



## 2019-2021 CATALOG

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## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

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**Welcome**

**Statement of Mission**

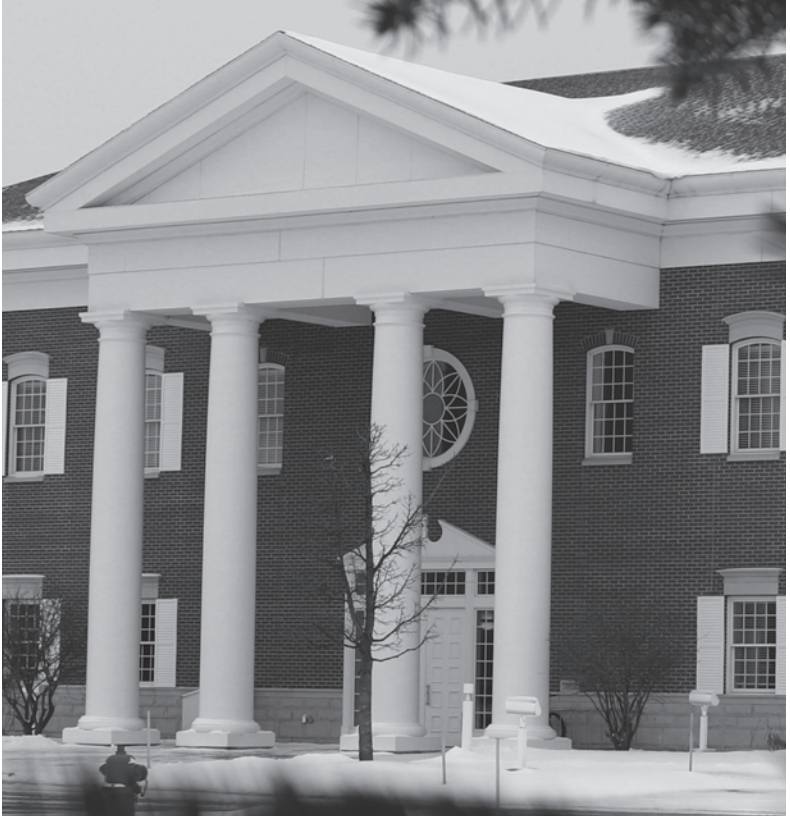
**Scriptural and Confessional Commitment**

**Perspective on Ministerial Training**

**Distinctives**

**History, Facilities, and Location**

**Programs, Accreditation, and Licensing**





## GENERAL INFORMATION

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### Welcome

A seminary is a center where called students are trained for faithful ministry in Christ's church (2 Tim. 2:2). It is to be an arm of the church of Jesus Christ, outfitting its students for ministry throughout the world (Matt. 28:18-20). The gospel alone is the hope of our perishing world. We believe that God, by His Spirit, will use the theological education of qualified spiritual leaders to enliven His people, save the lost, and glorify His name with faith that overcomes the world.

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary strives to be a catalyst for defining, inspiring, promoting, and defending the Christian faith around the globe through its graduates and faculty. The world needs faith that is based on Scripture, self-denying and serving, and openly dependent on God's sovereign grace. By such faith, Jesus Christ is imaged and God's glory is transcribed in the world.

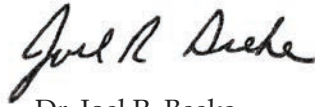
The need for faithful ministry is great, as are the opportunities. Moreover, no vocation on this side of heaven is as privileged or rewarding as Christian ministry. God has granted PRTS many blessings, including God-fearing instructors and students who have much love for God and each other. We are grateful for a student body of diverse backgrounds and denominations, seeking to glorify God by promoting His kingdom. The biblical, doctrinal, experiential, and relevant Reformed faith we strive to promote in every classroom builds a solid foundation for ministry today.

If you feel called by God to minister and are looking for training that combines solid Reformed theology with robust, biblical piety, our programs may be exactly what you are looking for! We hope you will seriously consider Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary as the place to prepare you, with the Spirit's blessing,

for a life of Christ-centered service. For more information and to schedule a visit, please contact our registrar, Jonathon Beeke, at (616) 432-3408, or send an e-mail to [admissions@prts.edu](mailto:admissions@prts.edu).

May God guide you and us in His way and, if it is His will, cause our paths to cross in several years of fruitful fellowship.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joel R. Beeke". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'J' and 'B'.

Dr. Joel R. Beeke

### **Statement of Mission**

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary is an educational institution whose mission is to prepare students to serve Christ and His church through biblical, experiential, and practical ministry. The seminary purposes that such training be God-glorifying and in accord with the Scriptures and historic Reformed creeds for the promotion and defense of the gospel of Jesus Christ. In dependence on the Holy Spirit, we believe that this purpose is well served by providing theological instruction and training to facilitate the development of knowledge and skills as well as personal piety and Christian character that is essential for faithful Christian ministry.

### **Scriptural and Confessional Commitment**

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary is committed to the conviction that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as originally written, are God's inerrant Word inspired by His Spirit and therefore are the only infallible authority for faith and practice.

Foundational to the character and mission of the seminary is its identity as a confessionally Reformed institution. Each faculty member, together with the ecclesiastical leaders of the seminary's supporting and governing denominations (the Heritage Reformed Congregations and Free Reformed Congregations), subscribe the cardinal doctrines of the Christian faith as expressed in the Ecumenical Creeds, and the teaching of the Reformed faith as expressed in the Three Forms of Unity (The Belgic Confession, 1561; the Heidelberg Catechism, 1563; and the Canons of Dort, 1618-1619) and the Westminster Standards of the 1640s. From these sources flow our Reformed perspective, our value system, our motivation for ministry, and our curricular emphases.

As PRTS is a confessional institution, and each faculty member subscribes the above-stated confessions, it is to be expected that faculty will teach courses from the perspective of these confessional standards that articulate their personal convictions. Although in certain cases students are admitted who may not fully subscribe all of the statements in these confessions, they should be aware that all courses will be taught according to the grid of Reformed and covenant theology as set forth in the Three Forms of Unity and Westminster Standards. Such students are

welcomed into the student body with the understanding that they will respect the confessional commitments of the institution. In situations where particular assignments may address issues that differ from their personal convictions, students should show that they are able to articulate the confessional position. In certain cases when dealing with potentially controversial topics, students are encouraged to discuss alternative projects or courses with the professor.

### **Perspective on Ministerial Training**

The seminary is committed to the perspective that a balanced training for Christian ministry includes a sound theological education and the nurturing of healthy, personal piety. Truth known by revelation is reasonable truth, and therefore the instruction of students for the ministry must have solid theological content. Adequate knowledge of the original languages of the sacred Scriptures and an acquaintance with the teachings of biblical revelation are essential. In keeping with the Reformed and Puritan tradition, we emphasize preaching the whole counsel of God as revealed in Jesus Christ, which entails preaching biblically, doctrinally, experientially, and practically. We believe that such preaching is God's primary means to save sinners and to nurture His church in her most holy faith (Rom. 10:14-17).

All true scholarship serves piety. Diligent theological training nurtures true faith. With the blessing of God's Spirit, such instruction aims to develop in the student a clear, systematic, intellectual knowledge of the doctrines of biblical revelation. Since faithful theology includes *theologia practica*, i.e., "practical theology" that studies and nurtures Christian experience, piety, and God-honoring service, instruction must also be directed to a student's conscience. Such instruction calls for the wholehearted assent and childlike trust of faith in Christ that exercises divine graces such as repentance, love, and zeal for holiness. Academic instruction should promote personal meditation upon the Word and prayer, thus equipping students to nurture spirituality in every facet of their personal lives and ministry.

This foundational perspective for theological training has been held in varying degrees by most Reformed seminaries in the past (particularly among the English Puritan and Dutch Further Reformation movements), and has been most successful in equipping

men for a practical, pastoral ministry. Gisbertus Voetius, a seventeenth-century Dutch Reformed theologian, expressed this perspective as *pietas cum scientia* (“piety with knowledge”), and more recently, John Murray said that seminaries should promote “intelligent piety.” We believe that ministers of the gospel who have religion without learning or learning without religion will soon prove to be injurious to the church.

The seminary also strives to provide its students with a social environment that nurtures godliness. Instruction is complemented by formal and informal occasions for personal interaction with academically qualified and spiritually minded theological professors or instructors as well as with godly fellow students. This creates a seminary atmosphere that facilitates personal piety in the context of responsible scholarship.

With the Spirit’s blessing and help, Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary is dedicated to serve Christ and His kingdom by effectively equipping its graduates with the necessary tools and skills for instructing, proclaiming, and applying the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ biblically, doctrinally, experientially, and practically with passion and conviction. This perspective of ministry includes the following skills and ability to:

- Exegete individual passages of Scripture accurately, employing understanding of the original languages, historical circumstances, and literary and theological relationships.
- Articulate the major issues of faith and life that the church has confronted throughout its history.
- Articulate confessional Reformed theology on exegetical, biblical, and theological grounds.
- Systematize exegetical, historical, and theological data into a consistent and coherent theology, and explain how theology applies to personal and church beliefs and actions.
- Serve their constituencies in biblical instruction or proclamation and application of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ; employ homiletic skills to preach or teach the Word of God biblically, doctrinally, experientially, and practically with passion and conviction.
- Respond with biblical discernment to contemporary trends in biblical interpretation and apply a sound Christian

worldview to contemporary cultural issues that impact the church today.

- Demonstrate empathetic, pastoral love for others and servant leadership skills in public and private pastoral or teaching roles.
- Exhibit personal communication skills in meeting people, forming friendships, and providing biblical counseling.
- Demonstrate understanding and commitment to promote evangelism, outreach and mission endeavors.
- Conduct, evaluate, and articulately communicate (in oral and written English) graduate level research, exercising critical analysis and constructing sound arguments, reflecting advanced understanding of theology.

Since there is a pervasive impact of Reformed principles on all of life and on every aspect of the Christian ministry, the seminary aims to expound, apply, and defend this statement of mission and these goals and perspectives in every division and department of its curriculum.

## **Distinctives**

### *Identity and Governance*

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary is governed by a Board of Trustees that includes seven members appointed by the Synod of the Heritage Reformed Churches (HRC), and three appointees from the Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRC). The daily administration conducted by the faculty and office staff is under the direction of the president, who is also a faculty member and is answerable to the Board of Trustees. The Board of Trustees is accountable to the denominational Synods of both HRC and FRC. This ecclesiastical oversight is the biblical model of governance for the seminary in accordance with the Reformed Church Order.

### *Reformed, Experiential Emphasis*

Many seminaries in North America today uphold Reformed doctrine, but few such institutions have a deep respect for experiential preaching. By experiential preaching we mean Christ-centered preaching which stresses that unto salvation sinners must have a

personal, experiential, Spirit-wrought knowledge of Christ (John 17:3; 1 Cor. 1:30), and by extension, of all the great truths of Scripture (2 Tim. 3:14–17). In theological terms this means that the two loci of christology and soteriology are taught in the seminary as two inseparable sides of one coin. Soteriology is the subjective experience of objective christology. Thus we stress, as the Puritans did, that the Holy Spirit causes the objective truths about Christ and His work to be experienced in the hearts of sinners.

Experiential preaching is therefore applicatory. It explains, in terms of biblical truth, how matters do go and how they ought to go in the Christian life. It aims to apply faith in Christ to all of the experience of the believer, as an individual and in all of his relationships in the family, church, and the world (Rom. 7:24–25; Col. 2:6–7).

Experiential preaching is also discriminatory. It defines the difference between believers and unbelievers, opening the kingdom of heaven to believers and shutting it against unbelievers (Matt. 16:19). In dependence upon the Holy Spirit, the seminary trains men who feel kinship with this emphasis.

### *The Academy Model*

Ministry in the church of Jesus Christ—whether it be preaching, teaching, counseling, or administering—must be theologically informed. Theology, the seminary, and the church must enrich one another. A seminary must equip students for a variety of forms of gospel ministry, ever remembering that the Spirit’s unction and blessing are requisite to make men “able ministers of the new testament” (2 Cor. 3:6).

A seminary must give hands-on experience to its students. At PRTS, we believe in high academic standards for ministry while stressing that the faith of God’s people is not an “ivory tower” academic enterprise. Since the church is God’s ordained means for the spiritual growth of His people, PRTS serves as an arm of the church in assisting theological students to grow in grace by being an academy closely related to the local church. Every student is expected to be an active member of a local church so that when there are pastoral needs for the students, the governing bodies of the church may be informed. The seminary does not have any ecclesiastical authority over the personal life of the student; that falls under the jurisdiction of the church. That is not to suggest that the seminary will not be deeply involved in assisting its students to

grow in grace, but we recognize that this growth is properly under the pastoral care of the church of which the student is a member.

### **History, Facilities, and Location**

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary began in 1995 with the acceptance of four seminary students from the Heritage Reformed Congregations (HRC). Classes officially commenced on August 9, 1995, under the leadership of our president, Dr. Joel R. Beeke. When we first opened, the vision of PRTS was to provide a high quality, four-year seminary program for men accepted by the HRC to train for pastoral ministry. After one year that vision broadened to include training men from other denominations, providing that they meet the admission requirements and adhere to the Reformed confessional tradition represented in the Three Forms of Unity or the Westminster Standards. In 1998 the Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRC) chose to train their theological students at PRTS, at which time Dr. Gerald M. Bilkes became the second full-time professor, teaching Old and New Testament Studies.

Within five years PRTS had outgrown its building. Receiving degree-granting status from the State of Michigan and several other approvals were contingent on a new facility as well. Construction began on our current facility in northeast Grand Rapids and the doors were opened in November of 2004. In October of 2005, we opened and dedicated the Puritan Resource Center, a unique part of our library intended to allow people around the world access to a wide variety of Puritan literature and to gain a deeper appreciation for the Puritan tradition. Dr. David P. Murray joined the full-time faculty in 2007 as Professor of Old Testament and Practical Theology. In 2010 Dr. William Van Doodewaard became Associate Professor of Church History at PRTS. In 2012 PRTS hired on Dr. Michael P. V. Barrett as Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean and Professor of Old Testament, as well as Rev. Mark Kelderman as Dean of Students and Spiritual Formation. Over twenty visiting professors/instructors round out our faculty. An extensive addition, effectively doubling the size of the original building, was completed in 2014.

PRTS added the PhD program in both Historical Theology (2016) and Biblical Studies (2017). To support this program, four additional faculty members were hired: Dr. Adriaan Neele as



Director of the PhD program and Professor of Historical Theology; Dr. Stephen Myers as Associate Professor of Historical Theology; Dr. Greg Salazar as Assistant Professor of Historical Theology; and Dr. Daniel Timmer as Professor of Biblical Studies.

The faculty is also supported by a growing administrative staff. Currently, Dr. Jonathon Beeke serves as Registrar and Director of Admissions & Assessment, Mr. Darryl Bradford as Video Producer/Editor, Mrs. Ann Dykema as Administrative Secretary and Finances, Mr. Chris Engelsma as Director of Distance Learning, Mr. Chris Hanna as Director of Marketing and Development, Mr. Seth Huckstead as IT Director, Mr. Henk Kleyn as Vice President for Operations, Mrs. Laura Ladwig and Miss Kim Dykema as librarians, Miss Kim Postma as ESL Tutor, and Mr. Paul Smalley as Research/Teaching Assistant to Dr. Joel Beeke.

From 1995 until the present, PRTS has graduated over 160 students; many other part-time and non-program students have attended throughout the years. Alumni are serving the church in various ways: pastoring, preaching, teaching, pursuing further education, international missions, domestic missions, and church planting. PRTS students hail from numerous denominations and countries around the globe.

### **Programs, Accreditation, and Licensing**

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary offers four programs designed to meet the needs of church and ministry: the Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree, the Master of Arts (Religion) degree, the Master of Theology (ThM) degree, and the Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) degree. Our programs are demanding and thorough; we believe that there are no shortcuts to proper preparation for ministry. Graduates find that the work done at PRTS is foundational, instructive, and invaluable for the rewarding obligations of their vocation and ministries.

The State of Michigan has granted PRTS a degree-granting license and approved all of our degree offerings. As of February 2014, PRTS has been fully accredited by the Commission on Accrediting of the Association of Theological Schools in the United States and Canada (ATS). The Association of Theological Schools can be contacted by means of the following: writing to 10 Summit Park Drive, Pittsburgh, PA 15275, telephone: (412) 788-6505, fax: (412) 788-6510, website: [www.ats.edu](http://www.ats.edu).

PRTS is recognized by the US Internal Revenue Service as a tax-exempt, non-profit organization, with the privilege of issuing tax-deductible receipts for donations to the seminary.



## **FACULTY**

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**Full-Time Faculty**

**Visiting /Adjunct Professors and Instructors**



### FULL-TIME FACULTY



**Dr. Michael Barrett** is Vice President for Academic Affairs/Academic Dean and Professor of Old Testament at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. He is a minister in the Heritage Reformed Congregations. Formerly, Dr. Barrett served as president of Geneva Reformed Seminary. He earned his doctorate in Old Testament Text with a special focus on Semitic languages. His dissertation was entitled "A Methodology for Investigating the Translation Philosophies and

Techniques of the Septuagint." For almost thirty years, he was professor of Ancient Languages and Old Testament Theology and Interpretation at Bob Jones University. He is a member of the Evangelical Theological Society and has published numerous articles in both professional and popular journals. He contributed to and served as Old Testament editor for *The Reformation Heritage KJV Study Bible*. His other published works include *Beginning at Moses: A Guide to Finding Christ in the Old Testament*; *Complete in Him: A Guide to Understanding and Enjoying the Gospel*; *God's Unfailing Purpose: The Message of Daniel*; *The Beauty of Holiness: A Guide to Biblical Worship*; *Love Divine and Unfailing: The Gospel According to Hosea*; and *The Hebrew Handbook*. Dr. Barrett and his wife, Sandra, have two sons and five grandchildren. Dr. Barrett's hobbies include hunting and thinking about hunting.



**Dr. Joel R. Beeke** is President and Professor of Systematic Theology and Homiletics at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, a pastor of the Heritage Reformed Congregation in Grand Rapids, Michigan, editor of *Banner of Sovereign Grace Truth*, Puritan Reformed Journal, editorial director of Reformation Heritage Books, president of Inheritance Publishers, and vice-president of the Dutch Reformed Translation Society. He has served as a pastor in Iowa, New Jersey,

and Michigan for more than forty years. He has written and co-authored one hundred books, edited one hundred more (most recently, *Reformed Systematic Theology*, *Reformed Preaching*, *Debated Issues in Sovereign Predestination*, *The Reformation Heritage KJV Study Bible*, *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life*, *Encouragement for Today's Pastors*, *Developing Healthy Spiritual Growth*, *Knowing and Growing in Assurance of Faith*), and contributed 2,500 articles to Reformed books, journals, periodicals, and encyclopedias. His PhD is in Reformation and Post-Reformation theology from Westminster Theological Seminary. He is frequently called upon to lecture at seminaries and to speak at Reformed conferences around the world. He and his wife, Mary, have three children and four grandchildren. You can read his blog *Doctrine for Life* at [www.joelbeeke.org](http://www.joelbeeke.org), or follow on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/joelbeeke](http://www.facebook.com/joelbeeke) and on Twitter @JoelBeeke.



**Dr. Gerald Bilkes** is Professor of New Testament and Biblical Theology at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. He completed a PhD (2002) from Princeton Theological Seminary. He was recipient of the United States Information Agency Fellowship at the Albright Institute (ASOR) in Jerusalem during the 1997-1998 year. He has authored *Glory Veiled and Unveiled: A Heart-Searching Look at Christ's Parables*, *Reservoirs of Strength*, and *Memoirs of the Way Home: Ezra and Nehemiah as a Call to*

*Conversion*, written several articles on biblical-theological themes, and has given addresses at several conferences. His areas of special interest include hermeneutics, the history of interpretation, and conversion in the Bible. He and his wife, Michelle, have five children: Lauren, Seth, Zachary, Audrey, and Joshua.



**Rev. Mark Kelderman** is Dean of Students and Spiritual Formation, as well as Instructor in Pastoral Theology at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. A former high school teacher, he completed his seminary training at PRTS and served as the pastor of Heritage Reformed Church in Burgessville, Ontario for thirteen years. He continues to preach regularly and ministers in the Heritage Reformed Congregation of Grand Rapids. He and his wife have six children and five grand-

children. They both are certified Biblical Counselors and continue to minister to others via counseling. Mark hopes to graduate with a DMin degree from Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary in May of 2020.



**Dr. David Murray** (DMin, PhD) is Professor of Old Testament and Practical Theology at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. He has pastored three churches in the UK and the USA over the past 23 years and has been teaching at PRTS since 2007. His PhD on Matthew Henry's apologetic was awarded by the Free University of Amsterdam. He has a DMin degree from Reformation International Theological Seminary for his work relating

Old Testament Introduction studies to the pastoral ministry. He is the author of a number of books, including *Christians Get Depressed Too*, *How Sermons Work*, *Jesus on Every Page*, *The Happy Christian*, *Reset*, and *Exploring the Bible*. You can read his blog at [www.HeadHeartHand.org/blog](http://www.HeadHeartHand.org/blog) or follow him on Twitter @davidpmmurray. David is married to Shona and they have five

children, and they love camping, fishing, boating, and skiing in the Lake Michigan area.



**Dr. Stephen Myers** (PhD, University of Edinburgh) is Associate Professor of Historical Theology for the PhD program at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. He was reared in a Christian family and mercifully was brought to faith at a young age. He is a graduate of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (BA), Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi (MDiv), and the University of Edinburgh (PhD). Prior to his appointment at PRTS, Dr. Myers served as the pastor of Pressly Memorial Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church in Statesville, N.C. While in the full-time pastorate, Dr. Myers also served as a visiting professor of theology at RTS Charlotte and a professor at International Biblical Seminary in Kiev, Ukraine. Dr. Myers is the author of *Scottish Federalism and Covenantalism in Transition: The Theology of Ebenezer Erskine*, “The Theology of the Marrow Controversy” in *The History of Scottish Theology, Reformed Piety: Covenantal and Experiential* (with Dr. Beeke), and several reviews and articles. In all of his work, Dr. Myers’s desire is to see biblical doctrine shape the lives and witness of God’s people around the world. Dr. Myers and his wife, Lisa, have four children.



**Dr. Adriaan Neele** (PhD, University of Utrecht) is Director of the Doctoral Program and Professor of Historical Theology at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. He is a minister of Word and Sacrament in the Heritage Reformed Congregation. Prior to arriving at PRTS in 2016, he lectured in Post-Reformation studies at Farel Reformed Theological Seminary, the University of Pretoria, and the African Institute for Missiology. He was Professor of Historical Theology and



Director at the Jonathan Edwards Centre at the University of the Free State, South Africa. Since 2007 he serves as Research Scholar and Digital Editor at the Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale University, and as a member of various businesses and academic boards (Dutch Reformed Translation Society, Bavinck Institute, and Jonathan Edwards Center at Yale). In addition, he is co-editor of the Jonathan Edwards Online journal, co-editor of the *Jonathan Edwards Encyclopedia*, and co-editor of the global Edwards sermon edition project. His research interests concern seventeenth-century Europe as well as early American (eighteenth-century New England) theology and philosophy. His most recent work is *Before Jonathan Edwards: Sources of New England Theology* (OUP, 2019). As co-founder of a foundation for internet-based and global theological education, he has a continuing interest in the intersection of primary sources, digitization, and web-based education.



**Dr. Greg Salazar** (PhD, University of Cambridge) is Assistant Professor of Historical Theology for the PhD program. Greg is originally from North Carolina and his passion for the Lord and theological study began at The University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill). In 2009, Greg began his MDiv studies at Reformed Theological Seminary (Orlando). His doctoral research focused on the doctrinal, ecclesiological, and pietistic links between puritanism and the post-Reformation English Church in the lead-up to the Westminster Assembly, through the lens of the English clergyman and Westminster Assembly divine Daniel Featley (1582–1645).

Over the years, Dr. Salazar has sought to be active in the life of the local church through preaching and teaching. He is pursuing ordination in the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC). Greg has a particular passion that students would love Reformed experiential theology – believing that the truths contained in Scripture should, by the power of the Spirit, penetrate our hearts, progressively enabling our minds, hearts, and character to be transformed and submitted to the lordship of Jesus Christ. He is married to Christie and they have three children.



**Dr. Daniel Timmer** (PhD, Trinity International University) is Professor of Biblical Studies for the PhD program at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. He is an ordained ruling elder in the Reformed Church of Quebec and also serves at the Faculté de théologie évangélique in Montreal. Prior to coming to PRTS, Dr. Timmer taught at Farel Reformed Seminary in Montreal, Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, MS, and the University of Sudbury in Ontario. He is a

member of the Evangelical Theological Society, the Institute for Biblical Research, and the Society of Biblical Literature, and has published a number of articles and several books exploring various aspects of biblical theology. Dr. Timmer's research has been supported by grants from the Association for Theological Schools and the Priscilla and Stanford Reid Trust, and he was a guest lecturer at the University of Duisberg-Essen in 2017. He and his wife, Andreea, have two sons, Nathan and Felix.



**Dr. William VanDoodewaard** is Professor of Church History at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. He has held appointments as Visiting Research Fellow in the School of History and Anthropology at Queen's University Belfast and Visiting Scholar at Princeton Theological Seminary for his ongoing work in the history of biblical interpretation. Prior to coming to PRTS, Dr. VanDoodewaard taught at Patrick Henry College, near Washington, D.C., and at Huntington

University in Indiana. He has written for Books & Culture, The Journal of British Studies, Themelios, Puritan Reformed Journal, Westminster Theological Journal, and online at The Gospel Coalition and Reformation21. He is also a contributor to a number of books, and the author of three: *1 & 2 Peter: Feed My Sheep (Welwyn Commentary Series)*, *The Quest for the Historical Adam*, and *The Marrow Controversy and Seceder Tradition*. Dr. VanDoodewaard is an ordained minister who has served as a church planter.

## VISITING/ADJUNCT PROFESSORS AND INSTRUCTORS

**James W. Beeke** is Visiting Instructor of Pastoral Theology in Catechetics and Teaching. He holds a Master in Educational Administration from Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo, Michigan, as well as a Bachelor of Arts in Education from Western Michigan University. He served as Inspector and Director of Independent Schools for the Ministry of Education in British Columbia, oversaw private education in China, and currently runs an educational consulting business. He is the author of seven books on Reformed doctrine for children and young people.

**Dr. Jonathon D. Beeke** is Visiting Instructor of Historical Theology. He holds a Master of Arts in Historical Theology from Westminster Seminary in California, and a PhD from Groningen University. Dr. Beeke serves as Book Review Editor for the Puritan Reformed Journal, and is a ruling elder at Redeemer OPC in Ada, MI.

**Dr. Brian A. DeVries** is visiting Professor of Missiology. He received his Master of Divinity from PRTS, a Master of Theology in Missiology from Calvin Theological Seminary, and a Doctorate of Philosophy from the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He is a missionary minister of the Heritage Reformed Congregations and has experience in urban ministry, church planting, and intercultural education within southern Africa, Indonesia, and North America. He is presently serving as principal of Mukhanyo Theological College and as the team leader of a church plant in Pretoria, South Africa.

**Rev. Bartel Elshout** is Visiting Instructor of Missiology and Church Polity. Rev. Elshout holds a Bachelor of Arts in German and studied at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary for three years. He has 18 years of experience teaching Bible in a secondary school in New Jersey as well as over twelve years of experience as pastor in Jordan Station, Ontario, and Chilliwack, British Columbia. He is the author of *The Practical Theology of Wilhelmus à Brakel*, and has translated several Dutch books into English, including à Brakel's *The Christian's Reasonable Service* (4 vols.).

**Dr. Michael A. G. Haykin**, Adjunct Professor of Historical Theology, teaches several courses at PRTS. He received his BA from the University of Toronto, his Master of Religion from Wycliffe College, and his Doctorate of Theology from the University of Toronto. He has also done post-doctoral research at Regents Park College, Oxford University, England. He currently serves as Professor of Church History and Biblical Spirituality at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky. He is the author and editor of over twenty books, including *“To Honour God”*: *The Spirituality of Oliver Cromwell*; *Jonathan Edwards: The Holy Spirit in Revival*; and *The Revived Puritan: The Spirituality of George Whitefield*. He is often called upon to speak at conferences around the world.

**Rev. Daniel R. Hyde** is Adjunct Instructor of Systematic Theology and Missions. He is also the founding pastor of the Oceanside United Reformed Church (URCNA) in Carlsbad/Oceanside, California. He is a graduate of Vanguard University (BA), Westminster Seminary California (MDiv), and Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary (ThM). He has written ten books, including *God in Our Midst, Why Believe in God?*, and *Welcome to a Reformed Church* as well as co-edited *Planting, Watering, Growing: Planting Confessionally Reformed Churches in the 21st Century*. He has also contributed to several books and written several articles in various journals.

**Dr. Robert Kolb** is Adjunct Professor of Church History at PRTS, teaching the ThM course of Lutheran Orthodoxy. He received his MDiv and STM degrees from Concordia Seminary, Saint Louis, and the PhD from the University of Wisconsin, Madison. He taught at Concordia College, Saint Paul, Minnesota 1977-1993, and has been Missions Professor of Systematic Theology and Director of the Institute for Mission Studies since 1993. He is co-editor of the new translation of *The Book of Concord*, and the author of several books, including *Bound Choice, Election*, and *Wittenberg Theological Method*, (with Charles P. Arand) *The Genius of Luther’s Theology*, and *Martin Luther, Confessor of the Faith*.

**Rev. David Kranendonk** is Visiting Instructor of Systematic Theology. He currently pastors the Free Reformed Church of Oxford

County, Ontario. He received his BA from McMaster University, MDiv from Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, and ThM from Calvin Seminary; he is also pursuing doctoral studies at the Theological University of Apeldoorn, the Netherlands. He serves as chairman of Bonisa Mission. He has translated several books with his wife and authored *Vital Balance: The Pursuit of Professors J. J. van der Schuit, L. H. van der Meiden, and G. Wisse* and *Teaching Predestination: Elnathan Parr and Pastoral Ministry in Early Stuart England*.

**Rev. Eric Moerdyk** graduated from PRTS in 2001 with an MDiv and then went on to acquire a ThM from the Theological University of Apeldoorn, where he is currently a PhD candidate. He has served as pastor of the Zion Free Reformed Church (Ontario), the Immanuel Free Reformed Church in Abbotsford (British Columbia), and is currently serving as the pastor of the Bethel Free Reformed Church in Monarch (Alberta). He is married to Lisette, and they have been blessed with 6 children.

**Dr. David Noe** finished undergraduate degrees in Philosophy and Classical Languages at Calvin College in 1994 and the PhD in Classics from the University of Iowa in 2003. His dissertation concerned Cicero's relationship with the Stoic and Academic schools of philosophy. He currently teaches at Calvin University and is chairman of the Philosophy and Classics Department. Dr. Noe's research interests focus on the reception of Classical literature in Protestant erudition of the 16th and 17th centuries, and recent publications include translations of Franciscus Junius, *A Treatise on True Theology*; Theodore Beza, *A Clear and Simple Treatise on the Lord's Supper*, and *Theses or Axioms on the Trinity of Persons and their Unity of Essence as Derived from Theodore Beza's Lectures*; William Perkins, *Antidicson of a Certain Man of Cambridge, G.P. along with a Short Treatise in which Dicson's Irreligious System of Artificial Memory Is Explained*, and *A Handbook on Memory and the Most Reliable Method of Accurate Recall by William Perkins of Cambridge, combined with a Friendly Admonition to Alexander Dicson on the vanity of that Art of Memory which he Publicly Maintains*. Forthcoming translations include work from John Calvin, John Arrowsmith, Peter Martyr Vermigli, and John Owen.

Dr. Noe is an enthusiastic student of spoken Latin and with the help of others maintains LatinPerDiem.com.

**Dr. Derek W. H. Thomas** is Adjunct Professor of Historical and Practical Theology. He holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Historical Theology from the University of Wales in Lampeter, Wales, as well as a Master of Divinity from Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi. He is currently the Minister of Preaching and Teaching at First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, South Carolina and Professor of Systematic and Practical Theology at Reformed Theological Seminary in Atlanta. Prior to these appointments, he pastored in Belfast, North Ireland. His PhD research was on Calvin's writings on Job. He has written or edited more than twenty books, and serves as the Editorial Director for The Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals and the editor of its e-zine, Reformation 21. He also speaks at numerous conferences around the world.

**Dr. Chad B. Van Dixhoorn** is Adjunct Professor and has taught the Westminster Standards course at PRTS. He is a graduate of Westminster Theological Seminary (MDiv, ThM) and the University of Cambridge (PhD). He has taught theology at the University of Nottingham, and has held three fellowships at the University of Cambridge, where he has researched the history and theology of the Westminster Assembly and taught on the subject of Puritanism. He retains a visiting fellowship at Wolfson College, Cambridge, and has served as associate minister of Cambridge Presbyterian Church and Grace Presbyterian Church in Vienna, Virginia (current). He is currently Professor of Church History at Westminster Theological Seminary.

**Dr. C. N. Willborn** is a teaching elder in the PCA and Associate Professor of Church History and Biblical Theology at Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. Having held pastorates in Tennessee and Alabama, Dr. Willborn was elected to the faculty of the GPTS in 2000. He holds the BS from Tennessee Technological University, the MDiv from Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary, and the PhD in Historical Theology from Westminster Theological Seminary. Dr. Willborn is a frequent conference speaker and preacher, and has published several theological articles.



## **ADMISSION PROCEDURES**

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**Admission  
Enrollment Deposit  
Pre-Seminary Requirements  
International Students  
Orientation**





## ADMISSION PROCEDURES

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### Admission

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary considers applications from interested students who adhere to the Three Forms of Unity or Westminster Standards, have successfully completed an undergraduate degree, and possess spiritual commitment and adequate intellectual abilities. Because of our commitment to male church leadership, women are only invited to apply for the MA (Religion), ThM, or PhD degrees.

PRTS accepts applications year-round. To begin the online application process, please visit [www.prts.edu](http://www.prts.edu) and fill out the form after clicking on “Applying to PRTS.” Our admissions staff will respond to the form, and then the rest of the application process can be completed online.

Visiting, language, and certificate students (i.e., non-degree seeking students) need only complete a short application; this too can be completed online.

To apply for study in any of the master’s programs of the seminary, the applicant must ordinarily present the following application components

1. *A completed general application form.*
2. *Two recommendations:* an ecclesiastical recommendation from the pastor or consistory (i.e., session or council) of the church of which the applicant is a member, and an academic recommendation from a college professor under whose guidance the applicant has pursued studies. The specific questions to be answered by the referent are supplied in the online application. In certain circumstances, the Director of Admissions may approve obtaining recommendations from other sources.

3. *Official transcripts of all academic work beyond high school.* If more than one college was attended, transcripts from each institution must be sent. Non-degree seeking applicants should have some college background, but exceptions may be granted to enroll in certain classes. Degree-seeking applicants (for the MA and MDiv) should have a four-year bachelor's degree. If the bachelor's degree program has not been completed at the time of application, a final transcript should be submitted before final admission can be granted and the student be allowed to register for classes. Applicants should have achieved a minimum average of 2.7 (B-) in college coursework. Applicants for the ThM and PhD, in addition to submitting transcripts reflecting a four-year bachelor's degree, must supply transcripts reflecting the MDiv degree, or its equivalent.
4. *Application essay(s).* All applicants must submit a short essay (250-500 words) explaining why they are applying to PRTS. MDiv applicants must also submit an essay describing their conversion and their calling to pursue the ministry. The specific details for these two essays can be found on the general application form.
5. *Academic writing sample.* All applicants must submit an academic writing sample. This sample may be a previously written paper, article, or essay that demonstrates proper citation methods and ability to construct, in English, a graduate-level paper.
6. *TOEFL or IELTS results.* All ESL (English as a Second Language) students are required to submit their TOEFL or IELTS results to verify their abilities in the English language. PRTS requires a score of 85 on the internet-based TOEFL. The IELTS minimum score required is a 6.5. Our reporting code for both the TOEFL and the IELTS is 0368.
7. *Application Fee of \$50.* The application fee is non-refundable.

Each applicant:

- is subject to all the admission and registration regulations of the institution;
- is responsible to determine whether a current institution will accept credit earned at PRTS, if desired;
- must understand that falsification of any part of an application may result in cancellation of admission and/or registration at the institution;
- if transferring from another seminary, must include with the application form an official transcript of their current seminary work, syllabi of courses requesting to be transferred, and an academic catalog from that institution.

The seminary may also make one or more of the following requests of the applicant before granting admission:

- To take a trial course via independent study or distance learning;
- To meet with a representative of the seminary for a personal interview, or to conduct a phone interview;
- To provide a physician's health certificate;
- To take the Graduate Record Examination General Test (administered at various centers throughout the United States and the world, as well as by computer).

All applications are reviewed by the Admissions Committee of PRTS and are subject to their approval. After reviewing the credentials submitted, the seminary will notify the applicant of the committee's decision. The seminary admits students of any race, age, and national or ethnic origin.

### **Enrollment Deposit**

All accepted students must confirm their desire to begin studies at PRTS with a \$100.00 deposit to be paid by July 1 for fall semester start and November 1 for spring semester start, or four weeks (for national students)/sixty days (for international students) after receipt of acceptance letter (whatever is the later date). This deposit will be used towards the tuition of the students' first course. Furthermore, accepted applications are valid for a maximum of 6 months; after this point a prospective student must re-apply.

## **Pre-Seminary Requirements**

Applicants to PRTS must demonstrate they have a comprehensive four-year undergraduate degree, something essential to theological studies. While it is not possible to prescribe one pattern as normative for all pre-seminary education, students will be greatly helped if they earned the following credits as part of their post-secondary education:

- Greek: 12 credits (4 courses)
- English (preferably grammar, composition, and speech): 9 credits (3 courses)
- History: 6 credits (2 courses)
- Philosophy: 3 credits (1 course)
- Logic: 2 credits (1 course)
- Speech: 2 credits (1 course)

Though not required, it is also recommended that students earn 6 credits in Hebrew, Latin, and one modern language.

In exceptional cases, mature students may be permitted to enter the MDiv program without a four-year bachelor's degree. Such a student could be admitted to the seminary by special approval, providing the applicant can demonstrate an equivalent academic background.

An applicant whose academic history does not show sufficient breadth in the liberal arts may be requested to do additional work as a condition of admission. The Director of Admissions is ready to advise any applicant regarding the course of pre-seminary studies.

## **International Students**

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary has obtained federal and state permission to receive for study students from foreign countries. U.S. immigration laws do not allow foreign citizens with a student visa (F-1 status), their wives, or their children to have paid employment while living in the United States. Spouses of F-1 status students and children under the age of 18 are granted residence in the United States (F-2 status). Non-minor children cannot legally reside in the United States under the F1 visa of a parent, and would need to establish their own legal visa, independent of their parents. The only legal employment for international students is work done at PRTS; at times, opportunities for

on-campus work arise, but applicants should not rely on this to cover all living expenses while studying at the seminary. All international students must maintain full-time status in a degree program in order to maintain their F-1 status.

### **Orientation**

At the beginning of each academic year, an orientation for new students is given; attendance is mandatory. The purpose of the orientation is to introduce new students to the seminary facilities and policies, including the resources of the library and of the surrounding community.

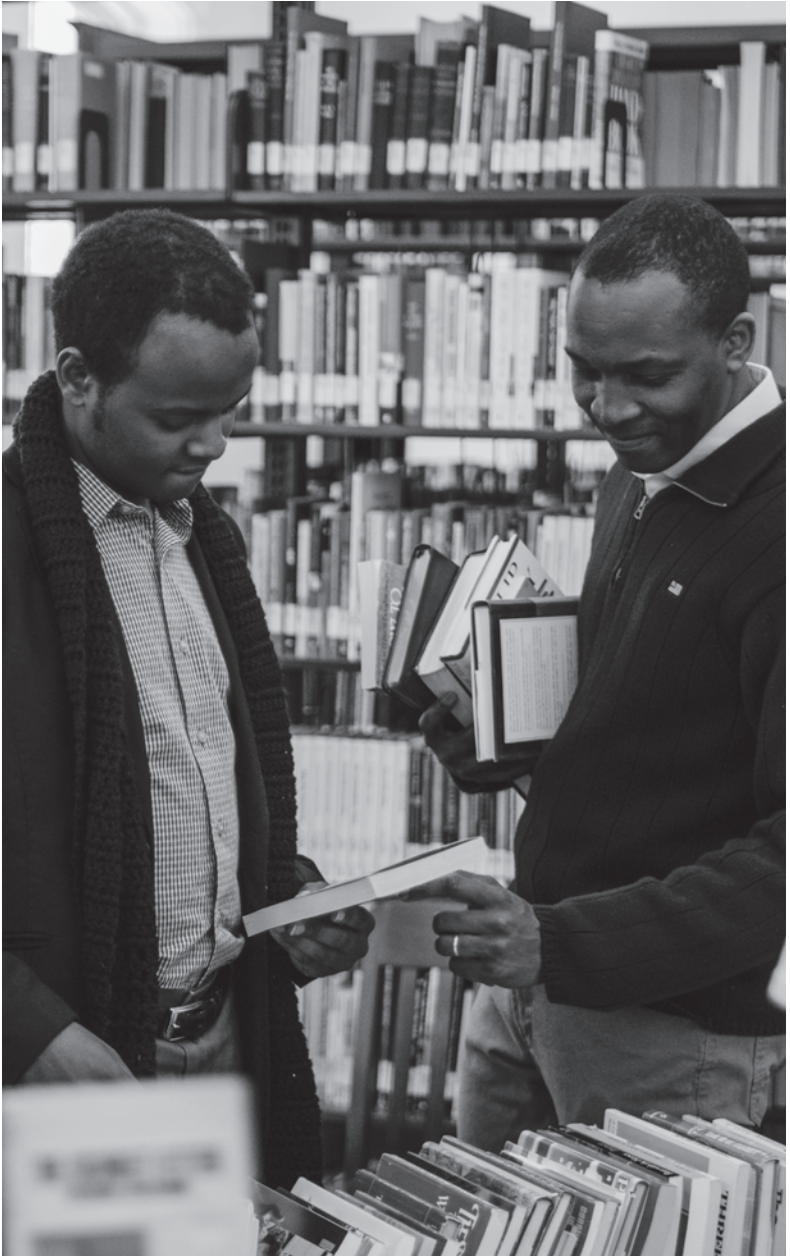




## **ACADEMIC PROGRAMS**

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**Master of Divinity**  
**Master of Arts in Religion**  
**Master of Theology**  
**Doctor of Philosophy**  
**PhD in Historical Theology**  
**PhD in Biblical Studies**  
**Certificate Programs**





## ACADEMIC PROGRAMS

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### **Master of Divinity (MDiv) – 106 Credits**

This course of study educates and prepares men for official, ordained ministries of instruction and leadership in the church as pastors, evangelists, missionaries, and teachers. This program furnishes the students with the tools to bring the Word of God to the part of God's church they are called to serve. The Master of Divinity (MDiv) curriculum is designed to enable the student to:

1. Exegete Scripture accurately, employing understanding of the original languages, historical contexts, and literary genres.
2. Articulate the system and history of doctrine of confessional Reformed theology and integrate it into the disciplines of biblical, systematic, and practical theology, as well as into life and ministry of the church.
3. Apply a sound Christian worldview and biblical principles to both life in the church and the contemporary cultures of our changing world.
4. Cultivate and demonstrate spiritual and personal qualities that evidence the biblical principles of leadership necessary for church ministry.

All of the general admission requirements apply to the MDiv program. Students must take a minimum of 50 per cent of their credits of study at PRTS (not counting language studies), show a godly walk of life, and fulfill their financial obligations to be awarded a Master of Divinity degree from PRTS.

A total of 106 credit hours (including language credits) must be completed with a minimum 2.3 grade average (C+) for the completion of the MDiv program. Should a student already possess knowledge of Greek and/or Hebrew, the number of credits may be reduced upon successful completion of a language placement exam. All credit hours for the MDiv must be completed

within eight years of matriculation; any exception must be approved by the president and academic dean.

The Master of Divinity requires completion of the following courses:

*Old Testament (100-number courses) – 17 required credits*

- 111 Hebrew I (3 credits)
- 112 Hebrew II (3 credits)
- 120 Methods of Hebrew Exegesis (3 credits)
- 121 Old Testament Exegesis I: Narratives (3 credits)
- 122 Old Testament Exegesis II: Poets and Prophets (3 credits)
- 132 Old Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*New Testament (200-number courses) – 19 required credits*

- 201 Greek I (3 credits)
- 202 Greek II (3 credits)
- 220 Methods of Greek Exegesis (3 credits)
- 221 New Testament Exegesis I: Gospels and Acts (3 credits)
- 222 New Testament Exegesis II: Epistles and Revelation (3 credits)
- 232 New Testament Introduction (2 credits)
- 233 Text and Translation of the Bible (2 credits)

*Historical Theology (300-number courses) – 13 required credits*

- 311 Ancient Church History (3 credits)
- 312 Medieval Church History (3 credits)
- 313 Reformation Church History (3 credits)
- 314 Modern Church History (3 credits)
- 322 Research Methodology (1 credit) – to be taken in student's first semester

*Systematic Theology (400-number courses) – 24 required credits*

- 411 Systematic Theology I: Prolegomena (2 credits)
- 412 Systematic Theology II: Theology Proper (2 credits)
- 413 Systematic Theology III: Anthropology (2 credits)
- 414 Systematic Theology IV: Christology (2 credits)
- 415 Systematic Theology V: Soteriology (3 credits)
- 416 Systematic Theology VI: Ecclesiology (2 credits)
- 417 Systematic Theology VII: Eschatology (2 credits)
- 421 Introduction to Apologetics (3 credits)

- 424 Puritan Theology (2 credits)
- 432 Biblical Ethics (2 credits)

One of the following (441b-441c):

- Either 441b Three Forms of Unity (2 credits)
- Or 441c Westminster Standards (2 credits)

*Homiletics (500-number courses) – 12 required credits*

- 511 Homiletics I: Sermon Preparation, Construction, & Delivery (3 credits)
- 512 Homiletics II: Reformed Experiential Preaching (2 credits)
- 513a Homiletics III: Sermon Preparation for Special Services (2 credits)
- 521 Practice Preaching (1 credit per semester for 5 semesters – equals 5 credits)

*Pastoral Theology (600-number courses) – 13 required credits*

- 611 Foundations & Process of Biblical Counseling (3 credits)
- 612 Issues in Biblical Counseling (2 credits)
- 613 Teaching Children/Teens & Youth Ministry (2 credits)
- 614 The Christian Minister & His Ministry (3 credits)
- 629 Ministry Practicum (3 credits)

*Missiology (600-number courses) – 4 required credits*

- 631 Foundations of Reformed Missions (2 credits)

An additional two missions credits from any of the following:

- 632 Evangelism and Church Planting (2 credits)
- 633 Revival and Prayer (2 credits)
- 634 Encounter with World Religions (2 credits)
- 635 Intercultural Gospel Communication (2 credits)
- 636 The Intercultural Missionary (2 credits)
- 637 Contemporary Studies in Missions (2 credits)

*General Degree Requirements – 4 required credits*

- 099 English Grammar and Syntax (0 credits) – to be taken in student's first semester
- 701 Nature and Method of Biblical Theology (2 credits)
- 702 Hermeneutics (2 credits)

All incoming MDiv students should be aware that Research Methodology and English Grammar and Syntax are required for

completion of the program and must be taken in the first semester of study (both courses are offered every fall semester). Should the student matriculate in the spring semester, and if the two courses are not then offered, the student must enroll in both courses at the next earliest offering.

### **Master of Arts (Religion)**

This course of study educates and prepares the student for service in a teaching capacity. It can be used as a terminal degree, or as a transitional degree to additional graduate studies, particularly a ThM or PhD program in religion or theology. As a terminal degree, it is designed for those who desire a theological background and training for various callings other than full-time, ordained gospel ministry. It is suitable for church office-bearers and for Christian professionals who desire a solid biblical and theological foundation for the work in which they are or will be engaged.

Students may choose one of four emphases: Old Testament, New Testament, Historical Theology, or Systematic Theology studies. In all cases, the program provides a thorough grounding in the Scriptures, Reformed theology, and church history. The Master of Arts (Religion) curriculum is designed to enable the student to:

1. Exegete Scripture accurately, employing understanding of the original languages, historical contexts, and literary genres.
2. Articulate the system and history of doctrine of confessional Reformed theology.
3. Evidence foundational knowledge in the principal theological disciplines of Biblical Studies, Systematic Theology, and Church History.
4. Articulate a proficient understanding in the student's focused discipline.

All of the general admission requirements apply to the MA program. Students must take a minimum of 50 per cent of their credits on campus (not counting language studies) to be awarded an MA from PRTS.

The Master of Arts (Religion) program is earned after completion of a minimum of 65 credits of coursework (depending on

the emphasis), including Greek and Hebrew. This allows dedicated students to complete the program in two years (assuming approximately 16 credits/semester), and then proceed to further education. A minimum grade point average of 2.7 (B-) is required. Should a student already possess knowledge of Greek and/or Hebrew, the number of credits may be reduced upon successful completion of a language placement exam. The MA program must be completed within five years of matriculation; any exception must be approved by the academic dean.

MA students must declare one of the following four emphases: Old Testament, New Testament, Historical Theology, and Systematic Theology. The required courses for each emphasis are as follows:

### **MA – Old Testament Emphasis (65 credits)**

*Old Testament (100-number courses) – 21 required credits*

- 111 Hebrew I (3 credits)
- 112 Hebrew II (3 credits)
- 120 Methods of Hebrew Exegesis (3 credits)
- 121 Old Testament Exegesis I: Narratives (3 credits)
- 122 Old Testament Exegesis II: Poets and Prophets (3 credits)
- 123 Old Testament Exegesis III: Advanced Exegesis (3 credits)
- 130 World of the Bible (1 credit)
- 132 Old Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*New Testament (200-number courses) – 17 required credits*

- 201 Greek I (3 credits)
- 202 Greek II (3 credits)
- 220 Methods of Greek Exegesis (3 credits)
- 221 New Testament Exegesis I: Gospels and Acts (3 credits)
- 222 New Testament Exegesis II: Epistles and Revelation (3 credits)
- 232 New Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*Historical Theology (300-number courses) – 10 required credits*

- 311 Ancient Church History (3 credits) OR 312 Medieval Church History (3 credits)
- 313 Reformation Church History (3 credits)
- 314 Modern Church History (3 credits)

- 322 Research Methodology (1 credit) – to be taken in student’s first semester

*Systematic Theology (400-number courses) – 12 required credits*

- 411 Systematic Theology I: Prolegomena (2 credits)
- 415 Systematic Theology V: Soteriology (3 credits)
- 421 Introduction to Apologetics (3 credits)

Four credits from the following:

- 412 Systematic Theology II: Theology Proper (2 credits)
- 413 Systematic Theology III: Anthropology (2 credits)
- 414 Systematic Theology IV: Christology (2 credits)
- 416 Systematic Theology VI: Ecclesiology (2 credits)
- 417 Systematic Theology VII: Eschatology (2 credits)
- 424 Puritan Theology (2 credits)
- 432 Biblical Ethics (2 credits)
- 441b Three Forms of Unity (2 credits)
- 441c Westminster Standards (2 credits)

*General Degree Requirements – 5 required credits*

- 099 English Grammar and Syntax (0 credits) – to be taken in student’s first semester
- 701 Nature and Method of Biblical Theology (2 credits)
- 702 Hermeneutics (2 credits)
- 750 Comprehensive Exam (1 credit)

**MA – New Testament Emphasis (66 credits)**

*Old Testament (100-number courses) – 17 required credits*

- 111 Hebrew I (3 credits)
- 112 Hebrew II (3 credits)
- 120 Methods of Hebrew Exegesis (3 credits)
- 121 Old Testament Exegesis I: Narratives (3 credits)
- 122 Old Testament Exegesis II: Poets and Prophets (3 credits)
- 132 Old Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*New Testament (200-number courses) – 22 required credits*

- 201 Greek I (3 credits)
- 202 Greek II (3 credits)
- 220 Methods of Greek Exegesis (3 credits)
- 221 New Testament Exegesis I: Gospels and Acts (3 credits)

- 222 New Testament Exegesis II: Epistles and Revelation (3 credits)
- 223 New Testament Exegesis III: Advanced Exegesis (3 credits)
- 233 Text of the Bible (2 credits)
- 232 New Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*Historical Theology (300-number courses) – 10 required credits*

- 311 Ancient Church History (3 credits) OR 312 Medieval Church History (3 credits)
- 313 Reformation Church History (3 credits)
- 314 Modern Church History (3 credits)
- 322 Research Methodology (1 credit) – to be taken in student’s first semester

*Systematic Theology (400-number courses) – 12 required credits*

- 411 Systematic Theology I: Prolegomena (2 credits)
- 415 Systematic Theology V: Soteriology (3 credits)
- 421 Introduction to Apologetics (3 credits)

Four credits from the following:

- 412 Systematic Theology II: Theology Proper (2 credits)
- 413 Systematic Theology III: Anthropology (2 credits)
- 414 Systematic Theology IV: Christology (2 credits)
- 416 Systematic Theology VI: Ecclesiology (2 credits)
- 417 Systematic Theology VII: Eschatology (2 credits)
- 424 Puritan Theology (2 credits)
- 432 Biblical Ethics (2 credits)
- 441b Three Forms of Unity (2 credits)
- 441c Westminster Standards (2 credits)

*General Degree Requirements – 5 required credits*

- 099 English Grammar and Syntax (0 credits) – to be taken in student’s first semester
- 701 Nature and Method of Biblical Theology (2 credits)
- 702 Hermeneutics (2 credits)
- 750 Comprehensive Exam (1 credit)

**MA – Historical Theology Emphasis (66 credits)**

*Old Testament (100-number courses) – 11 required credits*

- 111 Hebrew I (3 credits)

- 112 Hebrew II (3 credits)
- 120 Methods of Hebrew Exegesis (3 credits)
- 132 Old Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*New Testament (200-number courses) – 11 required credits*

- 201 Greek I (3 credits)
- 202 Greek II (3 credits)
- 220 Methods of Greek Exegesis (3 credits)
- 232 New Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*Old or New Testament – 3 required credits*

One course from the following:

- 121 Old Testament Exegesis I: Narratives (3 credits)
- 122 Old Testament Exegesis II: Poets and Prophets (3 credits)
- 221 New Testament Exegesis I: Gospels and Acts (3 credits)
- 222 New Testament Exegesis II: Epistles and Revelation (3 credits)

*Historical Theology (300-number courses) – 20 required credits*

- 311 Ancient Church History (3 credits)
- 312 Medieval Church History (3 credits)
- 313 Reformation Church History (3 credits)
- 314 Modern Church History (3 credits)
- 322 Research Methodology (1 credit) – to be taken in student's first semester

7 additional credits from any Historical Theology course (7 credits) *These 7 credits may include ThM-level courses; special permission must be granted.*

*Systematic Theology (400-number courses) – 16 required credits*

- 411 Systematic Theology I: Prolegomena (2 credits)
- 415 Systematic Theology V: Soteriology (3 credits)
- 421 Introduction to Apologetics (3 credits)
- 441b Three Forms of Unity (2 credits) OR 441c Westminster Standards (2 credits)

Six credits from the following:

- 412 Systematic Theology II: Theology Proper (2 credits)
- 413 Systematic Theology III: Anthropology (2 credits)
- 414 Systematic Theology IV: Christology (2 credits)
- 416 Systematic Theology VI: Ecclesiology (2 credits)
- 417 Systematic Theology VII: Eschatology (2 credits)



- 424 Puritan Theology (2 credits)
- 432 Biblical Ethics (2 credits)

*General Degree Requirements – 5 required credits*

- 099 English Grammar and Syntax (0 credits) – to be taken in student’s first semester
- 701 Nature and Method of Biblical Theology (2 credits)
- 702 Hermeneutics (2 credits)
- 750 Comprehensive Exam (1 credit)

**MA – Systematic Theology Emphasis (67 credits)**

*Old Testament (100-number courses) – 11 required credits*

- 111 Hebrew I (3 credits)
- 112 Hebrew II (3 credits)
- 120 Methods of Hebrew Exegesis (3 credits)
- 132 Old Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*New Testament (200-number courses) – 11 required credits*

- 201 Greek I (3 credits)
- 202 Greek II (3 credits)
- 220 Methods of Greek Exegesis (3 credits)
- 232 New Testament Introduction (2 credits)

*Old or New Testament – 3 required credits*

One course from the following:

- 121 Old Testament Exegesis I: Narratives (3 credits)
- 122 Old Testament Exegesis II: Poets and Prophets (3 credits)
- 221 New Testament Exegesis I: Gospels and Acts (3 credits)
- 222 New Testament Exegesis II: Epistles and Revelation (3 credits)

*Historical Theology (300-number courses) – 13 required credits*

- 311 Ancient Church History (3 credits)
- 312 Medieval Church History (3 credits)
- 313 Reformation Church History (3 credits)
- 314 Modern Church History (3 credits)
- 322 Research Methodology (1 credit) – to be taken in student’s first semester

*Systematic Theology (400-number courses) – 24 required credits*

- 411 Systematic Theology I: Prolegomena (2 credits)

- 415 Systematic Theology V: Soteriology (3 credits)
- 421 Introduction to Apologetics (3 credits)
- 441b Three Forms of Unity (2 credits) OR 441c Westminster Standards (2 credits)

The following fourteen credits:

- 412 Systematic Theology II: Theology Proper (2 credits)
- 413 Systematic Theology III: Anthropology (2 credits)
- 414 Systematic Theology IV: Christology (2 credits)
- 416 Systematic Theology VI: Ecclesiology (2 credits)
- 417 Systematic Theology VII: Eschatology (2 credits)
- 424 Puritan Theology (2 credits)
- 432 Biblical Ethics (2 credits)

*General Degree Requirements – 5 required credits*

- 099 English Grammar and Syntax (0 credits) – to be taken in student’s first semester
- 701 Nature and Method of Biblical Theology (2 credits)
- 702 Hermeneutics (2 credits)
- 750 Comprehensive Exam (1 credit)

*The MA (Religion) Comprehensive Examination*

To provide students in the MA program with an opportunity to review and draw into a comprehensive unity the material of the different courses in the curriculum, students take an exam that allows for a comprehensive evaluation of the student’s total program. This exam is an open-book, take-home examination to be completed in a 72-hour period, and is usually administered in the student’s final semester.

The examination involves three questions. For both the MA (OT emphasis) and MA (NT emphasis) there will be one in Old Testament, one in New Testament, and one in hermeneutics. For both the MA (ST emphasis) and MA (HT emphasis) there will be one in systematic theology, one in apologetics, and one in church history. The examination must be typed and each question answered separately in three to five pages.

The comprehensive examination will count for one semester hour of credit. It will be graded on a pass/fail basis. If a student should fail the exam, a petition for a retake examination within a three-week period may be considered. The questions of the examination aim at giving students the opportunity to

demonstrate that they can apply the knowledge acquired in the MA program.

*The MA Thesis (Optional) – 751 (2 credits)*

MA students may choose to substitute a thesis in their area of emphasis in place of another 2-credit course that falls under the department corresponding with their emphasis. This path is strongly recommended for those who intend to use the MA as a transitional degree to additional graduate studies. The student must enroll in 751 much the same as any course is enrolled in; prior approval must be obtained, however, by the student's faculty advisor. The thesis is to be submitted to the student's faculty advisor by February 1 in the final year of the student's program. If approved, some minor corrections may be required.

The MA thesis should demonstrate the student's ability to perform satisfactory work in the following areas: (a) a sound understanding of the subject treated; (b) adequate knowledge of relevant bibliography; (c) cogency and clarity of argument and composition; and (d) the ability to conduct independent scholarly research utilizing standard research methods. The thesis must be prepared in accordance with the guidelines set forth in *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* by Kate L. Tura-bian (current edition), and is to be between 50–75 pages in length (excluding bibliography).

*Research Methodology (322) and English Grammar and Syntax (099)*

All incoming MA students should be aware that Research Methodology and English Grammar and Syntax are required for completion of the degree and must be taken in the first semester of study (both courses are offered every fall semester). Should the student matriculate in the spring semester, and if either of the two are not then offered, the student must enroll in both courses at the next earliest offering.

**The Master of Theology (ThM) – 30 credits**

This course of study expands and deepens a student's abilities in ministry. It is designed for students who possess a Master of Divinity degree or equivalent to help them take their learning to a higher level. It can be used as a terminal degree or as a transitional degree to additional graduate studies, particularly a PhD program

in religion or theology. The Master of Theology (ThM) curriculum is designed to enable the student to:

1. Exegete Scripture accurately, employing understanding of the original languages, historical contexts, and literary genres.
2. Articulate the system and history of doctrine of confessional Reformed theology.
3. Demonstrate advanced knowledge in the student's chosen and related fields of study.
4. Demonstrate academic competence in the student's chosen discipline, including proficiency in producing scholarly work.

## **ThM Requirements**

### *Research Methodology*

All ThM students must successfully complete (B- or better) a Research Methodology course appropriate to their emphasis (BS900 for Biblical Studies emphasis students, and CH900 for Systematic Theology and Reformation and Post-Reformation Theology students). The Research Methodology course is offered every fall semester as a modular course; it is strongly recommended that students complete this course as their first course. It should be noted that BS900 or CH900 must be completed on campus; there is no distance learning equivalent.

### *Concentrations and Coursework Requirements*

A total of 30 credit hours must be completed with a minimum 3.0 grade point average (B) for the completion of the ThM program. The program must be completed within 6 years of matriculation; any exception must be approved by the president and academic dean. ThM students will choose a concentration in one of three areas: Biblical Studies, Reformation and Post-Reformation Theology, and Systematic Theology. Each of these concentrations is designed for either ministers desiring advanced training beyond the MDiv or students desiring to pursue doctoral studies.

Students choosing a ThM in Biblical Studies must demonstrate competency in Hebrew and Greek, having completed a minimum of one year of biblical Hebrew and one year of biblical Greek. It is particularly the purpose of this concentration to sharpen exegetical

skills, to learn to employ effectively the discipline of Biblical Theology for scriptural study and exposition, and to be able to defend the integrity and authority of Scripture.

The ThM degree can be earned following one of two tracks: either the ThM by classes only, or the ThM by classes and thesis. The first is designed for those intending the degree to be terminal; the second for those intending the degree to be transitional to further graduate study (such as a PhD).

All students accepted into the ThM program are first accepted into the course-based track of the ThM. In order to enter the thesis-based track of the ThM, the student, after successfully completing the Research Methodology course and at least one other course with a grade of “B” or higher, must make application to the academic dean by presenting a 2-page proposal of the thesis topic. The academic dean will then bring this initial proposal to the entire faculty for consideration. Further details for the thesis-based track are outlined on the seminary’s website.

All students admitted to the ThM by classes and thesis track will complete 24 credits of coursework (of which at least 18 credits, or 6 courses, must be in the student’s chosen area of concentration) and a 6-credit thesis. All students admitted to the ThM by classes-only track will complete 30 credits of coursework (of which at least 21 credits, or 7 courses, must be in the student’s chosen area of concentration).

ThM credits can be earned as follows:

- Completion of paired ThM and MA/MDiv courses. ThM students choosing paired courses will follow separate syllabus requirements than the MA/MDiv student. These courses are listed under the ThM courses section of the catalog.
- Completion of ThM-specific courses, or courses paired with the PhD program. ThM-level classes (or ThM/PhD classes) will be offered in the above-mentioned concentrations (see course descriptions below). Usually these classes will be administered as modular courses, and will typically meet for an intensive week of classes.
- The thesis: Students accepted by the faculty into the ThM by classes and thesis track will write a 100–200 page thesis on a topic related to the student’s concentration, and

approved by the appropriate faculty supervisor. The thesis is valued at 6 credits.

In order to maximize benefit to resident ThM students attending PRTS on scholarships, all such students are expected to audit one MDiv course a semester, the course to be chosen in consultation with the registrar. They are also encouraged to attend at least one practice preaching session a week and participate in the subsequent discussion. There will be no charge for auditing these courses.

### *Comprehensive Exam*

Each ThM student must take a comprehensive examination at the end of the program. This comprehensive exam will focus primarily on the student's particular concentration.

### *Residency Requirement*

At least one-half of the coursework towards the ThM must be completed through on-campus classes (modular courses qualify as on-campus courses). Up to one-half of the coursework may be completed through a combination of: 1) transfer of credit; 2) distance learning courses (i.e., courses that virtually "meet" synchronously with on-campus classes); 3) independent studies (a maximum of two courses can be taken as independent study).

## **The Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) - 36 Credits**

The Doctor of Philosophy degree advances a student's knowledge of a major field of theology, increases their level of theological acuity, and deepens ministry abilities. Designed for graduates of Master of Theology programs (or their equivalent), the program takes this learning to a higher level through coursework and individual theological research in areas of interest. This degree can also serve as a foundation for teaching on the level of a Master degree (MDiv, MA, and ThM) and/or preaching.

Graduates will demonstrate an advanced level of theological acuity in their abilities to:

1. Articulate:

- The system and history of doctrine and piety of Reformed theology in the broader context and trajectories of Christian theology.

2. Communicate:

- Orally present a cogent, coherent, and comprehensive argument of research findings to be understood by lay-people and scholars.
- Writing scholarly publications that relevantly serve the academy and church.

3. Demonstrate:

- advanced knowledge in the chosen and related field of study.
- international scholarly participation through working with research and course partners, and publication of scholarly work.
- academic competence, including proficiency in research, non-bias examination of data, and production and presentation of scholarly work.
- teaching and / or preaching competence.
- spiritual formation.

Students accepted into the PhD program must choose an emphasis in either Historical Theology or Biblical Studies. The PhD program is designed to be completed in four (4) to six (6) years, but must be completed within eight (8) years of matriculation; any exception must be approved by the academic dean and director of the doctoral program.

The specific objectives, admission requirements, tuition structure, and degree program requirements for each emphasis of the PhD are detailed in the PhD Handbook. This is available on the seminary's website.

### **PhD in Historical Theology**

The Historical Theology doctoral program offers focused areas of research, including but not limited to:

- Historical Figures and Thought
- Documents, Doctrines, and Eras
- Exegesis, Practice, and Preaching

PhD students in the Historical Theology (Reformation, Post-Reformation) program must take the following courses:

- CH900 Research Methodology – 3 credits
- CH901 Introduction to Reformation and Post-Reformation Studies – 3 credits
- BS/CH902 Introduction to Reformed Spirituality and Piety – 3 credits
- BS/CH991 Dissertation Proposal – 3 credits
- BS/CH992 Teaching/Preaching Practicum – 3 credits

Students must take an additional seven courses for credit of which at least four courses must be from the area of concentration (designated by the prefix CH), one course from another doctoral concentration (Biblical Studies), and two courses related to the student's concentration must be taken from an external higher-education institution (an approved course partner of PRTS). Please consult the seminary website and course schedule for doctoral courses related to the Historical Theology emphasis. Aside from these listed courses, students may upon approval enroll in CH999 – Directed Research, the course content and syllabus to be arranged between the student and the advisor.

### **PhD in Biblical Studies**

The Biblical Studies doctoral program offers focused areas of research, including but not limited to:

- Old Testament studies
- New Testament studies

PhD students in the Biblical Studies program must take the following courses:

- BS900 Research Methodology – 3 credits
- BS/CH902 Introduction to Reformed Spirituality and Piety – 3 credits
- BS942 Biblical Aramaic – 3 credits
- BS/CH991 Dissertation Proposal – 3 credits
- BS/CH992 Teaching/Preaching Practicum – 3 credits

Students must take an additional seven courses for credit of which at least four courses must be from the area of concentration (designated by the prefix BS), one course from another doctoral concentration (Historical Theology), and two courses related



to the student's concentration must be taken from an external higher-education institution (an approved course partner of PRIS). Please consult the seminary website and course schedule for doctoral courses related to the Biblical Studies emphasis. Aside from these listed courses, students may upon approval enroll in BS999 - Directed Research, the course content and syllabus to be arranged between the student and the advisor.

### **Certificate Programs**

Each of our certificate programs consists of eighteen credits of course work. Classes taken in these programs are the equivalent of classes taken at the seminary itself. Those who wish to enroll in any of these programs must complete an online application form (accessible through the seminary website). A prior bachelor's degree is not required for our certificate programs. A certificate is granted when the following requirements have been fulfilled:

1. Completion of the course sequence with a minimum GPA of 2.00.
2. Completion of the final project.
3. Payment of all financial obligations.

It is highly recommended that students take only one distance learning or independent study course at a time. We also recommend that students map out a schedule of when and how they intend to complete the requirements of each course. A program must be completed within eight years of its having been started. The student may begin the final project at any time during the sequence.

The following two certificates are available:

### **Certificate in Systematic Theology - 18 credits**

The Certificate in Systematic Theology requires the student to choose fifteen credits from the list of courses below and to complete the final project. The student must take Soteriology.

- 411 Prolegomena (2 credits)
- 412 Theology Proper (2 credits)
- 413 Anthropology (2 credits)
- 414 Christology (2 credits)
- 415 Soteriology (3 credits)
- 416 Ecclesiology (2 credits)

- 417 Eschatology (2 credits)
- 328 Reformed Covenant Theology (2 credit)
- Final Project (3 credits)

**Certificate in Historical Theology – 18 credits**

The Certificate in Historical Theology requires the student to complete the following courses as well as the final project:

- 311 Ancient Church History (3 credits)
- 312 Medieval Church History (3 credits)
- 313 Reformation Church History (3 credits)
- 314 Modern Church History (3 credits)
- 322 Research Methodology (1 credit)
- 424 Puritan Theology (2 credits)
- Final Project (3 credits)



## **COURSE DESCRIPTIONS**

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**Old Testament**

**New Testament**

**Historical Theology**

**Systematic Theology**

**Homiletics**

**Pastoral Theology**

**Missiology**

**General MDiv and MA Courses**

**Master of Theology (ThM) Courses**



## COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

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### OLD TESTAMENT

#### **111 Hebrew I (3) – Michael Barrett**

Basic knowledge of the Hebrew grammar (orthography, morphology, and syntax) and vocabulary. Knowledge of regular and irregular Hebrew verbs. Short readings of the Hebrew text of the Old Testament.

#### **112 Hebrew II (3) – Michael Barrett**

Continuation of 111. More emphasis on reading from Hebrew narrative. Instruction and practice in the practical uses of Hebrew as a tool for Bible study with a view to maintaining the use of the Hebrew Bible in ministry. Prerequisite: 111 or equivalent, or special permission from the instructor.

#### **120 Methods of Hebrew Exegesis (3) – Michael Barrett**

In-depth study of Hebrew syntax. Reading and grammatical analysis of representative passages from narrative, prophecy, and poetry. Attention to aspects of grammar and syntax that are particularly significant for exegesis. Prerequisite for 121 and 122.

#### **121 OT Exegesis I: Narratives (3) – David Murray**

This course will begin by proposing fundamental principles of interpretation when approaching Old Testament narratives. We will demonstrate and apply many of these principles by interpreting numerous significant passages from Genesis to Esther. Prerequisite: 111 and 112 or equivalent, or special permission from the instructor.

#### **122 OT Exegesis II: Poets & Prophets (3) – David Murray**

This course will begin by proposing fundamental principles of interpretation when approaching the poetic and prophetic literature of the Old Testament. We will demonstrate and apply many of these principles by interpreting numerous significant

passages from Job to Malachi. Prerequisite: 111 and 112 or equivalent, or special permission from the instructor.

**123 OT Exegesis III: Advanced Exegesis of Old Testament (3) –**

*David Murray*

This course enables students to gain further Old Testament exegetical experience through engaging in close study of selected texts from the Old Testament (e.g. Leviticus, Judges, 2 Kings, Song of Solomon, Ezekiel, Haggai & Zechariah). While based on the Hebrew text, students will use the tools of modern scholarship to engage the text. The format of the course will include a combination of lectures, seminars, and private study of the selected texts. The main focus will be on the central theological themes and interpretive issues of the writings, examined through detailed study of selected portions of the texts.

**130 The World of the Bible (1) – Michael Barrett**

A study of ancient near eastern and biblical history, including the cultures, religions, and peoples preceding and contemporary with Israel from the Exodus to the post-exilic era, including the inter-testamental period and the first century Mediterranean world. Includes the discussion of key archaeological discoveries that are relevant to providing information crucial to the historical context of the books of the Bible, which is vital data in the overall exegetical process.

**132 Old Testament Introduction (2) – David Murray**

Each Old Testament book will be considered under the headings of author, date, historical analysis, literary analysis, thematic analysis, New Testament analysis, and original message.

## **NEW TESTAMENT**

**201 Greek I (3) – Gerald Bilkes**

An introduction to the vocabulary, grammar, and syntax of New Testament Greek. Short readings of the Greek text of the New Testament.

**202 Greek II (3) – Gerald Bilkes**

Continuation of 201. More emphasis on readings from the Greek text of the New Testament. Prerequisite: 201 or equivalent, or special permission from the instructor.

**220 Methods of Greek Exegesis (3) – Gerald Bilkes**

In-depth study of Greek syntax. Reading and grammatical analysis of representative passages from narrative, prophecy, and poetry. Attention to aspects of grammar and syntax that are particularly significant for exegesis. Prerequisite for 221 and 222.

**221 NT Exegesis I: Gospels and Acts (3) – Gerald Bilkes**

An in-depth study of selections of the Gospels (Matthew–John) and Acts based on the original Greek. We will examine the art of interpreting narratives, as well as look at the distinctive approaches and messages of the various books. Prerequisite: 201 and 202 or equivalent, or special permission from the instructor.

**222 NT Exegesis II: Epistles and Revelation (3) – Gerald Bilkes**

An in-depth study of selections of the Epistles of Paul, as well as the General Epistles and the book of Revelation, based on the original Greek. We will examine the art of interpreting epistolary discourse, as well as look at the distinctive method and message of the various books. Prerequisite: 201 and 202 or equivalent, or special permission from the instructor.

**223 NT Exegesis III: Advanced New Testament Exegesis (3) – Gerald Bilkes**

This course enables students to gain further New Testament exegetical experience through engaging in close study of selected texts from the New Testament (e.g. John, Acts, Romans, Hebrews, Revelation). While based on the Greek text, students will use the tools of modern scholarship to engage the text. The format of the course will include a combination of lectures, seminars, and private study of the selected texts. The main focus will be on the central theological themes and interpretive issues of the writings, examined through detailed study of selected portions of the texts.

**232 New Testament Introduction (2) – Gerald Bilkes**

An introduction and survey of the books of the New Testament with a focus on questions of authorship, date, historical background, integrity, authenticity, and canonicity. The student will become acquainted with the main content and structure of each book.

**233 The Text of the Bible (2)** – *Michael Barrett*

An introduction to the transmission and canonization of the biblical text, and the principles of textual criticism. Also a survey of Bible translation, especially the history of the English Bible, and an analysis of theories of translation.

## **HISTORICAL THEOLOGY**

**311 Ancient Church History (3)** – *William VanDoodewaard*

A study of the developing theology, ecclesiology, piety, and worship of the Christian church from the close of the apostolic age to A.D. 600. Special attention will be given to main figures in the patristic age.

**312 Medieval Church History (3)** – *William VanDoodewaard*

A study of medieval developments (A.D. 590-1517): the emergence of medieval Christianity, the monastic movement, missions and evangelism, challenges to the Gregorian line of the church, Eastern Orthodoxy, theological debates (e.g., predestination, Christ's bodily presence in the Supper, and atonement), the Crusades, mysticism, the subsistence or reality of ideas (e.g., realism, conceptualism, and nominalism), the rise of scholasticism, heresies (e.g., Albigensianism and Waldensianism), religious orders and their prominent theologians (e.g., Franciscans: Francis of Assisi, Bonaventure, and Duns Scotus; Dominicans: Dominic, Albert the Great, and Thomas Aquinas), the dissolution of the medieval synthesis, and forerunners of the Reformation (e.g., Thomas Bradwardine, Gregory of Rimini, John Wycliffe, and Jan Hus).

**313 Reformation Church History (3)** – *William VanDoodewaard*

This course traces the historic development of the Protestant Reformation from its background prior to the sixteenth century to its impact on the church and world of today. The lives and teaching of the leading Reformers will be examined along with the course of the Reformation in Germany, England, Scotland, France, and the Netherlands.

**314 Modern Church History (3)** – *William VanDoodewaard*

A study of prominent movements in the church from A.D. 1650 to the present, including the place of the church today amid the secularization of politics and culture. The course will



focus on the consolidation of Protestant orthodoxy as well as the impact of pietism, rationalism, the evangelical revival, missiology, social reform, neo-Calvinism, and liberalism.

**315 North American Church History (2)** – *William VanDoodewaard*

A study of the establishment, expansion, internal development, and societal impact of the Protestant church on the North American continent from the colonial period until today, with particular focus on the major leaders and controversies in the development of Reformed and Presbyterian theology in the United States.

**321 Theology of Augustine & Calvin (2)** – *William VanDoodewaard*

A study of the life, theology, and influence of Augustine of Hippo, with attention to Augustinian thought in the Middle Ages, followed by a study of the sources and development of Calvin's thought, with special reference to the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*.

**322 Research Methodology (1)** –

*Laura Ladwig, William VanDoodewaard*

This course is a study of research skills and methodology, authoritative sources, and library use designed to prepare the student to research, to write a thesis, and to engage in effective study, writing, and preaching in ministry. Attention is given to Turabian format, bibliographies, and matters of form and style in academic writing. This course is required of all incoming students in all programs, and is to be taken in the student's beginning fall semester.

**328 Covenant Theology (2)** – *Stephen Myers*

An examination of the scriptural teaching on covenant and related concepts as they give unity and shape to the whole of the scriptural message. Also an overview of the historical development of covenant theology, focusing especially in continental and British Reformed thinking. Attention will be paid to points of theological debate, as well as venues for homiletical presentation and ecclesiastical application of the doctrine of the covenant.

## SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

### **411 Systematic Theology I: Prolegomena (2) – Joel Beeke**

The first half of this course is a study in the basic areas preliminary to systematic theology, including the definition, nature, history, methods, and sources of systematic theology as well as theological encyclopedia and the spirit of Reformed theology. The second half covers the doctrine of revelation, with special emphasis on the inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of Scripture.

### **412 Systematic Theology II: Theology Proper (2) – Stephen Myers**

Considers the doctrine of God, the knowability and being of God, the names and attributes of God, the Trinity, the divine decrees, and providence.

### **413 Systematic Theology III: Anthropology (2) – Joel Beeke**

A study of the doctrine of man, including creation, the original state of man, the covenant of works, the fall, and sin and its punishment.

### **414 Systematic Theology IV: Christology (2) –**

*William VanDoodewaard*

Considers the doctrine of the person and work of Christ: the names, natures, offices, and states of the Mediator, as well as the atonement.

### **415 Systematic Theology V: Soteriology (3) – Joel Beeke**

A study of the doctrine, nature, and work of the Holy Spirit, with a special emphasis on the Spirit's order of application of salvation (*ordo salutis*): union with Christ, calling, regeneration, conversion, repentance, faith and assurance, justification, adoption, sanctification, perseverance, and glorification.

### **416 Systematic Theology VI: Ecclesiology (2) – David Kranendonk**

A study of the doctrine of the church, with focus on the attributes and marks of the church, the nature and necessity of ecclesiastical offices, and the means of grace, including preaching and the sacraments. Considers scriptural principles for the organization of the New Testament church, analyzes various systems of polity, and compares church governments.

### **417 Systematic Theology VII: Eschatology (2) – David Murray**

A study of the doctrine of the last things, including a treatment of the eschatological nature of the biblical message; death,

immortality, and the intermediate state; the signs of Christ's second coming, His return, and millennial views; the resurrection, final judgment, and heaven and hell.

**421 Introduction to Apologetics (3) - staff**

An introduction to the concepts and principles of apologetic theories and how they cohere with their theoretical assumptions, with emphasis on understanding a biblical apologetic and its relationship to special revelation and the Christian world view. The student will learn how to apply the concepts of apologetics to contemporary attacks on the Christian faith and how to evaluate systems of apologetics by both internal and external criteria.

**424 Puritan Theology (2) - Joel Beeke**

An in-depth examination of some major themes of Puritan theology, including the Puritan view of Scripture, meditation, election, predestinarian grace, spiritual adoption, assurance of faith, sanctification, conscience and casuistry, church and worship, evangelism, and eschatology. Concluding lectures address the Puritan lifestyle that resulted from Puritan theology.

**432 Biblical Ethics (2) - staff**

An examination first of the theories of obligation and the theories of value from a philosophical perspective. Next a biblical theology of obligation and value along with their implications for decision-making in personal and church life. Also an examination of the underpinnings, method, and outworking of an ethics of the Word, with special focus on problems arising from modern medical technology (fertility, living wills, organ transplants). A thorough orientation on the Ten Commandments as the divine standard in all ethical matters.

**\*441a Belgic Confession and Canons of Dordt (2) - staff**

A study of the meaning, importance, and value of the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort.

**\*441b The Westminster Standards (2) - Chad Van Dixhoorn or David Murray**

The primary purpose of this course is to help the confessionally literate become confessionally fluent. The first part of the class will treat the history of the Westminster assembly (1643–1653) and select theological topics. The focus of the second part of the class will be an engagement with the texts that Presby-

terians adopt as their confessional standards. Thus readings, assignments, and lectures will explore the Westminster assembly, Confession of Faith, and catechisms. Participants will be equipped to defend our confessional standards from the Scriptures, and lectures will visit the historic contexts of these classic documents.

## HOMILETICS

### **511 Homiletics I: Sermon Preparation, Construction, & Delivery (3) – Joel Beeke and David Murray**

An introduction to the field of homiletics. Special attention is given to the principles of homiletics as well as to material and formal homiletics, including the steps from the origin of a text and sermonic ideas to their gestation, the methods of study required for preparation, and the relation of all this to completion and delivery of the sermon in a worship service. Stress falls on how to proclaim and apply narrative, doctrinal, and ethical texts biblically, doctrinally, practically, and experientially.

### **512 Homiletics II: Reformed Experiential Preaching (2) – Joel Beeke**

Defines and explains both the discriminatory and applicatory dimensions of Reformed experiential preaching. Examines how major Reformers, English Puritans, Dutch Further Reformation divines, and two great preachers from each of the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries emphasized the experiential dimension of vital Christianity in their sermons, then addresses the question: How can Reformed ministers best preach experientially today?

### **513a Homiletics III: Sermon Preparation for Special Occasions (2) – Joel Beeke**

This course focuses on preparation for speaking on special occasions such as baptism, confession of faith, the Lord's Supper, weddings, funerals, installation of office-bearers, inaugural and farewell messages, and dedication and anniversary services.

### **513b Homiletics III: Sermon Preparation for Special Services (1) – Joel Beeke**

This course focuses on pulpit preparation for the celebration of Advent weeks, the birth of Christ, New Year's Eve, New Year's Day, Prayer days, Passion weeks, Christ's crucifixion,

Christ's resurrection, Ascension, Pentecost, Reformation day, and Thanksgiving day.

**514 Homiletics IV: Preaching from the Heidelberg**

**Catechism** (3) – *Joel Beeke*

Examines the pros and cons of catechetical preaching; then teaches thematic preaching via each of the 52 Lord's Days of the Heidelberg Catechism.

**516 Homiletics VI: Preaching Christ in the Old Testament** (2) –

*David Murray*

The principles and practice of preaching Christ from the Old Testament: His Prophets, His Pictures, His Promises, His Presence, His Precepts, His Poets, His Past, and His People.

**521 Practice Preaching I-V** (5) – *staff*

Each student delivers a sermon each semester for five semesters to a small group of peers and staff personnel for discussion and evaluation with respect to exegetical, homiletical, and experiential content. Delivery, structure, and relevance of the sermon are also critiqued.

**524 Preaching Practicum** (4) – *Joel Beeke, Gerald Bilkes, or staff*

Either a practicum of preaching 60 times throughout the course of seminary study, usually within the last two years of study, or a one-credit-hour seminar held four times through the duration of seminary study. In the former case, evaluation forms are filled out by the hosting consistory and forwarded to the seminary. In the latter case, each one-credit-hour seminar will focus on preaching a different genre of Scripture: The Historical Books, The Psalms, The Gospels, The Epistles.

**PASTORAL THEOLOGY**

**611 Foundations & Process of Biblical Counseling** (3) –

*David Murray*

Foundations for helping people change and grow from a distinctively biblical perspective. Introducing the student to the content and process of personal ministry under the authority and sufficiency of Scripture. Application by class discussion of various counseling scenarios.

**612 Issues in Counseling (2) – David Murray**

Application of the broad principles of biblical counseling presented in the introductory course (611) to specific counseling cases and problems. Lectures, readings, and case studies will be used to address current counseling problems related to family development, communication, conflict resolution, child rearing, anger, depression, fear, drug and alcohol abuse, sexual and physical abuse, mental illness, eating disorders, homosexuality, grief, and suffering. Also a specific study on how to counsel from the pulpit, that is to say, give spiritual and practical guidance to a diversity of listeners in the minister's sermon.

**613 Teaching Children/Teens & Youth Ministry (2) –**

*James Beeke, Mark Kelderman*

This course is divided into two components that emphasize practical skills, methods, and applications for effectively teaching children and teens in catechism classes or other settings. It includes how to view, discipline, and be examples for our students. The history, theological foundation, purposes, connection to youth culture, and importance of catechetics and youth ministry are also studied. Included are various models and methods appropriate to the church's ministry to youth.

**614 The Christian Minister & His Ministry (3) – David Murray**

A practical course on the life of the minister (stressing his qualifications and his relationships) and the work of the ministry (stressing the pastor as preacher, teacher, evangelist, visitor, worship leader, manager, and peacemaker). This course also studies the principles and practices of Christian leadership and administration.

**616 Worship & Liturgy (2) – Eric Moerdijk**

A study of the principles and practices of Christian worship and liturgy in the church. This course focuses on a biblical-theological perspective, a historical overview, an analysis of the elements of worship, the preparation and leading of worship, and the history and content of the Dutch Reformed liturgy as printed in *The Psalter*.

**622 Church Polity: The Church Order of Dort (2) – Bartel Elshout**

A study of the biblical principles of church government relating to the institutional life of the church, with emphasis on the Church Order of Dort (1619).

**629 Ministry Practicum: Long-term Internship (3)**

The student resides in the locality of a pastor from one to three months, allowing him to settle into the church, become part of its body, and develop relationships with its members. The student is required to prepare and preach sermons each Sabbath and also to be involved in all aspects of a pastor's work and responsibilities.

**MISSIOLOGY**

**631 Foundations of Reformed Missions (2) – Brian DeVries**

An introductory survey of the theology, history, and methods of Christian missions with special emphasis on biblical foundations, culture issues, and recent trends.

**632 Evangelism and Church Planting (2) – Bartel Elshout and Danny Hyde**

A study of the mission of the local church by evangelism and church planting in North America with special emphasis on evangelistic preaching, congregational witness, urban ministry, and many practical considerations.

**633 Revival and Prayer (2) – Michael Haykin**

A survey of the history of revival in the western world since the Reformation. Particular attention is paid to the Puritan understanding and experience of revival, and the First and Second Great Awakenings. More recent reflections upon the nature of genuine revival by authors such as D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones and Iain H. Murray will also be considered. Also, an introductory exploration of what the Scriptures have to say about the nature of prayer and its practice. Includes an examination of what certain strands of the Christian tradition (notably, the Ancient Church, the Puritans, and the Calvinistic Baptists in the 18th century) have taught about prayer, aimed to deepen the student's commitment to a life of prayer, both personal and corporate.

**634 Encounter with World Religions (2) – Brian DeVries**

A study of the biblical principles of Christian encounter with non-Christian religion and a survey of each of the major religions in the world including Islam, Hinduism, Animism, North American cults, and religious expressions in a modern/

postmodern context. Special emphasis will be given to elenc-tics, culture, and evangelistic approach.

**635 Intercultural Gospel Communication (2)** – *Brian DeVries*

An application of anthropological and sociological insights to issues in Reformed missiology, with special attention to the fundamentals of world view and culture, differences among societies, intercultural communication, and teaching God’s unchanging Word in different contexts.

**637 Contemporary Studies in Missions (2)** – *Brian DeVries*

Missiological analysis of selected topics dealing with significant issues related to mission or evangelism today.

**638 Mission or Evangelism Internship (2)** – *staff*

Two months of supervised evangelistic or cross-cultural ministry.

## **GENERAL MDIV AND MA COURSES**

**099 English Grammar and Syntax (0)** – *Chris Engelsma*

An introduction to English grammar & syntax. This course is designed to prepare students for the original language classes, to give students the skills needed to write well and to analyze their own writing, and to acquaint students with the PRTS Style Guide and its requirements for proper citation. This course is required of all incoming MDiv and MA students, and is to be taken in the student’s beginning fall semester. Students are able to test out of all or portions of this course.

**101 Latin (3)** – *David Noe*

An introductory Latin language course designed to prepare students for further studies in Latin.

**102 Latin (3)** – *David Noe*

An intermediate Latin language course designed to prepare students for further studies in Latin.

**701 Nature and Method of Biblical Theology (2)** – *Gerald Bilkes*

Introduction to the history, nature and methods of Biblical Theology and the discipline’s place and contribution to exegetical theology. Illustrations of the applications of the methods of Biblical Theology from both the Old and New Testaments. Prerequisite for 121, 122, 221, and 222.



**702 Hermeneutics (2)** – *Gerald Bilkes*

An overview of the history of biblical interpretation. A study of the principles and methods of the grammatical-historical and theological interpretation of Scripture. A treatment of the principles and practice of biblical typology, delineated from its excesses.

**750 MA Comprehensive Exam (1)** – *faculty supervisor appointed*

**751 MA Thesis (2)** – 50–75 page paper – *faculty supervisor appointed*

**MASTER OF THEOLOGY (ThM) COURSES**

*Biblical Studies*

**BS801a Language and Exegesis: Old Testament (3)** –

*Michael Barrett*

Reinforcement and development in the grammatical and syntactical principles of exegesis, and application through the analysis of selected passages in the Old Testament with a special emphasis on the practical use of biblical languages in sermon preparation.

**BS801b Language and Exegesis: New Testament (3)** – *Gerald Bilkes*

Reinforcement and development in the grammatical and syntactical principles of exegesis, and application through the analysis of selected passages in the New Testament with a special emphasis on the practical use of biblical languages in sermon preparation.

**BS802 The World of the Bible (3)** – *Michael Barrett*

A study of ancient near eastern and biblical history, including the cultures, religions, and peoples preceding and contemporary with Israel from the Exodus to the post-exilic era, including the inter-testamental period and the first century Mediterranean world. Includes the discussion of key archaeological discoveries that are relevant to providing information crucial to the historical context of the books of the Bible, which is vital data in the overall exegetical process.

**BS803a Issues in Old Testament Biblical Theology (3)** –

*Michael Barrett*

Reinforcement and development of the application of the principles of biblical theology, particularly focusing on Scripture as

the interpretation of redemption with a view to demonstrating how the discipline contributes to and demonstrates the validity of covenant theology. Attention will be given to how Biblical Theology aids in identifying the specific themes and messages of individual books of the Old Testament and how they relate to a holistic understanding of Scripture.

**BS803b Issues in New Testament Biblical Theology (3) -**

*Gerald Bilkes*

Reinforcement and development of the application of the principles of biblical theology, particularly focusing on Scripture as the interpretation of redemption with a view to demonstrating how the discipline contributes to and demonstrates the validity of covenant theology. Attention will be given to how Biblical Theology aids in identifying the specific themes and messages of individual books of the New Testament and how they relate to a holistic understanding of Scripture.

**BS804 Christ in the Old Testament (3) -** *David Murray*

The hermeneutics of identifying Messianic revelation from the various portions of the Old Testament and the principles and practices of preaching Christ from the ancient texts. Attention will be given to the revelation of Christ in His prophets, pictures, promises, presence, precepts, poets, past, and people. Special focus may be given to a particular book to illustrate how to preach the ancient message to the modern church.

**BS805 Distinctive Ideas in the Old Testament (3) -** *staff*

Development of key Old Testament themes or concepts from a biblical-theological perspective, such as the covenant, law, life after death and resurrection, names of God, creation theology, the Holy Spirit, and key theological words.

**BS806 Distinctive Ideas in the New Testament (3) -** *staff*

Development of key New Testament themes or concepts from a biblical-theological perspective, such as conversion, stewardship, missions, parables, and key theological words.

**BS807 Issues in Old Testament Studies (3) -** *staff*

Analysis of specific problem passages in the Old Testament, including major issues and individual texts. Major issues include topics such as the genealogies of Genesis 5 and 10, the date of the Exodus, extermination of the Canaanites, polygamy,

sacrifice of Jephthah's daughter, imprecatory Psalms, interpretation of Canticles, Hosea's marriage, and more.

**BS808 The New Testament Use of the Old Testament (3) – staff**

A study of the different types of Old Testament quotations and allusions occurring in the New Testament. Consideration is given to textual issues as well as the hermeneutical principles employed by the New Testament writers.

**BS809 Readings in Old Testament Studies (3) – staff**

Directed reading in various schools of thought and theories involved in Old Testament scholarship (past and present), and evaluation on the basis of the absolute authority of Scripture with a view to defending Scripture against critical attacks.

**BS810 Readings in New Testament Studies (3) – staff**

Directed reading in various schools of thought and theories involved in New Testament scholarship (past and present), and evaluation on the basis of the absolute authority of Scripture with a view to defending Scripture against critical attacks.

**BS811 The History and Preservation of the Biblical Text (3)**

*Michael Barrett*

Studies in the history, theories, and praxis of textual criticism with a view to affirming the reliability of the Masoretic Text for the Old Testament and Majority Text for the New Testament.

**BS812 Directed Research (3) – staff**

Subject to approval by the administration, the student will submit an outline of a topic of special interest in the general field of biblical studies, including the course requirements and how the objectives of the course will be achieved. The requirements should include a detailed bibliography, the number of pages to be read, a description of a research paper, and the number of scheduled meetings with the directing professor.

**BS813 Biblical Aramaic – Michael Barrett**

A study of the basic grammar of Aramaic and reading of the Aramaic passages in the Old Testament. In addition, the reading of selected extra-biblical texts from the Targums, Qumran, and Elephantine.

**BS814 Introduction to the Septuagint** – *Michael Barrett*

Selected readings from the Septuagint as well as instruction regarding the Septuagint's value and use for both Old and New Testament studies.

**REFORMATION AND POST-REFORMATION  
THEOLOGY COURSES**

**CH849 The Theology of Augustine (3)** – *William VanDoodewaard*

A study of the life, theology, and influence of Augustine of Hippo, with attention to Augustinian thought in the Middle Ages.

**CH850 The Life and Theology of Thomas Aquinas (3)** – *staff*

This course examines the life and theology of Thomas Aquinas, the single most important theologian in the shaping of medieval and modern Catholicism. Topics covered include: his biography; the basic elements of his philosophy; his doctrine of God; his Christology; his understanding of predestination; his understanding of the nature of salvation; his sacramentology; his influence on later Reformed orthodoxy.

**CH851 Forerunners of the Reformation (3)** –

*William VanDoodewaard*

An investigation of the historical setting and doctrinal perspective of the men regarded as forerunners of the Reformation such as John Wycliffe, John Hus, Gregory of Rimini, Thomas Bradwardine, Girolamo Savonarola, Jacques Lefevre d'Étaples, and Juan de Valdes.

**CH852 The Life and Thought of Francis Turretin (3)** –

*Jonathon Beeke*

This course offers an in-depth study of the life and thought of Francis Turretin (1623–1687), considered by many the quintessential representative of Reformed orthodoxy. Primary attention will be given to Turretin's magnum opus, his *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* (1679–1685). As even the title of this work demands that due diligence be given to contextual considerations, Turretin's historical context within which he formulated his theology will be considered. Special attention will also be given to Turretin's scholastic method, his prolegomena, his covenant theology, and his christology.

**CH853 The Theology of John Calvin (3)** – *William VanDoodewaard*  
or *Richard Gamble*

A historical-theological study of the sources and development of Calvin's thought, with special reference to the Institutes. Supplemental readings are given from Calvin's theological treatises, commentaries, sermons, letters, and polemical writings.

**CH855 The Dutch Further Reformation (3)** – *Adriaan Neele*

A historical and theological study of the *Nadere Reformatie*, or Further Reformation, in the Netherlands, covering the period 1600 until 1775. Similarities and differences with English Puritanism will be highlighted. The theology of some leading representatives of the Dutch Further Reformation will be examined, especially their views on the church, Scripture, and the Holy Spirit's saving work.

**CH856 The Theology of Wilhelmus à Brakel (3)** – *staff*

A deductive study of à Brakel's *magnum opus*, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, with a special emphasis on the experiential and practical applications of his theology. Includes a historical assessment of à Brakel's life and ministry.

**CH857 John Knox and the Scottish Reformation (3)** –

*William VanDoodewaard*

Covers the Scottish Reformation from its earliest representatives until the end of the sixteenth century, with a particular focus on the life, work, and theology of John Knox.

**CH858 Scottish Presbyterianism (3)** – *Stephen Myers*

Covers Scottish Presbyterianism from the beginning of the seventeenth century to early eighteenth-century Moderatism. Particular attention will be given to the period from the Scottish Second Reformation to the Marrow Controversy: the Covenants, the Scottish influence on the Westminster Assembly, the persecution, the reestablishment of Presbyterianism, and the distinctive contributions of such theologians as Rutherford, Gillespie, Dickson, Durham, Brown of Wamphray, and Boston.

**CH859 The Westminster Assembly (3)** – *Chad Van Dixhoorn* or  
*David Murray*

The primary purpose of this course is to help the confessionally literate become confessionally fluent. The first part of the

class will treat the history of the Westminster assembly (1643–1653) and select theological topics. The focus of the second part of the class (optional to ThM students) will be an engagement with the texts that Presbyterians adopt as their confessional standards. Thus readings, assignments, and lectures will explore the Westminster assembly, Confession of Faith, and catechisms. Participants will be equipped to defend our confessional standards from the Scriptures, and lectures will visit the historic contexts of these classic documents.

**CH860 The Theology of John Owen (3)** – *Derek Thomas or Crawford Gribben*

An in-depth study of Owen’s life and theology. Attention will be given to the Trinitarian and covenant structure of his theology and to his distinctive contributions to Puritan teaching.

**CH861 Puritan Theology in England (3)** – *Joel Beeke/Greg Salazar*

An in-depth examination of some major themes of Puritan theology, including the Puritan view of Scripture, meditation, election, predestinarian grace, spiritual adoption, assurance of faith, sanctification, conscience and casuistry, church and worship, evangelism, and eschatology. Concluding lectures address the Puritan lifestyle that resulted from Puritan theology.

**CH862 Puritan Theology in New England (3)** – *staff*

A study of the origin and development of the theology of New England Puritan ministers, with particular emphasis on John Cotton, Thomas Hooker, Thomas Shepard, Peter Bulkeley, and Thomas Cobbet. Among the issues discussed will be the “visible saints” criterion for church membership, New England covenant theology, the antinomian controversy, the Half-way Covenant, and the relationship between church and state.

**CH863 The Theology of Jonathan Edwards (3)** – *Adriaan Neele*

An examination of the doctrinal, experiential, ethical, and philosophical thought of America’s greatest theologian, with an emphasis on Edwards’s formative role in shaping subsequent American theology and spirituality through his most important treatises and sermons.

**CH864 Puritan Approaches to Scriptural Interpretation (3) -**  
*staff*

A study of Puritan methods and practice of interpretation, with special attention to great commentaries from the Puritan era. The student will become familiar with the skill and orientation of the Puritan commentator and the full range of Puritan commentaries and their value for today.

**CH865 Revival in the Reformed Tradition (3) -** *Michael Haykin*

A study of the history of revival in the western world since the Reformation. Particular attention is paid to the Puritan understanding and experience of revival, and the First and Second Great Awakenings. More recent reflections upon the nature of genuine revival by authors such as D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones and Iain H. Murray will also be considered.

**CH866 Reformed Covenant Theology (3) -** *Stephen Myers*

An examination of the scriptural teaching on covenant and related concepts as they give unity and shape to the whole of the scriptural message. Also an overview of the historical development of covenant theology, focusing especially in continental and British Reformed thinking. Attention will be paid to points of theological debate, as well as venues for homiletical presentation and ecclesiastical application of the doctrine of the covenant.

**CH867 Lutheran Orthodoxy (3) -** *Robert Kolb*

An examination of Lutheran orthodoxy in response to Phillipist and Reformed challenges. A comparison with parallel problems and resolutions in Reformed Orthodoxy will be studied.

**CH870 American Presbyterianism (3) -** *C. N. Willborn*

A study of American Presbyterian history with a particular emphasis on the theological developments and contributions of leading American Presbyterians. Students will also learn the distinctives of major branches of American Presbyterianism.

**CH871 North American Church History (3) -**

*William VanDoodewaard*

A study of the establishment, expansion, internal development, and societal impact of the Protestant church on the North American continent from the colonial period until today, with particular focus on the major leaders and con-

troversies in the development of Reformed and Presbyterian theology in the United States.

**CH872 Directed Research (3) – staff**

Subject to approval by the administration, the student will submit an outline of a topic of special interest in the general field of Reformation and post-Reformation studies, including the course requirements and how the objectives of the course will be achieved. The requirements should include a detailed bibliography, the number of pages to be read, a description of a research paper, and the number of scheduled meetings with the directing professor.

## SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY COURSES

**ST853 The Theology of John Calvin (3) – William VanDoodewaard  
or Richard Gamble**

A historical-theological study of the sources and development of Calvin's thought, with special reference to the *Institutes*. Supplemental readings are given from Calvin's theological treatises, commentaries, sermons, letters, and polemical writings.

**ST856 The Theology of Wilhelmus à Brakel (3) – staff**

A deductive study of à Brakel's *magnum opus*, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, with a special emphasis on the experiential and practical applications of his theology. Includes a historical assessment of à Brakel's life and ministry.

**ST859 The Westminster Assembly (3) – Chad Van Dixhoorn or  
David Murray**

The primary purpose of this course is to help the confessionally literate become confessionally fluent. The first part of the class will treat the history of the Westminster assembly (1643–1653) and select theological topics. The focus of the second part of the class (optional to ThM students) will be an engagement with the texts that Presbyterians adopt as their confessional standards. Thus readings, assignments, and lectures will explore the Westminster assembly, Confession of Faith, and catechisms. Participants will be equipped to defend our confessional standards from the Scriptures, and lectures will visit the historic contexts of these classic documents.



**ST860 The Theology of John Owen (3) – Derek Thomas or Crawford Gribben**

A close study of Owen's life and theology. Attention will be given to the Trinitarian and covenant structure of his theology and to his distinctive contributions to Puritan teaching.

**ST861 Puritan Theology in England (3) – Joel Beeke/Greg Salazar**

An in-depth examination of some major themes of Puritan theology, including the Puritan view of Scripture, meditation, election, predestinarian grace, spiritual adoption, assurance of faith, sanctification, conscience and casuistry, church and worship, evangelism, and eschatology. Concluding lectures address the Puritan lifestyle that resulted from Puritan theology.

**ST862 Puritan Theology in New England (3) – staff**

A study of the origin and development of the theology of New England Puritan ministers, with particular emphasis on John Cotton, Thomas Hooker, Thomas Shepard, Peter Bulkeley, and Thomas Cobbet. Among the issues discussed will be the "visible saints" criterion for church membership, New England covenant theology, the antinomian controversy, the Half-way Covenant, and the relationship between church and state.

**ST863 The Theology of Jonathan Edwards (3) – Adriaan Neele**

An examination of the doctrinal, experiential, ethical, and philosophical thought of America's greatest theologian, with an emphasis on Edwards's formative role in shaping subsequent American theology and spirituality through his most important treatises and sermons.

**ST866 Reformed Covenant Theology (3) – Stephen Myers**

A study of the origin and development of Reformed covenant theology from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries, including early Reformers such as Zwingli and Bullinger, the Genevan influence of Calvin and Beza, the Heidelberg impact of Ursinus and Olevianus, the Puritan stream of Perkins and Roberts, and the Scottish connection through Knox and Boston, etc.

**ST881 Prolegomena (3) – Joel Beeke**

The first half of this course is a study in the basic areas preliminary to systematic theology, including the definition, nature, history, methods, and sources of systematic theology as well

as theological encyclopedia and the spirit of Reformed theology. The second half covers the doctrine of revelation, with special emphasis on the inspiration, inerrancy, and authority of Scripture.

**ST882 Theology Proper (3) – Stephen Myers**

Considers the doctrine of God, the knowability and being of God, the names and attributes of God, the Trinity, the divine decrees, and providence.

**ST883 Anthropology (3) – Joel Beeke**

A study of the doctrine of man, including creation, the original state of man, the covenant of works, the fall, and sin and its punishment.

**ST884 Christology (3) – William VanDoodewaard**

Considers the doctrine of the person and work of Christ: the names, natures, offices, and states of the Mediator, as well as atonement.

**ST885 Soteriology (3) – Joel Beeke**

A study of the doctrine, nature, and work of the Holy Spirit, with a special emphasis on the Spirit's order of application of salvation (*ordo salutis*): union with Christ, calling, regeneration, conversion, repentance, faith and assurance, justification, adoption, sanctification, perseverance, and glorification.

**ST886 Ecclesiology (3) – David Kranendonk**

A study of the doctrine of the church, with focus on the attributes and marks of the church, the nature and necessity of ecclesiastical offices, and the means of grace, including preaching and the sacraments. Considers scriptural principles for the organization of the New Testament church, analyzes various systems of polity, and compares church governments.

**ST887 Eschatology (3) – David Murray**

A study of the doctrine of the last things, including a treatment of the eschatological nature of the biblical message; death, immortality, and the intermediate state; the signs of Christ's second coming, His return, and millennial views; the resurrection, final judgment, and heaven and hell.

**ST890 Directed Research (3) – staff**

Subject to approval by the administration, the student will submit an outline of a topic of special interest in the general

field of Systematic Theology, including the course requirements and how the objectives of the course will be achieved. The requirements should include a detailed bibliography, the number of pages to be read, a description of a research paper, and the number of scheduled meetings with the directing professor.

## OTHER REQUIREMENTS

### **Research Methodology (3)** – *staff*

This course is a study of research skills and methodology, authoritative sources, and library use designed to prepare the student to research, to write a thesis, and to engage in effective study, writing, and preaching in ministry. Attention is given to Turabian format, bibliographies, and matters of form and style in academic writing. This course is required of all incoming students in all programs, and is to be taken in the student's beginning fall semester.

**TH951 Thesis (6):** 100–200 page paper – *faculty supervisor appointed* (required of those accepted into the ThM by classes and thesis track)





## **ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

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- Academic Calendar**
- Seminary Hours of Operation**
- Grading System**
- Grade Reports and Appeals**
- Academic Probation**
- Definition of Full-time Status**
- Enrollment in Courses**
- Visiting Student Status and Auditing Courses**
- Distance Learning Program**
- Tuition and Fees**
- Tuition Refund of Dropped/Withdrawn Courses**
- Final Examinations**
- Commencement and Placement**



## ACADEMIC INFORMATION

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### Academic Calendar

The normal academic year consists of two 14-week semesters (fall and spring) and usually a few weeks of interim courses in the winter and summer. Normally, the fall semester begins the Tuesday before Labor Day; the spring semester begins the last Tuesday in January. Traditionally, the academic calendar is as follows:

- Last Tuesday Before Labor Day: Fall Classes Begin
- Thanksgiving Day and following Friday: No classes
- Second week of December: Final Exams
- Second and Third weeks of January: Winter Interim
- Last Tuesday of January: Spring Classes Begin
- March week of Spring Classis: No classes – Reading Days
- Fourteenth week of the calendar year: Spring Break
- Second or third week of May: Final Exams
- End of May and early June: Summer Interim

More detailed academic calendars are available on the seminary's website.

### Seminary Hours of Operation

The seminary is open Monday to Friday from 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM. Most classes are taught Tuesday through Friday to accommodate student and faculty weekend travel; other classes are taught as modules that may include Mondays or evenings. The William Perkins Library hours are posted on the seminary's website.

### Grading System

PRTS employs a common set of marks to indicate student achievement in a course. The course syllabi detail specific requirements for each level of achievement. The following criteria are used in assigning a final grade:

- A Excellent; superior achievement of course objectives.
- B Good; commendable achievement of course objectives.
- C Satisfactory; acceptable achievement of course objectives.
- D Poor; marginal achievement of course objectives.
- F Failure to advance in the course to the extent necessary for credit to be given.
- W Withdrawal; official permission granted to withdraw from the course after the final date for dropping a course.
- P Pass; adequate achievement of course objectives, but no grade points given.
- AU Audit; no grade points given.
- I Incomplete; a temporary extension granted as defined in the "Policy for Incompletes."

Grades have been assigned the following numerical values for the purpose of computing the grade point average:

Percentage	Grade	Grade Points
95-100	A	4.0
91-94	A-	3.7
88-90	B+	3.3
84-87	B	3.0
81-83	B-	2.7
78-80	C+	2.3
74-77	C	2.0
71-73	C-	1.7
68-70	D+	1.3
64-67	D	1.0
61-63	D-	0.7
0-60	F	0.0

Grade points per subject are determined by multiplying the grade points assigned to the letter grade earned, times the number of credit hours assigned to the course. A student's semester and cumulative grade-point average are computed by dividing the total grade points earned by the number of attempted hours.



## **Grade Reports and Appeals**

Every student has access to an unofficial copy of his or her transcript through Populi, the seminary's online student management system. Any discrepancy between the transcript and the student's personal record must be brought to the attention of the seminary registrar. Students have a period of six months from the final date of the semester to appeal any grade recorded on their transcript within that same semester. After this six-month period, grades will be considered final.

## **Academic Probation**

At the end of each academic term, a student who fails to maintain the minimum GPA for his or her program (MDiv = 2.3; MA = 2.7; ThM and PhD = 3.0) will receive a notification from the registrar warning the student of the drop in performance, even if the student's cumulative GPA meets the minimum requirement. The student should take this warning seriously and endeavor to raise his or her average to acceptable standards during the following term. A student whose GPA falls below the minimum requirements for graduation will be placed on academic probation and will be given two semesters to raise his or her average to the minimum, or to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the registrar and Academic Dean that significant progress is being made to raise the average to the minimum standard. If sufficient progress is not made, the student will be terminated from the program. Funding sources such as the PRTS Scholarship Committee and/or church support will be promptly notified when a student receiving funds is terminated from a program.

## **Definition of Full-time Status**

Full-time status is determined by a minimum number of hours of coursework to be taken per semester. For MDiv and MA students, at least 12 hours must be taken per semester (or 24 hours per academic year) in order to maintain full-time status; for ThM and PhD students, a minimum of 6 hours must be taken per semester (or 12 hours per academic year) in order to maintain full-time status.

## **Enrollment in Courses**

Enrollment periods for winter/spring courses and summer/fall courses are established as defined in the academic calendar. All

returning students are required to enroll in their desired courses during these two registration periods; most semester-length and modular courses can be enrolled in through Populi, PRTS's online student software. Late enrollment will be penalized at 5% of the total tuition costs. Enrollment in Independent Study courses must be administered by the registrar and are not subject to the late enrollment fee.

### **Visiting Student Status and Auditing Courses**

Students not enrolled in a degree program at PRTS are yet able to take classes for credit at the seminary; they can do so as visiting students. A maximum of 15 credits may be taken as a visiting student at the MDiv/MA level, and a maximum of 6 credits may be taken as a visiting student at the ThM/PhD level. If a prospective student wishes to either audit a class or take it for credit, he or she must first submit an online condensed application; instructions regarding this mini-application can be obtained from the registrar. Classes may be audited at the cost of \$60 per credit hour.

Students who have taken a course which they subsequently wish to audit, may do so free of charge providing there is sufficient room in the class and permission is granted by the instructor. Regular students are not able, however, to first audit a course and then take this course for credit.

### **Distance Learning Program**

Our distance learning program aims to bring the Reformed tradition of biblical, experiential, and Christ-centered theology to as many as are interested, regardless of location. PRTS desires to train future leaders around the world who will serve the church and society with hearts and minds that have been trained for ministry. A limited number of our courses can be taken without coming to the seminary. These courses are the same courses taught in our seminary by our professors.

The credits earned can be applied to our traditional degrees. PRTS uses an online course management system to engage students, facilitate interactions between students, and to distribute course materials.

Tuition for distance education courses is the same as the normal seminary tuition. If it is necessary to drop or withdraw from a course, the refund policy as described in the "Tuition Refund

for Dropped/Withdrawn courses” will apply. Should a certificate student decide to pursue a master’s degree, he or she must go through the application process.

All distance learning classes are overseen by Chris Engelsma, Director of Distance Learning (chris.engelsma@prts.edu or phone/text 616-259-0172).

### **Tuition and Fees**

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary is committed to providing affordable, solid seminary training to its students for the good of the church. Students are charged \$275 per credit hour (\$60 per audited hour). *The tuition rate is subject to change by approval of the faculty.*

Students are invoiced for tuition costs at the beginning of each semester; there are four payment due dates corresponding to the four semester invoicing periods:

- for all courses within the fall semester, tuition is due September 30;
- for all courses within the winter interim, tuition is due January 30;
- for all courses within the spring semester, tuition is due February 28;
- for all courses within the summer interim, tuition is due August 30.

Special fees include the following:

- Application fee: \$50 (non-refundable)
- Accepted student deposit: \$100 (confirming accepted student’s decision to enroll and is applied towards student’s tuition)
- Distance Education fee: \$75.00/course
- 30-day extension for independent study courses: 20% of course’s tuition cost (can only be applied two times per independent study course)
- Late enrollment fee for returning students: 5% of total semester tuition cost.
- Graduation fee of \$75.00 to be charged in student’s final semester. This fee is applied even if the student does not attend the graduation ceremony.

If payment of tuition and fees is not received prior to the beginning of the following semester, or if an approved payment plan is not in place, the student may be prohibited from enrolling in further courses.

The low cost of education at PRTS is part of the seminary's commitment to reach out to others to provide a solid ministerial training for the good of the universal church of Christ Jesus.

Students should also be aware that PRTS has chosen to not administer VA benefits. PRTS does not accept any government funding, including the GI Bill. The seminary believes that receiving government funds could result in regulatory burdens that could potentially jeopardize or compromise biblical principles. In its place, scholarship funds are available for qualifying applicants who are veterans.

### **Tuition Refund of Dropped/Withdrawn Courses**

A student dropping or withdrawing from an individual course may receive the following refund on tuition:

*For traditional semester-length (including distance education) and independent study courses:*

1. Within two weeks, an 80% refund is granted
2. Within four weeks, a 60% refund is granted
3. Within six weeks, a 50% refund is granted
4. After six weeks, no refund is granted.

For modular or intensive courses:

- Within 3-4 weeks prior to the first day, an 80% refund is granted
- Within 2-3 weeks prior to the first day, a 60% refund is granted
- Within 1-2 weeks prior to the first day, a 50% refund is granted
- Within 0-1 week prior to the first day, no refund is granted.

For scholarship students, the above drop/add policy applies.

## **Final Examinations**

Final examinations are given during an announced exam week at the conclusion of each academic term. If applicable, exams for all courses will be administered during each course's regularly appointed time-slot for that semester. Students are expected to take examinations at this time. Excuses for absence from a final examination and requests to reschedule an exam are to be presented to the professor prior to the scheduled time of the examination, unless unforeseen circumstances make prior notice impossible.

## **Commencement and Placement**

A student will be allowed to graduate only after all the program requirements have been met and a graduation checklist form has been completed and submitted to the registrar. Only in rare situations, and with approval of both the academic dean and the registrar, may a student participate in commencement exercises with incomplete coursework. In such cases the student will not be awarded a diploma until all program requirements have been fulfilled. Each student who is eligible to receive a degree is expected to participate in the commencement, unless he or she has compelling reasons for being absent. In such cases, a student will receive the degree in absentia. The date for commencement exercises will typically be the first Friday evening after the last final exam of the spring semester. Seminary regalia will be made available for graduating students.

Faculty and administration happily provide any assistance or necessary paperwork, records, and letters of recommendation to a student who needs them for entrance into another graduate program or a position for which they are qualified.





## **ACADEMIC POLICIES**

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**Drop/Add Policy**

**Withdrawal from Course(s) Policy**

**Withdrawal from Seminary Policy**

**Transfer of Credits**

**Retake Policy**

**Policy for Assignment Extensions**

**Late Submission of Course Assignments Policy**

**Policy for Incompletes**

**Plagiarism Policy**

**Distance Learning Policies**

**Independent Study Policies**

**Policy for Enrolling in a Directed Study**





### **Drop/Add Policy**

A student is able to drop or add a course within an established “grace” period as set in the academic calendar. After the drop/add deadline, a student may no longer enroll in a course. If a student drops a course within this period, the dropped course does not appear on the student’s transcript. The drop/add deadlines are as follows:

- for fall, winter, spring, and summer semesters – 7 days after the start of each semester. These deadlines will be noted in the academic calendar.
- for all independent studies – 7 days after enrollment date.
- for all modular courses – first day of course (a student adding a modular class must attend the first day of that class)

The student should be aware of the tuition refund concerning dropped/withdrawn courses as established in the section entitled “Tuition Refund of Dropped/Withdrawn Course(s).”

### **Withdrawal from Course(s) Policy**

After the Drop/Add deadline, a student may withdraw from a course(s) with the permission of the registrar. The student will be assigned a “W” (withdrawn) on his or her transcript. Written petitions to withdraw from a particular course are to be made by the student to the registrar; furthermore, petitions for withdrawal must be made within the following deadlines:

- for fall, winter, spring, and summer semesters – 6 weeks after the start of each semester. These deadlines will be noted in the academic calendar.
- for all independent studies – 6 weeks after enrollment date.
- for all modular courses – second day of course

Withdrawal under any other circumstance or withdrawal “after”

the withdrawal deadline will result in a failing grade “F” for the course. Exceptions will apply only if approved by the academic dean or registrar.

The student should be aware of the tuition refund concerning dropped/withdrawn courses as established in the section entitled “Tuition Refund of Dropped/Withdrawn Course(s).”

### **Withdrawal from Seminary Policy**

A student planning to withdraw from the seminary should report this intention to the registrar in writing, and is responsible for unpaid bills to the seminary and the bookstore. Should such a student desire to return to the seminary within one academic year of withdrawing, he should notify the registrar and normally need not reapply.

### **Transfer of Credits**

A student seeking transfer credit on the basis of master’s-level course work pursued at another institution should present to the registrar prior to registration an official transcript of the previous work, syllabi of the applicable courses, and a catalog from the other institution containing course descriptions of the work for which credit is requested. Work that has received a “C” or lower, as well as work completed more than 10 years prior to the request will normally not be accepted for transfer. After confirming equivalency of course status with the appropriate professor of the relevant course(s), credit may be granted by the registrar for up to 50 per cent of the program being completed. No credit will be given for coursework completed at the bachelor’s level, though language courses may be waived by successfully passing a language placement exam. In the event that courses completed at the bachelor’s level clearly duplicate courses prescribed in the student’s degree program at PRTS, permission may be given to substitute other equivalent courses. Such substitutions do not reduce the total number of credits required for the completion of the student’s degree program.

### **Retake Policy**

In a course in which a student has received a failing grade, permission may be granted by the professor to take a re-examination or resubmit an assignment of sufficient quality to raise the grade

to a passing grade. Such work must be completed within one month after notification of the failing grade. If the grade is raised to a passing grade, the student receives credit for the course but receives a 0.0 GPA for the course.

Students are permitted to repeat a course in which a grade was earned. When a course with an earned grade of an “F” is repeated, both the failing and second grade figure into the cumulative grade-point average. If a student repeats a course that has been passed, both grades will be shown on the transcript, but only the first grade will factor into the student’s GPA.

### **Policy for Assignment Extensions**

The syllabus for every course designates the dates assignments are due and the penalty that will be imposed on unexcused late submissions. Extensions may be granted on the following basis. The student requesting an extension must submit in writing the reason for his/her inability to meet the deadline of the assignment before the scheduled due date. This request will be submitted to a committee consisting of the Academic Dean, the Registrar, and the Dean of Students. This committee, in consultation with the professor of the course, will consider the validity of the request. If the committee determines that the student’s explanation is valid, it will grant an extension. The professor will have the discretion to set a new due date for the project, although the extension would not normally exceed three weeks after the original date. Only one extension will be granted. If the request for an extension is not granted, the project will be subject to the penalties set for unexcused late submissions.

### **Late Submission of Course Assignments Policy**

In all courses in which theses, papers, reports on assigned readings, or other special assignments are required, either in place of or in addition to a final examination, these written materials must be submitted on or before the date set by the professor in charge.

A student is expected to complete all work within the term. In special circumstances, however, a student may request an incomplete (I), provided that he or she is in agreement with the professor for that course. The incomplete will be removed from the transcript upon completion of the course providing it is within the time frame as expressed in the “Policy for Incompletes.”

Each instructor may deal with late assignments as he sees fit. The standard procedure, however, is that for every day late the student will be penalized by a drop of 0.7 grade points (thus, two days late would reduce the grade by 1.4 grade points, or for example, reduce the grade from an A- to a C+).

A student cannot submit the same or similar assignments for more than one requirement at the seminary, unless the instructor explicitly approves this. Neither can a student use work done for another institution (e.g., undergraduate work) to fulfill assignments in courses at the seminary. If you have questions about a possible overlap of work, please check with your instructor.

### **Policy for Incompletes**

Students who make an incomplete (I) are required to make up or complete their work by the mid-term point of the following semester. If the work is not completed by the required deadline, the "I" will be changed to "F." A student who makes up his work within the required time will receive a grade determined by the instructor. Exceptions to this policy are at the discretion of the Academic Dean.

### **Plagiarism Policy**

Plagiarism is an academic crime that is never acceptable. In serious cases, it is a flagrant sin against the eighth and ninth commandments, and the seminary cannot tolerate it in any of its forms.

There is often confusion among students as to what constitutes plagiarism. At its basic level, plagiarism is taking another person's intellectual property and presenting it as if it were one's own. Practically speaking, it usually involves taking basic units of language (words, phrases, sentences, and paragraphs)—or even thoughts and ideas—without properly accounting for them in footnotes or endnotes. Direct quotations must be indicated by the use of quotation marks and a footnote citation.

It is perhaps easiest to explain with examples. Note the following paragraph taken from Gerald F. DeJong's, *The Dutch Reformed Church in the American Colonies*, Historical Series of the Reformed Church in America No. 5 (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978), 228:

In contrast to some of the English colonies, New Netherland was not founded as a place of refuge for the religiously oppressed, but was established for the specific purpose of

extending the Dutch commercial empire. Nevertheless, the religious needs of the settlers were not overlooked. Numerous letters and other documents of this period attest to the fact that the divines in Holland kept a watchful eye on what transpired across the Atlantic and from an early date fostered the Dutch Reformed Church there. By the time New Netherland fell to the English in 1664, eleven Dutch Reformed congregations had been organized on American soil, all but two of which were located in the colony of New York. The conditions confronting the churches were those of the wilderness frontier: communities were generally isolated, living conditions were harsh, ministerial salaries were irregularly paid, and most of the people were of a rough and boorish background. Nevertheless, despite primitive conditions, most of the ministers were well educated and dedicated men.

The following points, including improper and proper examples of citation from the above paragraph, must be understood concerning plagiarism:

- Plagiarism includes undocumented copying of whole phrases.

*Wrong:* "Numerous letters and other documents of this period attest to the fact that the divines in Holland kept a watchful eye on what transpired across the Atlantic and from an early date fostered the Dutch Reformed Church there."

- Plagiarism includes undocumented copying of the essential substance of a sentence, even though one changes some words.

*Wrong:* "While the English colonies may have been started as a haven for religiously persecuted people, the Dutch colonies were founded for commercial purposes."

*Right:* "As Gerald DeJong argues, unlike their English counterparts, the Dutch colonies were founded for commercial purposes. (footnote)"

- Plagiarism includes copying of a phrase or phrases of another author, even if they are in one's own sentence.

*Wrong:* "Dutch theologians did not ignore the developments across the Atlantic, but kept a watchful eye on what transpired in the colonies."

*Right #1:* “As Gerald DeJong has documented, Dutch theologians did not ignore the developments across the Atlantic, but followed events in the colonies from afar. (footnote)”

*Right #2:* “Dutch theologians did not ignore the developments across the Atlantic, but followed events in the colonies carefully. (footnote)”

- Plagiarism does not include repeating things that are common knowledge, which you might find in a dictionary or encyclopedia, and that anyone could have formulated in that specific manner. These things need not be documented, unless you are doing so at length or you are including definite specifics of your source author. In such a case, you should simply have an opening footnote stating that you are leaning heavily on a particular source.

*Right:* It is unnecessary to footnote: “New Netherland fell to the English in 1664.”

The best way to avoid unintentional plagiarism is to do your research in a methodical way, making adequate notes of your sources so that ideas do not make their way into your mind without your being able to trace them. Follow this general rule: if in doubt, footnote (although one should take care not to over-document).

Instances of plagiarism will be dealt with as follows:

- First offense: The student is spoken to by the professor and/or the Academic Dean and the incident is recorded and entered into the student’s permanent record. The project in question receives a failing grade, and it is at the discretion of the professor to allow an additional assignment to be completed.
- Second offense: In a second case of plagiarism, the student is suspended for one year. Re-admittance to study at PRTS requires the approval of the president of the seminary in consultation with faculty and the Board of Trustees (BOT).
- Third offense: In a third case of plagiarism, the student is expelled from the seminary and will not be permitted to graduate with a degree. Expulsion will proceed as deter-

mined by the faculty committee with the president and approved by the Board of Trustees.

Scholarship students who withdraw or are expelled as a consequence of plagiarism or any other discipline are required to reimburse the seminary 75% of the total funds received in scholarships.

All cases of plagiarism must be referred to the academic dean, who will then consult with the full-time faculty. Each case will be dealt with individually and may not go exactly according to the above-named steps. In a serious offense (intentional, lengthy, etc.) the first step may be skipped. All second and third offenses—and serious first offenses—of plagiarism will be reported, as decided by the president in consultation with the full-time faculty, to the local church consistory (session or council) of which the student is a member, and to the BOT for any additional action. The president, in consultation with the full-time faculty, is to exercise discretion in this area, and the student retains the right to appeal to the BOT.

### **Distance Learning Policies**

Any student not in a regular degree program who desires to take a course via distance learning should submit the “Visiting Student” application available on the seminary website. This will initiate the process of enrolling in your desired course. The student will be billed \$275 per credit hour for the course, as well as a non-refundable distance learning fee of \$75.00. For distance learning students, the refund policy for a dropped/withdrawn course is as follows:

- Within two weeks, an 80% refund is granted
- Within four weeks, 60%
- Within six weeks, 50%
- After six weeks, 0%.

Notification of a dropped or withdrawn course (as outlined in “Drop/Add Policy” and “Withdrawal from Course[s] Policy”) should be provided by submitting a written statement to this effect (email is fine) to the registrar. The appropriate refund will be sent promptly. If a student fails to notify the registrar of a dropped or withdrawn course within the established deadline, an “F” will be noted on the student’s transcript and no refund will be granted.

The distance learning student is subject to all the same

requirements, deadlines, and penalties as set by the instructor for the on-campus students in the course instance.

### **Independent Study Policies**

*For all language courses (online Greek and Hebrew):*

All students enrolled in an online language class have a one month trial period during which they may freely take the course and benefit from the instruction and guidance of the course instructor. After one month has passed, however, the student will be billed \$275 per credit hour for the course, as well as a non-refundable distance education fee of \$75.00. The seminary's drop/add policy (as outlined above) begins to apply after the student's trial month is over.

Notification of a dropped course (as outlined in "Drop/Add Policy" and "Withdrawal from Course(s) Policy") should be provided by submitting a written statement to this effect (email is fine) to the registrar. The appropriate refund will be sent promptly. If a student fails to notify the registrar of a dropped or withdrawn course within the established deadline, an "F" will be noted on the student's transcript and no refund will be granted.

All students have fifty-two weeks (one year) to complete the course(s). If the course is incomplete after this point, the student will be charged a 30-day course extension, assessed at 20% of the course(s) tuition cost. A maximum of two extensions are allowed; if the course is still incomplete after this time, the course will be finalized and any incomplete assignments will receive a failing grade. Should the student request to be withdrawn from the course before the extensions expire, however, a "W" may be granted with the approval of the academic dean.

#### *Non-language Independent Study Courses*

Any student who desires to take any course as an independent study (other than online Greek or Hebrew) must submit the independent study request form to the registrar (forms are available from the registrar or the seminary website). In order to enroll in an independent study, the student and over-seeing professor must agree to a syllabus that establishes the requirements and deadlines of the course. A maximum of 15 credits of independent study courses can apply towards the MA and MDiv degrees, whereas a maximum of 6 credits of independent study courses can apply towards the ThM degree. A student who has received approval to



enroll in an independent study will be billed \$275 per credit hour for the course, as well as a non-refundable distance learning fee of \$75.00. On the date the registrar enrolls the student, the student is considered to have begun the class.

Should the student fail to meet the deadlines as established by the syllabus, the student will be charged a 30-day course extension, assessed at 20% of the course(s) tuition cost. A maximum of two 30-day extensions are allowed; if the course is still incomplete after this time, the student will receive an “F” for the course. Should the student request to be withdrawn from the course before the extensions expire, however, a “W” may be granted with the approval of the academic dean.

The seminary’s policies concerning dropping and withdrawing from a course are effective on the date of enrollment. The refund policy for a dropped/withdrawn course is as follows:

- Within two weeks, an 80% refund is granted
- Within four weeks, 60%
- Within six weeks, 50%
- After six weeks, 0%.

Notification of a dropped course should be provided by submitting a written statement to this effect (email is fine) to the registrar. The appropriate refund will be sent promptly. If a student fails to notify the registrar of a dropped or withdrawn course within the established deadline, an “F” will be noted on the student’s transcript and no refund will be granted; exceptions must be approved by the academic dean. No independent study may exceed 26 weeks in duration.

### **Policy for Enrolling in a Directed Study (PhD and ThM)**

Students may apply for a directed study once the following two criteria are met: 1) the student has completed three (3) courses; and 2) the student has obtained a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.50.

PhD students may apply for a maximum of two (2) directed studies, whereas ThM students may apply for a maximum of one (1) directed study. In no case may the combination of directed studies and independent studies exceed two (2) courses.

#### *Process for Requesting a Directed Study:*

First, a registered student in the PhD or ThM programs should

request the appropriate form from the registrar if he or she is interested in enrolling in a directed study. The student should NOT first contact the individual professor, but make the request either to the registrar or academic dean. After initial approval is given, the student must then work with the overseeing professor (who must be a residential faculty member) to develop an approved syllabus. The syllabus should clearly outline reading requirements (with page numbers), a schedule of meetings between the professor and student, specific assignments with clear due dates, and a relevant bibliography. As much as possible, the syllabus should follow the standard guidelines and workloads as spelled out in the creation of syllabi guidelines. The student is encouraged to contact the registrar for this information, or model the drafted syllabus after another syllabus from a previously taught course.

When the drafted syllabus has been agreed upon by the professor and student, it must be submitted to the academic dean. Once approved, only then will the student be enrolled in the directed study.

A directed study is an opportunity for a student to student in depth a subject area that is not covered by one of the offered courses. This is different than an independent study, which uses the recordings and syllabus of a previously taught course.



## **GENERAL STUDENT POLICIES**

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**Attendance**  
**Student Life and Conduct**  
**Campus Employment**



## GENERAL STUDENT POLICIES

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### **Attendance**

Each student is expected, barring lawful reasons, to attend every class for which he is registered. Absences caused by illness or other justifiable causes will be permitted to a limited extent. Students should not accrue more unexcused absences than the number of course credit hours. Should absences endanger the student's performance in class, the instructor will counsel the student. Further absences will normally result in either the reduction of course grades or expulsion from the course. Unexcused absences may also result in the student being placed on academic probation.

### **Student Life and Conduct**

Our students represent a wide range of ages, previous employments, church backgrounds, and nationalities. The wide variety enriches the atmosphere and culture of the seminary while providing students with many perspectives and occasions for "iron to sharpen iron," to assist each other, and to bear each other up in prayer and support. Chapel is held weekly during the spring and fall semesters to allow for student fellowship and mutual spiritual learning, worship, and prayer.

As a community of future leaders of the Christian church, the seminary seeks to maintain high standards of integrity in all areas of life, including academic work, ministry, and church and community relationships. Given these objectives, the seminary faculty and governing committees expect students to live according to high standards of faith and to use wise judgment in matters pertaining to personal conduct. Students are expected to show maturity in Christ, love for one another, pronounced patterns of devotion and service, and the responsible use of Christian liberty. All members of the seminary community are expected to act in accordance with local, state, and federal laws at all times, whether on or off campus.

The seminary is a smoke-free environment, and is committed to being an institution free of the use of illegal drugs and of the abuse of alcohol. All faculty, staff, and students are required as a condition of employment and/or enrollment not to use illegal drugs or to abuse alcohol. Behavior that is immoral, illegal, or disruptive will result in dismissal.

This standard of behavior is expected to extend into the academic lives of students as well, prohibiting all forms of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism. Plagiarism is an academic crime that is never acceptable; in serious cases, it is a flagrant sin against the eighth and ninth commandments and the seminary cannot tolerate it in any of its forms. There is often confusion among students as to what constitutes plagiarism; students are required to abide by the guidelines and principles presented in the Student Handbook.

### **Campus Employment Policy**

Students employed by the seminary must have permission from their academic advisor. To commence or continue in seminary employment, students must maintain the cumulative minimum GPA required in their program.



## **STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES/INFORMATION**

**Library**  
**Seminary Bookstore**  
**Student Housing**  
**Food Bank**  
**Student Society**  
**Scholarships**  
**Puritan Reformed Journal**  
**Contact**





## STUDENT OPPORTUNITIES/INFORMATION

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### Library

#### *William Perkins Library*

The Williams Perkins Library has about ninety-two thousand titles. Nearly two hundred current periodical subscriptions further support the research needs along with fifteen subscription databases providing primary and secondary source material. Students have access to databases remotely via proxy authentication. Two in-home databases are unique to PRTS: a Puritan Studies Database that is the definitive database on Puritanism's secondary literature. BRS (Bible Reference Search) is a Scripture index allowing users to identify material dealing with specific Scripture references.

Individually lighted and wired study carrels, group study space, and quiet study space make the library an attractive and efficient place to read and write.

The William Perkins Library shares an online library catalog through a cooperative effort with neighboring Cornerstone University Library and Kuyper College. This provides faculty and students with access to the combined collections of 500,000+ volumes. Students can borrow materials from these three libraries at no cost. The William Perkins Library is also part of OCLC which means that its holdings are indexed in the massive *WorldCat* database.

#### *The Puritan Research Center*

The seminary houses the Puritan Research Center in a special climate-controlled room equipped with a Halon fire suppression system. The Puritan Research Center is the culmination of a dream that is decades old and offers exciting possibilities for promoting the appreciation of Reformed and Puritan literature around the world. The Center's aim is to assemble the largest possible collection of resources on the Puritans, including antiquarian books (mostly from the seventeenth century) and modern reprints of

Puritan writings, and secondary source materials on the Puritans such as books, dissertations, articles, and book reviews.

Presently, the collection of Puritan writings is one of the best in the world. Its specialty is a rare collection of antiquarian material, of which numerous titles have only a few known copies in the world. Other volumes are special collector's items due to their former ownership or condition. For example, the Center is home to *The Works of William Perkins*, a three-volume set once owned by Charles Spurgeon, bearing his Pastor's College seal, and later acquired by Arthur W. Pink, whose penciled notations appear throughout. The oldest book in the collection is a title by John Knox that was printed in 1560.

For more information about the William Perkins Library, visit the seminary's website or contact the Library staff at (616) 432-3415.

### **Seminary Bookstore**

The nonprofit ministry of Reformation Heritage Books is housed in the seminary building, serving as a seminary bookstore in addition to its regular business. All of RHB's titles are sold at discounted prices; in addition, students receive 10% off all purchases of used books. Most of the required textbooks are included in their stock. For ordering and more information visit [www.heritagebooks.org](http://www.heritagebooks.org)

### **Student Housing**

The seminary has a welcoming committee established for assisting students in finding suitable accommodations for their time in Grand Rapids. The seminary owns sixteen apartments and two homes on adjacent lots that can be rented by seminary families or by several single students. Off-campus accommodations are available as well; single students may be able to room with a local family, or students may join together to rent an apartment. The welcoming committee can help you find a living arrangement that best suits your needs. Please contact Kim Postma ([kim.postma@prts.edu](mailto:kim.postma@prts.edu)), for further information.

### **Food Bank**

Students can seek assistance from a food bank housed on the property of the seminary where they can obtain free groceries that have been donated from local grocery stores, etc. This option

can save qualifying students and their families thousands of dollars per year. Students should contact the registrar for food bank applications.

### **Student Society**

The PRTS Student Society is a student-led campus group that exists to enrich PRTS students' lives while they attend PRTS. The society has a fourfold mission: to promote Christian growth; to offer Christian fellowship and recreation; to encourage theological reflection; and to foster intellectual development. To accomplish this, the society sponsors spiritual, theological, and intellectual discussions; plans various fellowship and recreational events; and provides opportunities that allow students to take advantage of the rich resources available in the seminary and greater Grand Rapids community. On-campus students are elected to serve on this society. The society is designed to draw the student body closer together through active participation in the events which are separate from the classroom setting.

### **Scholarships**

The seminary's Scholarship Fund collects funds to be distributed as scholarships for students demonstrating financial need and academic potential. Our focus is to help students whose sending church/denomination does not have the resources to finance the student's seminary education. The purpose of this needs-based scholarship program is to provide a medium for donors to give funds specifically for the support of seminarians, and for students to receive funds to assist with their theological education, both to God's praise (Col. 3:23-24).

In order to apply for scholarships, interested students must be accepted into a degree program and meet all of the requirements as listed by the individual scholarship. Upon acceptance, students should request a scholarship application and submit it to the seminary no less than two months prior to the beginning of a semester (June 1 deadline for those applying for the fall semester, November 1 deadline for the spring semester). To be considered for a scholarship, both new and returning students must submit the scholarship application by the semester deadlines (NB: receipt of a scholarship one year is not a guarantee that the student will receive a scholarship the following year). More information and

the scholarship application are available from the seminary's website.



### **Puritan Reformed Journal**

PRTS began publishing its own bi-annual journal in 2009. The subscription price per year for individuals and institutions is \$20.00 in the United States, \$30.00 in Canada (payable in U.S. funds), \$35.00 foreign countries (surface mail). Back issues may be purchased at \$10.00 per copy. Send subscriptions to Mrs. Ann Dykema, PRJ Administrative Assistant, 2965 Leonard St., N.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49525; telephone (616) 432-3404;

e-mail: [ann.dykema@prts.edu](mailto:ann.dykema@prts.edu). Manuscripts and book reviews may be submitted through the seminary website, or sent to the editors, Dr. William VanDoodewaard or Dr. Joel R. Beeke, 2965 Leonard St., N.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49525; telephone (616) 432-3403; e-mail: [joel.beeke@prts.edu](mailto:joel.beeke@prts.edu).

### **Contact**

If you are interested in applying for seminary studies, we welcome your interest in Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. For additional application forms, current course schedules, and upcoming conferences and events, please visit our website at: [www.prts.edu](http://www.prts.edu). Our Admissions Director and other staff members can be reached via phone at (616) 977-0599 or via email at [info@prts.edu](mailto:info@prts.edu).

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## **APPENDIX: The Call to the Ministry**

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## APPENDIX: The Call to the Ministry

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Entering any calling in life should be a serious matter for prayerful consideration, searching of God's Word, and keen observation of providential leadings. This is particularly true of the calling to the ministry, as a minister is called to be God's ambassador to man. This appendix seeks to outline foundational concepts of the ministerial calling and of ministerial training. We commence with a scriptural study on God's standards for the ministry based on 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.

### I. A Scriptural Study on God's Standards for the Ministry

*Note: All words studied below are taken from 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 unless otherwise noted. To benefit more fully from this section, please open to and read these portions of Scripture as you follow these brief word studies.*

#### *Positive Qualifying Traits*

1. *Desire* [1 Tim. 3:1] (*orego* = "desire," *epithumeo* = "desireth") – The first word for desire signifies a mental effort of stretching out for something and longing after it, the stress being placed upon the thing desired. The latter is from the same root as the word that Jesus used in describing the desire He had to partake of the last supper with His disciples and that Paul used when describing his earnest yearning to depart to be with Christ. It signifies desiring earnestly, with the stress being on the inward impulse of the soul rather than on the object desired. Thus, Paul is stating that the call to ministry involves an inward desire for a work which is desired.
2. *Blameless* [1 Tim. 3:2] (*anepileptos*) [1 Tim. 3:10, Titus 1:6-7] (*anenkletos*) – Both words translated blameless necessitate true conversion, for any believer or office-bearer can only be regarded blameless in Christ Jesus. The latter word is the same

as that used in 1 Corinthians 1:8 where the believer will be presented blameless by Christ in the day of the Lord. It means to be unprovable in the righteousness of Christ. The former word means: not open to censure, without reproach.

3. *Husband of one wife* [1 Tim. 3:2] is an attributive genitive and is similar to an adjective which includes not only a command against polygamy, but also against being flirtatious. In other words, the married brother called to the office of ministry should exhibit a morally blameless conduct in the marriage state and be dedicated wholly to his wife.
4. *Vigilant (nephaios)*—In 1 Timothy 3:11 and Titus 2:2 this word is rendered “sober.” Its root, *nepho*, signifies being free from intoxicants and is used in association with *watchfulness*. It infers self-control and self-denial.
5. *Sober* [1 Tim. 3:2] (*sophron*) denotes being of a sound mind; hence self-controlled, sober-minded, temperate, discreet, prudent and sensible.
6. *Of good behavior* [1 Tim. 3:2] (*kosmios*) signifies being orderly, decent, modest—also inwardly; honorable, virtuous, respectable.
7. *Given to hospitality* [1 Tim. 3:2] (*philoxenos*) means hospitable—literally, a lover of caring for strangers.
8. *Apt to teach* [1 Tim. 3:2] (*didaktikos*) means skillful in teaching. The goal of this is shown, for example, in 2 Timothy 2:2 where the Spirit emphasizes the importance of Timothy teaching the principles of Christianity to others who, in turn, will teach still others.
9. *Patient* [1 Tim. 3:3] (*epieikes*) derives from the root meaning clemency, gentleness, equitable, fair, moderate, forbearing, not insisting on the letter of the law. There is a definite legal sense in this word as one looking “humanely and considerately” at the facts of a case, redressing any excessive requisites of justice.
10. *One that ruleth (proistemi) well his own house, having his children in subjection (hupotage) with all gravity (semnotes) [1 Tim. 3:4]/ having faithful (pistos) children not accused of riot (asotia) or unruly (anupotaktos) [Titus 1:6]*
  - a. *proistemi*: rule, have in subjection
  - b. *hupotage*: obedient, submissive to parental rule

- c. *semnotes*: decency, orderliness, performing one's duties well, dignity, being honorable, venerable
  - d. *pistos*: trusting, believing (can also signify in the spiritual sense)
  - e. *asotia*: wastefulness, recklessly extravagant, given up to licentiousness or excessive drinking
  - f. *anupotaktos*: not obedient or subject to rule (i.e., uncontrollable)
11. A good report (*maturia*) of them that are without (*exothern*) [1 Tim. 3:7]
- a. *maturia*: not only witness but by evidence, so a corroborated report (i.e., their life gives proof to the good reputation they have in the world; their life is not just surface or show)
  - b. *exothern*: from without (i.e., from outside of the church)
12. Faithful [2 Tim. 2:2] (*pistos*) – worthy to be believed; reliable; a believer of the gospel
13. A lover of good men [Titus 1:8] (*philagathos*) – a promoter of virtue; loving that which is good
14. Just [Titus 1:8] (*dikaios*) – righteous, a state of being right; right conduct; justified by God
15. Holy [Titus 1:8] (*hosios*) – consecration to God and purity from defilement, stemming from a right relationship with God
16. Temperate [Titus 1:8] (*enkrates*) – self-control; chaste; not loose in morals
17. Holding fast the faithful (*pistos*) Word (*logos*) as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort (*paralaleo*) and to convince (*elegcho*) the gainsayers (*antilego*) [Titus 1:9]
- a. *pistos*: sure, true
  - b. *logos*: here meaning God's Word
  - c. *paralaleo*: literally to call near; to entreat, to invoke, implore, console
  - d. *elegcho*: to admonish, convict, convince, rebuke, reprove
  - e. *antilego*: those that deny, contradict, or oppose the truth

#### Negative Disqualifying Traits

1. Not given to wine [1 Tim. 3:3] (*paroinos*) – addiction to wine or drunkenness

2. *No striker* [1 Tim. 3:3] (*plektes*)—not quarrelsome or pugnacious (not given to fighting, not argumentative)
3. *Not greedy of filthy lucre* [1 Tim. 3:3] (*aischrokerdes*)—not greedy of gain
4. *Not a brawler* [1 Tim. 3:3] (*amachos*)—not fighting; i.e., not contentious
5. *Not covetous* [1 Tim. 3:3] (*aphilagruros*)—not a lover of money; free from the love of money
6. *Not a novice* [1 Tim. 3:6] (*neophutos*)—literally, newly planted; a new convert, inexperienced
7. *Not self-willed* [Titus 1:7] (*authades*)—not self-pleasing; not dominated by self-interest and inconsiderate of others; strongly asserting his own will (opposite of #9 above)
8. *Not soon angry* [Titus 1:7] (*orgilos*)—not prone to anger; not easily provoked to anger; not hot-tempered

### *Conclusion*

These twenty-five qualifications (seventeen of a positive nature; eight of a negative nature) form a formidable and humbling list. Two cautionary notes are in order here.

First, though this list represents a summary list which every minister must strive to live up to by the grace of God, Paul does not intend to state that all ministers must have all these qualities perfectly or be equally strong in each of them. For example, if a minister has one of several children still under his care at home that is not as controlled as the child should be, this does not mean that he is automatically disqualified for the ministry. Rather, Paul directs Timothy that these are the qualities—both positive and negative—he is to look for when he seeks to establish the ministry in different localities.

Secondly, Paul also does not state that all these qualities are of equal weight. For example, to be a brawler might be considered more of a detriment to the ministry than to not possess a substantial degree of hospitality. Paul's point is not that we ought to expect to find perfect men; every minister will have a number of faults and weaknesses, which will be hindrances in his ministry to a smaller or greater degree. Nevertheless, here is a clear scriptural guide of qualities that the called minister must have in some measure and must be pursuing. For example, if a minister may at times

display a temper, God does not mean that he should automatically be rejected for the office of ministry on this ground alone. Two questions would first have to be asked about his temper: First, is it of such a serious degree and persistent nature that it would be a serious impediment to the ministry? If so, the church had better wait to receive such a man for office until he has gained more maturity in controlling his temper. If not, he may be accepted for theological study, but be cautioned to pray for more maturity in this area. Secondly, does he realize his problem and is he praying and striving against it? These would be good signs and would tend to minimize the impediment itself.

## II. How Our Forefathers Viewed the Ministerial Call

We have provided below seven (two in detail) clear outlines that various forefathers provided of the ministerial call. Taken together, these accounts underscore the scriptural qualifications listed above and serve as helpful guides.

*A. The Christian's Reasonable Service* by Wilhelmus à Brakel (1635-1711; a Second Reformation divine and leading representative of practical Reformed orthodoxy in the Netherlands)

### *Internal Call*

Regarding the necessary internal call to the ministry, he writes, "An extraordinary, divine declaration is not an element of this internal commission. God does not do this, or does so only on very rare occasions, and thus one need not wait for this" (vol. 2, p. 121).

He lists the following as elements of an internal call:

1. Knowledge of the office – what it consists of and requires of us in abilities and example
2. Aptitude for this work
  - a. Fundamental knowledge of divine truth
  - b. Experience of divine truths in the heart
3. An extraordinary love for
  - a. Christ
  - b. The church
  - c. Souls
4. Willing to deny all that is of the world

- a. Honor
  - b. Material goods
  - c. Even life itself
5. A great desire for the work (1 Tim. 3:1)
- a. Continual stirrings to give oneself to the Lord
  - b. Concern about whether or not one is called
  - c. Anxiety when ulterior motives are perceived
  - d. Struggles with heaviness of the work and sense of inability
  - e. Nevertheless the stirrings (see a) will overcome all else, helping to clear the sincerity of the desire before the Lord

### *External Call*

The following considerations are given by à Brakel regarding the external call by means of the church:

1. This calling is also not extraordinary in nature
2. The church always retains this authority to call, even calling men from her midst and initiating them into this service.
3. Examination of prospective ministers by the church
  - a. Performed by elders gathered at classical or synodical meetings
  - b. Examination of life, doctrine, and ability was made (2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Tim. 5:22; 1 Tim. 3:10)
  - c. Successful completion of examination led to commission

### *Examination of Call*

Brakel's questions for examination (or self-examination) of prospective ministers:

1. Have I been sent of God, or did I run myself?
2. Do I know what pertains to this office?
3. Was I convinced that I had some aptitude for this as far as external knowledge is concerned, and am I likewise spiritually acquainted with the experience of:
  - a. Regeneration
  - b. Faith
  - c. Hope
  - d. Love

- e. Holiness
  - f. God's dealings with the soul
  - g. Spiritual warfare
  - h. The various conditions of the soul in order to bring forth old and new things out of the treasure of my heart to address everyone according to his condition, and particularly to give everyone publicly and privately his portion by way of personal experience, and to speak from heart to heart
4. Do I have a special love to preach Christ, to be instrumental to the conversion of souls, and to promote the welfare of the church?
  5. Was I continually stirred up in my soul to accept this work?
  6. Has it been my concern whether or not the Lord has sent me, and have I prayed much in order to know this?
  7. Have I at times been desirous not to be engaged in this work, considering the magnitude of this task and my inability?
  8. Were those desires to draw back repeatedly conquered by love for this work, or was I frequently put at ease and confirmed in my intention?
  9. Have I been troubled by ulterior motives which time and again disappeared by perceiving my sincere motive in the presence of the Lord?
  10. Did I perceive a frame of heart by which I was willing to deny myself by parting with material goods, honor, and my life for the Lord Jesus and His church? Or did I only pursue honor and prestige, the acquisition of material goods by which to improve my temporal circumstances, and which outside of this office, would have been poor and insignificant?
  11. Had I advanced in my studies to such a degree that I [simply judged that I] of necessity had to proceed?
  12. Did I ever really examine myself concerning these matters, or did I merely run without such self-examination?

*Qualifications for the Ministry*

Brakel lists the following as qualifications for the ministry:

1. Learning (2 Tim. 3:15; Mat. 13:52; 1 John 1:1, 3)
  - a. Hebrew and Greek most essential; Latin, helpful

- b. Knowledge of philosophy or natural wisdom is helpful (liberal arts education)
  - c. Thorough knowledge of theology an absolute requirement (1 Tim. 4:15)
  - d. Wisdom in using both kinds of knowledge and an aptitude in presenting it in a manner beneficial to others
  - e. Thorough study of Scripture (1 Tim. 4:13)
  - f. Considerable personal experience of religion through the work of the Holy Ghost
2. Apt to teach (1 Tim. 3:2)
  3. Grave, but not pretentious, surly, stern, nor immature
  4. Excel in love for Christ, His cause, and His sheep; for the congregation's spiritual welfare, resulting in much prayer for them (1 Thess. 3:10)
  5. Self-denial—a willingness to sacrifice all for the Lord (Acts 20:24; 21:13)
  6. Diligence (see 1 Tim. 3:1-2) due to the weight and multiplicity of his duties
  7. Be an example (Phil. 3:17; 1 Cor. 11:1; 1 Tim. 4:12)

B. *The Christian Ministry* by Charles Bridges (1794-1869; sound English commentator, author, and pastor—a prominent member of the evangelical party in the Anglican church)

In Bridges's day, the church asked ministerial applicants, "Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this office?"

#### *Examination of Call*

Bridges provides the following guideline for self-examination for those who believe they are being called to the ministry. If the calling is from above, the Holy Spirit will influence the heart in the following ways:

1. Enlighten the heart under a deep impression of the worth of souls
2. Constrain the soul by the love of Christ to "spend and be spent for Him"



3. Direct the conscience to a sober, searching, self-inquiry (self-examination)
4. Prompt a regular study of the Word
5. Instill fervent prayer in reference to this great matter
6. Cause a careful observation of the providential indications of the Master's will in this calling

### *Marks of a Ministerial Calling*

According to Bridges, scriptural marks of a calling to the ministry include the following:

1. A desire for the work
  - a. As exhibited in Jesus' ministry (Prov. 8:31; Psalm 40:8/ Heb. 10:5-9; John 4:32-34)
  - b. As exhibited in the disciples (1 Tim. 3:1)
  - c. Being something beyond the general Christian desire to promote the glory of God (Jer. 20:9; Isa. 6:8)
  - d. Rising above all difficulties, taking pleasure in sacrifices for the work's sake, and quickening to a readiness of mind, all tempered by a consciousness of our unfitness and unworthiness for the work
  - e. A "considerate" desire, involving a matured calculation of the cost made over some time
  - f. A "disinterested" desire—i.e., a pure intention, uninfluenced by love of literature, desire for ease from our secular calling, desire for esteem or respectability, desire for worldly comfort
  - g. Aiming for nothing but souls, rather winning one soul to Christ than a world to ourselves
  - h. Devoting all our talents to the service of God—"to live, to labour, and to possess nothing, but for Jesus Christ and His Church"
  - i. Personal and consistent piety is not a mark, of itself, that indicates this calling, but should be a general mark of every Christian
2. A competent measure of ministerial gifts
  - a. As exhibited in Jesus' ministry (Ps. 45:7/Isa. 11:2-4, 42:1, 61:1; John 3:34)
  - b. Not only "faithful men" are called but also those "faithful

- men which shall be able to teach others also" (2 Tim. 2:2; cf. 1 Tim. 3:2; 2 Tim. 2:24; 2 Cor. 3:6)
- c. Not necessarily extraordinarily gifted men, yet not lacking necessary gifts
  - d. Conscientiously improving our natural gifts through prayer and study
3. Providential guidance—Bridges suggests a few examples of how the Lord might providentially direct to this calling:
- a. Providentially disposing of a person's circumstances, thoughts, inclinations, and studies to this end
  - b. The disappointment of his plans for a future course in life or the closing of providential avenues to other callings
  - c. Unlooked-for openings in the church
  - d. Some particular crisis in the individual sphere or family circumstances
  - e. The judgment of Christian friends, and especially of experienced ministers
  - f. He concludes this consideration of providential dealings by stating, "One or more of these may prove the 'word behind him saying—This is the way, walk ye in it.'"

#### *Qualifications for the Ministry*

In a separate chapter, Bridges lists these ministerial qualifications:

1. Holiness (Titus 1:8)
  - a. self-denial
  - b. love to the Savior and souls of men
  - c. blameless consistency of conduct
  - d. experienced (not a novice [newcomer] to experimental matters)
2. Acquaintance with scriptural and doctrinal knowledge "beyond a bare sufficiency for personal salvation" (Mal. 2:7; Mat. 13:52)
3. The ability to communicate and apply this knowledge to others (2 Tim. 2:15; 1 Cor. 4:1)—to be able to speak "in a manner suitable to the dignity of the pulpit, and yet plain to the weakest capacity"
4. Clear thinking, ability to arrange matter, aptitude of expression, familiar and appropriate illustration

C. *Letters of John Newton (1725–1807)*—renowned Anglican clergyman and hymn writer.

Newton asserted the call to the ministry to include the following three requisites:

1. A warm and earnest desire to be employed in the ministry.
2. “Besides this affection, desire, and readiness to preach, there must in due season appear some competent sufficiency as to gifts, knowledge, and utterance.”
3. An “opening in Providence, by a gradual train of circumstances pointing out the means, the time, the place, of actually entering upon the work.”

D. *Lectures to My Students* by Charles H. Spurgeon (1834–1892), renowned English Baptist preacher.

Spurgeon affirmed his agreement with Newton’s three points, but set out his own view in the following points:

1. “An intense, all-absorbing desire for the work.” This desire must be: (a) thoughtful; (b) unselfish; (c) continuing.
2. “There must be aptness to teach and some measure of the other qualities needful for the office of a public instructor.”
3. “After a little exercise of his gifts...he must see a measure of conversion-work going on under his efforts.”
4. His “preaching should be acceptable to the people of God.”

E. *The Thought of the Evangelical Leaders* by Rev. J. Venn (1759–1813)—Anglican clergyman

1. The call of the Spirit, which consists in His giving a man grace, and a desire, accompanied by great humility and diffidence.
2. Some external fitting.
3. A legal designation of the church.

F. *Discussions: Evangelical and Theological*, vol. 2, by Dr. Robert L. Dabney (1820–1898)—conservative southern Presbyterian theologian

After defining the call to the ministry as “an expression of the

divine will that a man should preach the gospel," Dabney provides the following particulars:

1. "A call to preach is not complete until the Holy Spirit has uttered it, not only in the Christian judgment of the candidate himself, but in that of his brethren also."
2. The Spirit will employ the principles of Scripture to instruct him and his brethren as to the divine will in this matter.
3. God will make known His will also through "outward circumstances and qualifications viewed in the light of Scripture truth."
4. "He must have a hearty and healthy piety, a fair reputation for holiness of life, a respectable force of character, some Christian experience, and aptness to teach."
5. "An abiding and strong desire for this special work."
6. A sense of the needs of the church.
7. "Prayer must be fervently and incessantly offered."

*G. Preaching and Preachers* by Dr. Martyn Lloyd-Jones (1900-1981) – pastor of London's Westminster chapel, prolific author; regarded by many conservatives as the greatest 20th-century Reformed preacher

Dr. Lloyd-Jones affirms the following regarding the ministerial call:

1. "A call generally starts in the form of a consciousness within one's own spirit."
2. It is "accentuated through the influence of others."
3. It "develops and leads to a concern about others."
4. "There should also be a sense of constraint."
5. "A sense of diffidence, unworthiness, inadequacy."
6. He must be "sent by the church."

Dr. Lloyd-Jones states that the church must look for the following qualifications:

1. A man who is "filled with the Spirit."
2. He must have "knowledge of the Truth and his relationship to it."

3. He must have a good “character”: godliness, wisdom, patience, gentle, etc.
4. He must have an understanding of people and of human nature.
5. He must have natural intelligence and ability.
6. He must have “the gift of speech.”

#### H. Conclusion: Essential Elements of the Ministerial Call

Summarizing all of the above (i.e., the scriptural qualifications of section 2 and our forefathers’ assessments of the ministerial call in this section), we may conclude that the ministerial calling is a holy calling which necessarily involves the following:

1. *Holy life*—Prerequisite to the call itself, and flowing out of genuine conversion, there must be attributes of godliness manifest in the called brother’s life, such as are found in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1 (see section 2 above). He must also be exercising these principles of godliness in his family relationships.
2. *Holy desire*—Wholehearted desire for the work of the ministry worked by the Holy Spirit through Scripture and providence. Some of God’s servants are called more through the application of specific texts or scriptural passages; others are called more through intervening acts of providence, directing them and burdening them with an intense commitment towards and desire for the ministry. In either case, one’s call must be in conformity to Scripture and be strengthened by the timing and circumstances of providence which bring the brother to a point where he can no longer refrain from giving himself to the work of the ministry.
3. *Holy motivation*—The call must be motivated by a love for the glory of God, the proclamation of the gospel in Christ Jesus, the burden of and love for souls, and the need of the church.
4. *Holy compulsion*—There must be a growing sense of Spirit-worked compulsion for this work: “Woe unto me if I preach not the gospel!” This compulsion will involve a sense of self-denial and an earnest desire to live wholeheartedly to God.
5. *Holy fitness*—There must be some measure of ministerial and speaking gifts, some aptness to teach, some spiritual maturity

- (in the experience of one's own misery, deliverance, and gratitude), some knowledge of Scripture, some knowledge of doctrinal and spiritual matters, some gift of prayer, some awareness of human nature and understanding of people.
6. *Holy struggles*—The ministerial call will not be worked out without strife and continual self-examination. Intense struggles concerning the ministerial call are commonplace:
    - a. struggles with surrendering to the work,
    - b. with the weightiness of the work,
    - c. with Satan's devices aimed to thwart the call,
    - d. with one's unworthiness for and inability to do that work,
    - e. with the need for confirmation of the call itself.
  7. *Holy confirmation*—The inward call is confirmed (a) commonly by the approbation of God's people, and (b) always must be confirmed by a congregation's actual call to the brother who has completed his seminary training. Question 1 of our minister's ordination form asks: "Whether thou feelest in thy heart that thou art lawfully called of God's Church, and therefore of God Himself, to this holy ministry?" The call of the church is also part of the brother's call to the ministry. Thus, the call is a gradual process which does not culminate until the brother's ordination; in fact, this call is in process of being fulfilled throughout his entire ministerial life.
  8. *Holy Spirit*—It ought to be noted that although this list may be helpful in listening to and evaluating a ministerial call, the call itself cannot be reduced to a mere list of items. In the final analysis, the call is the work of the Holy Spirit in each one of the points listed above. He alone must and will fulfill the ministerial call He plants and nourishes in His own time and way.