

Time & Place: TBA

Spring, 2018

Meeting Place: TBA

Note: the professor reserves the right to modify this syllabus as needed at any time.

### Contact Information

#### Professor

Bruce Baugus (BPB)

Email: [bbaugus@rts.edu](mailto:bbaugus@rts.edu) or [bpbaugus@gmail.com](mailto:bpbaugus@gmail.com)

Phone: 601-923-1696 (office) or 601-519-9091 (personal cell)

Office: Dean Center Faculty Suite (Jackson Campus)

Hours: T, W, & Th, whenever I am not teaching

#### Teaching Assistants

Wes Strebeck (BPB's TA)

Email: [wes830@gmail.com](mailto:wes830@gmail.com)

Office: Biblical Studies TA Suite

### Catalog Course Description

Students examine the various approaches to apologetic methodology and engage the most frequently raised objections to the Christian faith.

### Explanation

The purpose of this class is to help students (1) understand the role apologetics plays in the life and work of the ministry, (2) develop an effective apologetic method grounded in Scripture and consistent with the Reformed standards; and (3) identify and engage various common challenges, objections to, and attacks upon Christian faith on the contemporary scene.

### Textbooks

#### Textbooks

Brian Morley, *Mapping Apologetics: Comparing Contemporary Approaches* (IVP, 2015)

ISBN: 9780830840670

Timothy Keller, *The Reason for God: Belief in an Age of Skepticism* (Riverhead Trade, 2009)

ISBN: 9781594483493

#### Primary Readings

William Edgar and Scott Oliphant, *Christian Apologetics Past and Present*, 2 vols. (Crossway, 2009)

ISBN: 9781581349061

#### On Topics

Alvin Plantinga, *Where the Conflict Really lies: Science, Religion, and Naturalism* (OUP, 2011)

ISBN: 9780199812097

Colin Chapman, *Cross and Crescent: Responding to the Challenge of Islam* (IVP, 2008)

ISBN: 9780830834853

#### Recommended

C. Stephen Evans, *Pocket Dictionary of Apologetics & Philosophy of Religion* (IVP, 2002)

ISBN: 9780830814657

### Technology Use Policy

Since students who type notes during lectures consistently perform worse on exams and other assessments of lecture and discussion comprehension, laptops and tablets are prohibited in class except by special permission from the professor.<sup>1</sup> (Permission is ordinarily restricted to matters of learning disabilities or those who handwrite their notes directly into a tablet application). Phones must be on silent and kept out of sight (and mind). If you must receive or place a call, even during a class break, please leave the classroom to do so.

---

<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Pam A. Mueller and Daniel M. Oppenheimer, "The Pen is Mightier Than the Keyboard: Advantages of Longhand over Laptop Not Taking," *Psychological Science* 25.6 (June 2014): 1159-1168. See also the excellent guide produced by Harvard University's Harvard Initiative for Learning and Teaching (HILT): Machael C. Friedman, "Notes and Note-Taking: Review of Research and Insights for Students and Instructors," available online at [http://hilt.harvard.edu/files/hilt/files/notetaking\\_0.pdf](http://hilt.harvard.edu/files/hilt/files/notetaking_0.pdf) and appended to this syllabus.

**Attendance & Participation Policy**

Your primary assignment is to be present, prepared, and ready to participate fully in class each week. This requires showing up on time and remaining for the duration of class, ready to contribute meaningfully by having read all assigned materials beforehand.

Any student who misses class or is grievously or repeatedly tardy (without prior permission or a compelling emergency) may find their course grade reduced on the following schedule:

1. By one full letter grade (e.g. A to B) for each unexcused absence
2. By one increment (e.g. A to A-) for each unexcused tardy or absence from class of more than 20 minutes
3. By one increment (e.g. A to A-) for every unexcused tardy of less than 20 minutes, for repeat offenders

Students found studying for other classes or using electronic devices for any reason not directly related to the current topic of discussion will be counted as being tardy or absent from class for more than 20 minutes.

Permission to be absent from class will ordinarily be granted only for medical reasons or family crises. Elective choices such as attending a conference, work (including RTS and church internship duties), enrolling in another course in conflict with this one, and so on, are unacceptable excuses. (The professor will try to accommodate special events on campus and presbytery meetings, as needed.)

Note: this “law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient” (1 Tim 1:9).

**Assessments**

*Exam:* there will be a cumulative final essay exam that will cover class lectures and discussions and assigned readings. This exam will be open note and open book and you will be able to take this exam at your convenience within a specified window of opportunity. While you may use notes and books, you must NOT work together with classmates while taking the exam or discuss the exam with classmates till the professor has notified you that ALL exams have been submitted. See the course schedule for due date.

Note: I often use student questions to introduce and expand on important concepts and their applications. Class discussions ordinarily cover testable material.

*Reading Report:* Students are required to submit a concise, single paragraph summary of the argument in each assigned chapter of the required readings for this course. See the course schedule for assigned chapters. The reading report is due at the same time as the final exam and all paragraph summaries should be submitted as a single document organized into five parts by the title of each book.

*Apologetic Essay:* Student are required to submit a five-page, single-spaced essay that identifies a common apologetic issue you encounter in the course of work or with which you personally struggle and then uses the material covered in this class to effectively address this issue. This essay should demonstrate the practical application of the material covered in this course and reflect appropriate spiritual sensibilities, a clear grasp of the intellectual component of the problem, and the effective ministerial application of sound theology.

**Assignment Submission Policy**

Submit written assignments as individual PDF files via email to [baugus.assignments@gmail.com](mailto:baugus.assignments@gmail.com) with a subject line that includes the course name name, included assignments, and your last name. I will confirm receipt within 24 hours of your submission. If you have not received a confirmation from me within 24 hours, be sure to check your junk and spam folders for a misplaced reply, then follow up promptly with me or my TA using our personal contact information at the top of this syllabus.

**Course Grade**

Exam	50% (demonstrating familiarity with issues and mastery of concepts)
Reading Report	20% (demonstrating comprehension of assigned readings)
Essay	30% (demonstrating effective application of class content in ministry context)
Total	100%

REFORMED  THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
SYSTEM

**Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes**

<u>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<u>Rubric</u>	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
<b>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</b>	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	See course title
<b>Scripture</b>	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.)	Moderate	A biblical concept and method of Apologetics and apologetic defense the Scripture are central concerns of the course
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Reformed theology is assumed and drawn upon as a source in course
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Minimal	Love of God and neighbor, however, is the only proper spirit for apologetics
<b>Desire for Worldview</b>	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Strong	Aim of our ministry of apologetics
<b>Winsomely Reformed</b>	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.)	Strong	A constant theme of the course
<b>Preach</b>	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Moderate	Ideally this course will help student know "what they are up against" and how to adequately address it in the work of the ministry
<b>Worship</b>	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Minimal	Course is rich in implications for worship which will be explored at times
<b>Shepherd</b>	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.	Moderate	Apologetics is vital to this aspect of the ministry
<b>Church/World</b>	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Strong	Engaging the world (and less so other Christian traditions) is central to the course