete these requirements. If not met, the student will not be allowed to graduate and must pay the graduation fee again.

   **December Graduates:**
   - All catechism exams and English Bible Exam must be completed by Fall Break. The graduation exception form does not apply to December graduates.

2.3.17 Student Records

RTS maintains the security and confidentiality of student educational records. All student records are kept in locked rooms and in locked file cabinets. In addition, all transcripted information for current degree-seeking students is digitally “backed-up” at an off-site location.

Since RTS does not accept Title IV student loan monies, RTS is not bound by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). However, RTS’ confidentiality policies are generally consistent with FERPA. RTS policies are as follows:

1. A student may inspect and review his/her academic file and transcript after a written request has been made to the Registrar’s office. The Registrar will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. The Registrar will be present during this inspection and review.

2. If a student believes his/her academic file and/or transcript are inaccurate or misleading, the student may request to amend the file and/or transcript. The student should write the Registrar, clearly identifying the portion of the record that the student wishes to change and specifying what is inaccurate or misleading. If RTS decides not to amend, the student may use the appeal process outlined elsewhere in this Handbook.

3. RTS will not disclose, without the student’s consent, personally identifiable information found in the student’s academic file or transcript, excepting legitimate educational interests and directory information.
4. Directory information includes, but is not limited to, name, address, telephone number, email, date and place of birth, spouse’s name, home state, previous schools attended, denomination and presbytery affiliation, grade level, dates of attendance, photo and photo of spouse, degree program, enrollment type (full-time, part-time), and degrees with date of graduation.

2.3.18 Accreditation Information

Reformed Theological Seminary is accredited by The Association of Theological Schools (ATS) and The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Reformed Theological Seminary has a License by Means of Accreditation (LMBA) from the Florida Department of Education/Commission for Independent Education (FLDoE/CIE).

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Accreditation Body</th>
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<th>Next Re-Affirmation of Accreditation</th>
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<tr>
<td>ATS</td>
<td>June 30, 2012</td>
<td>May 30, 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>SACS</td>
<td>July 31, 2012</td>
<td>December 31, 2022</td>
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Reformed Theological Seminary is accredited to award the following degrees: Doctor of Ministry, Master of Divinity, Master of Arts (Biblical Studies), Master of Arts (Theological Studies), Master of Arts in Counseling.

The Association of Theological Standards
10 Summit Park Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15275-1110
(412) 788-6505
www.ats.edu

Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
1866 Southern Lane
Decatur, GA 30033
(404) 245-3200
www.sacs.org

Florida Department of Education
325 West Gaines Street, Suite 1414
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0400
(850) 245-3200
www.fldoe.org

2.3.19 Accreditation Standards

Reformed Theological Seminary complies fully with the standards of accreditation of ATS, SACS, and the Florida Department of Education/Commission for Independent Education. Students who believe RTS has violated these standards in any way should submit their complaint(s) in writing to the RTS Orlando Academic Dean. The Dean will consult with the Chief Academic Officer who serves as the coordinator of matters related to institutional accreditation. The complaint will be reviewed and a
written response will be provided to the student in timely fashion. At this point, if the student is not
satisfied with the written response from RTS, the student may file a complaint directly with ATS and/or SACS, and/or FLDoE/CIE.

2.4 Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times as mature believers. Exemplary Christian conduct should control our words and our actions, both public and private. In today’s technological environment, our words can include texting, emails, social networking and blogging, in addition to our speech. Godly behavior, expected of all Christians, is especially required of those who are preparing themselves to become ministers of the Word or servants in the church. Classroom manners should also reflect this maturity. Students should be respectful of professors, attend all class periods, and hand in assignments on time. Classroom etiquette also includes leaving cell phones turned off, refraining from surfing the Internet and laptop computer games, and communicating to your neighbor during lectures.

Student conduct is under the supervision of the Dean of Student Development. The seminary reserves the right to dismiss any student whose conduct is found to be unsatisfactory on the basis of spiritual or moral principles found in the Scriptures. If desired, the student can appeal the dismissal according to the stated policy.

2.4.1 Student Appeals

An appeals process exists to resolve any behavioral or academic problem that cannot otherwise be settled in a Biblical manner and assures fairness to all parties concerned. This process is rarely needed and should only be used after all other means have been exhausted. For example, in academic matters that pertain to a class or a grade, the student should first work directly with the professor and/or Registrar. Concerning behavioral or community issues, the student should first consult with the Dean of Student Development.

If the matter cannot be resolved by the above means, the following appeals process exists:

1. The student should submit a written appeal to the Academic Dean regarding the issue. Depending on the issue, the Academic Dean may request input from the Faculty. The Academic Dean will render a written decision.
2. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Academic Dean, then the student may submit a subsequent written appeal to the campus President requesting a hearing. The campus President may or may not grant the request. If granted, the campus President will appoint an ad hoc committee that may consist of trustees, faculty, staff, and/or institutional officers to hear the case. This committee is authorized to meet with any or all concerned parties to resolve the issue and will render a written decision concerning the case.
3. The decision of the President or the ad hoc committee is considered final, subject only to review by the Executive Committee of the Board to affirm the appeals process was properly observed.

Student complaints may be formal and informal. Informal complaints are made verbally or via email and do not rise to the level of a written complaint. Formal complaints are made in writing via the Student Complaint & Appeals Form, and could include complaints that are serious in nature such as cheating, grade appeals, concerns about student behavior, concerns about professor behavior, etc.
Repeated informal complaints are a problematic trend and should be communicated to the appropriate administrator.

2.4.2 Children on Campus

Families and children are welcome on campus but must be closely supervised by their parent or guardian at all times. Unaccompanied minors are not allowed on campus. Children under the age of 17 are not allowed to use the RTS library computers.

2.4.3 Sexual Harassment Policy

The seminary expects all members of its community to apply sanctified common sense and Biblical principles to their relationships. It will not tolerate offensive or inappropriate sexual behavior and requires all faculty, staff and students to refrain from any action or conduct which could be viewed as sexual harassment. Any such harassment is contrary to and prohibited by seminary policy and will be considered grounds for disciplinary action. It should be noted that for academic purposes, some appropriate teaching and discussion of sexual information may occur, particularly in a counseling program; however, these discussions are necessary for the formation of a competent counselor or pastor, and therefore, does not constitute sexual harassment.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other offensive verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature is expressly prohibited. Examples of prohibited conduct include but are not limited to lewd or sexually suggestive comments; off-color language or jokes of a sexual nature; verbal, graphic or physical conduct inappropriately relating to an individual’s gender; or any display of sexually explicit pictures, greeting cards, articles, books, magazines, photos, computer images or cartoons.

The seminary must have the cooperation of all faculty, staff and students in order to implement its sexual harassment policy. It is the individual’s responsibility to report immediately any incident which they believe to constitute sexual harassment. Even if they believe the act is isolated or infrequent, they should report it to the campus Dean of Student Development or President. The seminary will promptly investigate the situation and take whatever corrective action is necessary and appropriate. The seminary prohibits any retaliatory action against persons reporting conduct which is believed by the reporting individual to be in violation of this policy.

2.4.4 Student’s Role in Institutional Decision Making

The seminary recognizes that students may contribute positively to institutional decision making. Therefore, an open-door policy exists throughout the institution, through which students may voice their concerns, suggestions, and needs. In addition, pertinent matters may be brought to the attention of the faculty, administration, or Board of Trustees through the student government and its officers.

2.4.5 Notice of Non-Discrimination

Reformed Theological Seminary has a non-discriminatory (race, sex, or handicap) admissions policy. The seminary’s policy is to admit students to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities at the seminary and to make no discrimination on the basis of race, sex, or handicap in the administration
of educational policies, applications for admission, scholarship or loan programs, and extracurricular activities.
Part Two

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3.3  RTS Directory

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3. Unique to Dallas Campus

3.1 Library

3.1.1 Eligible Users

All currently enrolled credit students have library privileges according to circulation policies below. Students who are only auditing courses have limited checkout privileges for that semester. Members of the community who are not enrolled may use library resources on site but may not take materials outside of the library (unless otherwise arranged with the librarian). Eligibility will be determined on a semester-by-semester basis. RTS graduates may borrow materials upon verification of degree completion, with the library reserving the right to limit the number of items checked out and length of checkout. Special borrowing privileges may be arranged only by permission of the library director. Abuse of library privileges may result in the temporary or permanent suspension of borrowing privileges.

3.1.2 Arrangement of the Library

The library is classified by the Library of Congress System. The **RESERVE** books are on three top shelves of the wooden bookcase outside the Librarian’s office. The bottom two shelves of this case are for oversized books from the general collection. The circulating collection is kept on the library metal shelves. It begins on the shelves that are against the wall (across the room from the office of the Librarian). It starts with A-B (Library of Congress classification) and moves on to the parallel shelves in an orderly way. If you need help locating an item please ask the librarian for assistance.
3.1.3 Library Databases

The library offers you the keys to the kingdom of research in the American Theological Library Association index. ATLA is a searchable database which indexes theological journals, books, and essays. Some full text articles are available, and the index is searchable by subject, scripture reference, author, etc. ATLA database is available online at RTS website (www.rts.edu/site/resources/library/research.aspx). To access the electronic databases you will use the same log-in credentials as the ones for Self Service/Canvas. Ask a librarian for assistance on using this valuable tool.

The library subscribes to several JSTOR collections, The Encyclopedia of Islam, the LOEB Classical Library, and many other electronic resources. To see other electronic collections go to the web link mentioned above.

3.1.4 Locating Books

At this time RTS Dallas campus library is not part of the global RTS library catalog. The RTS Dallas library online catalog (http://dallaslibrary.rts.edu/) allows you to search the library’s holdings by author, title, keyword, subject, etc. The catalog will tell you the status (available or checked-out) of the item, as well as the call number which helps you locate a book on the shelves. Please ask for assistance if you have difficulty finding what you need.

3.1.5 Circulation Policies

Every library book has a white book card inside a book pocket located at the last page of the book. To check a book out a student needs to print his/her name on the card and leave it in the box at the table outside the librarian’s office. Any item may be checked out for a period of 28 days (4 weeks) and renewed online or in person as long as another patron has not requested it. A processing fee of $10 plus the replacement cost of the book is charged for any lost item. Students may check out up to 15 books at a time. You must return all overdue books and pay any outstanding fine before you may check out books. You can request a renewal of items as long as they have not been requested by another patron.

3.1.6 Other Library Policies

You are allowed to leave books on the tables in the study area overnight if you are going to be using them again when you return. You must leave a note on the books that includes your name, the date, and a request to leave them. The library staff does not guarantee that books will remain on the tables if left.

In order to protect the library materials, eating is not allowed in the library but you may have drinks that are covered.

3.1.7 Using TexShare network

TexShare is a state sponsored program that enables Texas academic libraries to join together in order to share both print and electronic resources with patrons of participating libraries. RTS Dallas library is in the process of joining the TexShare program. In the meantime, the RTS Dallas students are encouraged to obtain the TexShare card by joining a local public library. Once a member of the local public library,
the student needs to request a TexShare card, which gives access to all the libraries in the state of Texas that are part of the TexShare network. The list of participating libraries can be found at the TexShare website. The libraries of both Dallas Theological Seminary and SMU Perkins School of Theology are TexShare members.

3.1.8 WiFi Network

The seminary offers free wireless internet access on the whole campus. This network is unique to RTS Dallas campus only and is not a part of RTS computer network. The access parameters are available on campus. Once logged on to the WiFi network, the student has access to the campus printer. If you have difficulty using the wireless, we may be able to offer our assistance with your computer.

To preserve bandwidth so that everyone may enjoy quick access and acceptable levels of service, please avoid using file-sharing services and initiating large downloads (ex: iTunes movie).

3.1.9 Network Printers

| indexLibrary!Network Printers

There are two network printers available to the students. For printing on CANON printer there are following fees:

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For printing on Hewlett-Packard printer the cost is 5 cents per page. This printer prints on one side only (no duplex printing). The students are encouraged to use the Hewlett-Packard printer, unless there is a real need for duplex or color printing. Payment is by cash only (there is a cash box located next to the printer(s).

The CANON printer can function also as a copier or scanner. The cost of photocopying is the same as the cost of printing on the CANON printer. Scanning is provided free of charge. Should you need help either with a configuration of the network printer(s) or with copying/scanning ask the librarian for assistance.

3.2 Facilities

3.2.1 Guidelines

We have been blessed with excellent facilities at RTS. In order to keep these facilities as useful and clean as possible, the cooperation of every member of the Seminary community is necessary. You can help share that responsibility in several ways:

1. Wherever you see litter or trash, please pick it up and throw it away. If you see a spill, please clean it up, or contact Student Life or Maintenance for assistance.
2. Please refrain from consuming food or drink in the library area. Covered drinks are allowed in the library, but food is not. Please do not place drinks (cups, cans or bottles) on the library shelves while browsing.
3. If you should see a need for maintenance, contact Student Life or Maintenance.
4. Do not remove furnishings from the dining area or the sitting/study area. If you are part of any student function requiring rearrangement of chairs or tables it is your responsibility to see that all furnishings are replaced exactly as they were when you are finished.
5. Please turn off lights in the classrooms when you are the last person to leave. If you are the last person to leave the campus turn off all the lights and lock both the front and back doors.
6. Children on campus must be under the direct supervision of an adult. Please do not leave young children unattended. Unaccompanied minors are not allowed on campus.
7. No dogs, cats, or other pets that could cause damage or bring offense to others are allowed in any Seminary building.
8. Please keep the kitchen clean. If brewing tea or coffee clean up the teapot and/or coffee maker. Wash the dishes – do not leave dirty plates or mugs in the kitchen sink. Any unclaimed items in the refrigerator will be removed. If there is an accidental spill inside a microwave (or anywhere in the kitchen), please clean it up.
9. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on Seminary property.
10. Smoking is not permitted anywhere on Seminary property.

3.2.2 Parking

You may park in front of the building (Dragon Street entrance) and in the large parking lot on the side of the building. Please do not park in the reserved spaces or in the handicap parking space. The handicap-friendly entrance is located on the side of the building (next to the large parking lot).

The RTS campus in Dallas shares the building with other retail businesses. When you park, be mindful of people patronizing these neighboring businesses.

3.3 RTS Directory

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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Ben Dunson</td>
<td>Associate Professor of New Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Mark McDowell</td>
<td>Executive Director &amp; Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs. Gretchen Weir</td>
<td>Director of Development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Bogdan Witecki</td>
<td>Librarian &amp; Campus Administrator</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr. Peter Yoder</td>
<td>Director of Admissions &amp; Lecturer in Historical Theology</td>
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Atlanta: 1580 Terrell Mill Road, Marietta, GA 30067
          404-995-8484
Charlotte: 2101 Carmel Rd., Charlotte, NC 28226
           704-366-5066
Dallas: 1202 Dragon Street, Suite 104, Dallas, TX 75207
         214-298-8599
D.C.: 1651 Old Meadow Road, Suite 300, McLean, VA 22102
       703-448-3393
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<td>Houston</td>
<td>8300 Katy Freeway, Houston, TX 77024-1092</td>
<td>832-377-1675</td>
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<td>Jackson</td>
<td>5422 Clinton Blvd., Jackson, MS 39209</td>
<td>601-923-1600</td>
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<td>Memphis</td>
<td>4055 Poplar Avenue, Memphis, TN 38111</td>
<td>901-507-4490</td>
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<td>Orlando</td>
<td>1231 Reformation Dr., Oviedo, FL 32765</td>
<td>407-366-9493</td>
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<tr>
<td>Global</td>
<td>2101 Carmel Road, Charlotte, NC 28226</td>
<td>704-366-5066</td>
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<td>New York</td>
<td>150 W 83rd Street, New York, NY 10024</td>
<td>646-430-5862</td>
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