05HT6320 Theology of John Calvin Syllabus
Reformed Theological Seminary
Spring 2021—Houston Campus

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Course Dates and Times
February 19-20
March 19-20
April 9-10

Course Description
This class will introduce Calvin’s *Institutes* and will also help students to understand the nature of Calvin’s theology. It will provide a context for theological analysis of both pre- and post-Reformation theology.

The course will be conducted in a seminar fashion as much as possible with heavy focus upon discussing the reading during class time.

Course Objectives
To assist the student in developing an appreciation for the theology of Calvin in its historical and theological contexts and in analyzing Reformation and post-Reformation theology in general.

Course Requirements
I. Required Reading

John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Westminster/John Knox, 1559 edition, Battles translation), as follows:
- I.1.1 to I.18.4
- II.12.1 to II.17.6
- III.21.1 to III.24.17
- IV.14.1 to IV.17.50


II. Class Attendance
Class attendance is imperative for successful completion of this course.
III. Evaluation

1. Class participation (30%).
2. Research paper (70%). Due Date: May 7.


Possible paper topics:

Reformation vs. post-Reformation theology. Continuities and discontinuities.

Relations between Calvin and renaissance humanism.

Relations between Calvin and medieval scholasticism.

Relations between Calvin and Reformed scholasticism.

Calvin’s theological method (relations of reason and authority in theology, epistemology, mode of expression, definition of theology, structure and organization of theology, etc).

Calvin’s doctrine of Scripture.

Calvin’s doctrine of religious or civil authority.

Calvin’s doctrine of God (existence, attributes, works, providence, Trinity, etc).

Calvin’s theological anthropology (creation, image of God, fall, etc).

Calvin’s Christology (two natures, hypostatic union, communicatio idiomatum, extra Calvinisticum, etc).

Calvin’s soteriology (propitiation, expiation, justification, predestination, etc). What did Calvin teach on justification? What are the relations between his doctrine and those of the late medieval theologians and church, between his, Augustine’s, and Luther’s? What are the relations between his and Luther’s doctrine of predestination? What was his doctrine of the atonement?

Calvin’s view of law and gospel.

Calvin on union with Christ. Sources? Parallels with Luther? Augustine? Function in his theology? Relations to other parts of his theology?

Calvin’s doctrine of covenant (covenant of works, grace, redemption?).
Calvin’s doctrine of the third use of the law.

Calvin’s ecclesiology (marks and nature of the church, visible vs. invisible church, offices, function, authority, etc).

Calvin’s doctrine of the means of grace.

Calvin’s doctrine of the Lord’s Supper. To what degree was he dependent upon Luther? Where did they differ? Why? How?

Calvin’s doctrine of baptism. Compare and contrast with Luther.

Relation between Calvin’s theology and the theology of the Reformed confessions (pick a locus).

Calvin and natural law.

Calvin’s ethics.

Calvin’s doctrine of the state.

Calvin’s eschatology.

**Course Lecture Schedule**

The following is the tentative schedule for the course:

February 19pm    Syllabus, Introduction, Introduction to Calvin
February 20am    Introduction to Institutes, Institutes I.1-10
February 20pm    Institutes I.11-18

March 19pm        Institutes II.12-17
March 20am        Institutes III.21-24
March 20pm        Institutes IV.14-17

April 9pm         The Necessity of Reforming the Church
April 10am        Calvin’s preaching
April 10pm        Concerning Scandals

**Assignments**

The due dates for all assignments are listed above. Any assignments received after these dates will be considered late and will receive a 3-point grade reduction for every day past the deadline. Please be sure that everything you hand in has your full name on it.
**Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: Theology of Calvin (HT6320)

Professor: Guy M. Richard

Campus: Houston

Date: Spring 2021

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><em><em>MDiv</em> Student Learning Outcomes</em>*</th>
<th><strong>Rubric</strong></th>
<th><strong>Mini-Justification</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>The course strongly engages historical and theological concepts.</td>
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<td>Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.</td>
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<td><strong>Scripture</strong></td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>The class will require students to engage with Scripture only through engaging with Calvin’s treatment of it.</td>
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<td>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.)</td>
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<td><strong>Reformed Theology</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>This class is all about Reformed theology, especially as it was articulated by John Calvin.</td>
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<td>Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.</td>
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<td><strong>Sanctification</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Since students are exposed to the various facets of Reformed soteriology, they will be challenged to think through their own sanctification and to apply the things they learn to their own lives.</td>
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<td>Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.</td>
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<td><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>As this was Calvin’s desire, students should grow in this area as well.</td>
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<td>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</td>
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<td><strong>Winsomely Reformed</strong></td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>This class will engage with Calvin’s theology in a winsome manner and talk about applying it in the same way to our own contexts today.</td>
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<td>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.)</td>
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<td><strong>Preach</strong></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>The class will discuss Calvin as a preacher and glean what we can from him for our own lives and ministries.</td>
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<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
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<td>Worship</td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<td>Shepherd</td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church/World</td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
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