

Time &amp; Place: Monday, 1:00 AM – 3:00 PM; Jan 27–May 8

Spring 2020

Meeting Place: DC1

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

Bruce Baugus (BPB)

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Hours: M 11:00–1:00, and T–Th by appointment.

*Teaching Assistant*

Sebastian Bjernegård

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**RTS Catalog Course Description**

An introduction to Christian philosophy from a Reformed perspective. Topics include the relationship between philosophy and theology, major figures and movements in the history of Christian thought, and the application of philosophical thinking to Christian faith and practice.

**Explanation**

Building on the material covered in ST5400 Christian Thought and Philosophy, the purpose of this course is to help students develop a biblical and confessional theology of culture and incisive understanding of the contemporary context of Christian life and ministry in order to be a faithful disciple and minister of Christ and the gospel in the world. We will read and discuss a number of important historical and contemporary contributions to the topic in light of Scripture and the Westminster Standards. Special consideration will be given to the biblical view of the ministry and mission of the visible church in the world.

**Required Readings** (some available online)Athanasius, [Life of St. Anthony](#)Tertullian, [Prescription Against Heretics](#), 1–7Luther, "[Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation](#)"Calvin, *Institutes of Christian Religion*, 3.19, 4.11, 4.20Samuel Rutherford, *Lex Rex*, [Q 42](#)Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology*, Topic 14, QQ 5 & 16[Gardiner Spring Resolutions & Protest of Charles Hodge](#)Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism* (Eerdmans) ISBN: 9780802816078James Davison Hunter, *To Change the World: The Irony, Tragedy, & Possibility of Christianity in the Late Modern World* (Oxford University Press, 2010). ISBN: 9780199730803James K. A. Smith, *How (Not) to be Secular* (Eerdmans, 2014). ISBN: 9780802867612Carolyn Renée Dupont, *Mississippi Praying: Southern White Evangelicals and the Civil Rights Movement, 1945–1975* (excerpt posted on Canvas)**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).

### **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.

### **Assessments**

*Final Essay Exam* that will cover class lectures and discussions and assigned readings. This will be a time-limited open-note and open-book essay exam administered through Canvas and taken at your convenience within 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 until the professor has notified you that ALL exams have been submitted. See schedule for date. Sample prompts will be distributed ahead of time, and an element of choice will be built into the final exam.

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

*Reading Report* in which you write up a concise, one-page, single-spaced summary of the argument in each assigned reading for this course (see schedule for assigned readings, each line is a distinct “reading” requiring its own write up). The report is due by 5:00 PM on the final day of class. Submit as a single pdf document via Canvas.

### **Assignment Submission Policy**

Submit written assignments as individual pdf files on Canvas. If you have any difficulties submitting your assignments, please contact my teaching assistant using the contact information at the top of this syllabus.

### **Course Grade**

Written Exam	60% (demonstrating familiarity with issues and mastery of concepts)
<u>Reading Report</u>	<u>40% (demonstrating comprehension of assigned readings)</u>
Total	100%

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<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 Note 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): Michael C. Friedman, “Notes and Note-Taking: Review of Research and Insights for Students and Instructors,” available online at [https://hwi.harvard.edu/files/hilt/files/notetaking\\_0.pdf](https://hwi.harvard.edu/files/hilt/files/notetaking_0.pdf).



**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 close consideration of biblical teaching on culture, the church, and work of the ministry are central components of this course.
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	Reformed theology is the decisive perspective and framework for the content of this course.
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	The course aims at equipping students to be faithful disciples and witnesses in the world.
<b>Desire for Worldview</b>	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Strong	A central object of this course.
<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.)	moderate	Holding a reformed view in a winsome way is a desired outcome of this course.
<b>Preach</b>	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	This course will help students apply the gospel to the people who make up their congregation.
<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.	Strong	This course will enhance students' ability to speak effectively into the life of the people they serve.
<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.