

2015–16 Academic Catalog



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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.

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,

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: The 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.

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 three appointees from the Free Reformed Churches of North America (FRC), and seven members appointed by the Synod of the Heritage Reformed Churches (HRC). 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 VanDoodewaard](#) 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.

The faculty is also supported by a growing administrative staff. Currently, Mr. Jonathon Beeke serves as Registrar and Director of Admissions, Mrs. Ann Dykema serves as Administrative Secretary and Finances, Mr. Chris Engelsma serves as Director of Distance Learning, Mr. Chris Hanna as Director of Marketing and Development, Mr. Seth Huckstead as IT Director, Mr. Henk Kleyen as Vice President for Operations, and Mrs. Laura Ladwig as head librarian.

From 1995 until the present, PRTS has graduated approximately ninety 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.

Programs, Accreditation, and Licensing

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary offers three programs designed to meet the needs of church and ministry: the Master of Divinity (MDiv) degree, the Master of Arts (Religion) degree, and the Master of Theology (ThM) 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) ([see here for more information](#)). Any issues related to PRTS's ATS accreditation status may be communicated to the ATS Accreditation Coordinator, James Beeke at jimbeeke@shaw.ca or (604) 794-7109. 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.

We are also a charter member of the Association of Reformed Theological Seminaries (ARTS), and are subject to the standards of that organization. ARTS oversees a number of Reformed seminaries in North America that adhere to the Three Forms of Unity or the Westminster Standards.

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

Full-time faculty

[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 Free Presbyterian Church of North America. 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. Dr. Barrett has had an active role in the ministry of the Free Presbyterian Church since its inception in North America. 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 Netherlands Reformed Congregation in Grand Rapids, Michigan, editor of *Banner of Sovereign Grace Truth*, editorial director of Reformation Heritage Books, president of Inheritance Publishers, and vice-president of the Dutch Reformed Translation Society. He has written, co-authored, or edited eighty books (most recently, *The Reformation Heritage KJV Study Bible*, *A Puritan Theology: Doctrine for Life*, *Encouragement for Today's Pastors*, *Developing Healthy Spiritual Growth*, *Prepared by Grace for Grace: The Puritans on God's Ordinary Way of Leading Sinners to Christ*), and contributed a few thousand 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.

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* as well as *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 13 years, where he established a significant youth program. He is a regular contributor of articles for youth in the *Banner of Sovereign Grace Truth*. He and his wife Donna have five children: Rachel, Micah, Nathan, Caleb, and Hannah.

Dr. [David Murray](#) is Professor of Old Testament and Practical Theology at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. He is also pastor of Grand Rapids Free Reformed Church. He was a pastor in Scotland for 12 years before accepting a call to teach at Puritan Reformed Seminary in 2007. He has a Doctor of Ministry degree from Reformation International Theological Seminary for his work relating Old Testament Introduction studies to the pastoral ministry. He is the author of *Christians Get Depressed Too*, *How Sermons Work*, *Jesus on Every Page*, and *The Happy Christian*. You can read his blog at www.HeadHeartHand.org/blog or follow him on Twitter

@davidpmurray. David is married to Shona and they have five children ranging from 1 to 18 years old, and they love camping, fishing, boating, and skiing in the Lake Michigan area.

Dr. [William VanDoodewaard](#) is Professor of Church History at Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary. Previously he taught at Patrick Henry College, near Washington, D.C., and at Huntington University in Indiana. He earned his PhD in church history from the University of Aberdeen. He has contributed to a number of books, and is the author of two: *The Marrow Controversy and Seceder Tradition: Atonement, Saving Faith, and the Gospel Offer in Scotland (1718–1799)* and *The Quest for the Historical Adam: Genesis, Hermeneutics and Human Origins*. An ordained minister in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church, he currently serves as a minister at Holy Trinity Presbyterian Church in Grand Rapids.

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. Laurens W. Bilkes is Adjunct Professor of Pastoral and Contemporary Theology. Dr. Bilkes holds a Doctor of Philosophy as well as a Master of Philosophy in Theological Ethics from the Theological University of Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Apeldoorn, the Netherlands. He also holds a Bachelor of Divinity from Calvin Seminary. He was editor of the Free Reformed Theological Journal, and served as the pastor of the Free Reformed Church of Grand Rapids, Michigan.

Dr. Anthony Curto is Associate Professor of Practical Theology in Missions & Apologetics at Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary. He has a BA from Southern California College, an MA from Westminster Theological Seminary, an MDiv from Westminster Seminary California, and a DMin from Westminster Seminary California. Dr. Curto has long served in the pastorate and foreign missions: he served as pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church, California from 1980–1988; pastor of Covenant Community Church (OPC) from 1988–1994; Regional Home Missionary, Presbytery of Southern California (OPC) from 1994–1995; Missionary Evangelist in Uganda, East Africa (OPC) from 1995–2004; and Missionary Evangelist in Ethiopia from 2002–present. Dr. Curto is author of *Preaching in the Marketplace* (1996, DMin project), a contributing author to *New Horizons*, and a contributing editor to the magazine *Antithesis*.

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 Churches 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 3 years. He has 18 years of experience teaching Bible in a secondary school in New Jersey as well as over 12 years of experience as pastor in Jordan Station, Ontario, and Chilliwack, British Columbia. He is the author of *The Practical Theology of Wilhelms à Brakel*, and has translated several Dutch books into English, including à Brakel's *The Christian's Reasonable Service* (4 vols.).

Dr. Sinclair Ferguson is Adjunct Professor of Systematic Theology. A graduate of the University of Aberdeen, Scotland, he is the author of some two dozen books, has authored numerous articles and has contributed to various symposia. His writing interests have ranged from works of scholarship to books for children. He has served as minister of two congregations in Scotland, one on Unst, the most northerly inhabited island in the United Kingdom, and the other at the center of Glasgow, the largest city in Scotland. Currently, he is the Senior Pastor at First Presbyterian Church in Columbia, SC. He has served more than twenty years as a seminary professor and is currently on the faculty of Redeemer Seminary in Dallas, Texas as well as part time faculty of Westminster Seminary in Philadelphia.

Dr. W. Robert Godfrey is Adjunct Professor of Church History. He has taught church history at Westminster Seminary California since 1981. He taught previously at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Stanford University, and Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia. His MDiv is from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary; his MA and PhD are from Stanford University. He is the third president of Westminster Seminary California and a minister in the United Reformed Churches. He has spoken at many conferences and is the author of *An Unexpected Journey*, *Reformation Sketches*, *Pleasing God in Our Worship*, and *God's Pattern for Creation*. He has written chapters or articles on a variety of theological topics for many journals and books.

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. Ken Herfst is Visiting Instructor of Missiology. He graduated from McMaster University in Ontario and received his Master of Divinity from the Theological College of the Canadian Reformed Churches. He served as a missionary of the Free Reformed Churches from 1991–2002 in Guatemala. From 2002–2004, he worked as a domestic missionary on Vancouver Island, British Columbia; he then returned to Guatemala to become director of the missions department

at Seminario Evangelico Presbiteriano. In addition to his services in Guatemala, he serves several months of each year as a missionary to Hispanic communities in Ontario, Canada.

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* (Reformation Trust, 2012), *Why Believe in God?* (P&R, 2011), and *Welcome to a Reformed Church* (Reformation Trust, 2010) as well as co-edited *Planting, Watering, Growing: Planting Confessionally Reformed Churches in the 21st Century* (RHB, 2011). He has also contributed to several books and written articles in *American Theological Inquiry*, *Calvin Theological Journal*, *Mid-America Journal of Theology*, *Puritan Reformed Journal*, and *The Confessional Presbyterian*. He is also a member of the theological advisory council for the international agency, Word & Deed.

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* (2000), and the author of several books, including *Bound Choice, Election, and Wittenberg Theological Method* (Eerdmans, 2005), (with Charles P. Arand) *The Genius of Luther's Theology* (Baker Academic, 2008), and *Martin Luther, Confessor of the Faith* (Oxford University Press, 2009).

Rev. David Kranendonk is Visiting Instructor of Systematic Theology. He currently pastors the Free Reformed Church of Bornholm, Ontario. He received his BA from McMaster University, MDiv from Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary, and ThM from Calvin Seminary; he is also pursuing further studies at the Theological University of Apeldoorn, the Netherlands. He serves as chairman of Bonisa Mission and editor of the *To Keep it Holy* magazine. 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*.

Dr. Richard Muller is Adjunct Professor of Historical Theology. He holds the P.J. Zondervan Chair of Doctoral Studies as Professor of Historical Theology at Calvin Seminary. His PhD is from Duke University. He is the author of more than 200 articles, reviews, and books, and has established himself as a leading authority on Protestant scholasticism. He is often invited to lecture at seminaries and conferences around the world.

Dr. Robert W. Oliver is Adjunct Professor of Church History. He holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Church History from the Council for National Academic Awards, United Kingdom. He also holds a post-graduate certificate of Education in Education Theory and Practice from the University of Nottingham, United Kingdom, and a Bachelor of Arts from the University of London, in London, United Kingdom. He served for many years as pastor of a Reformed church in Bradford-on-Avon, England. He has also written a history of the English Calvinistic Baptists.

Dr. Joseph A. Pipa, Jr. is a graduate of Belhaven College and Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, and received a Ph.D. from Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Dr. Pipa has over twenty years of pastoral experience in Mississippi, Texas, and California. He was also Associate Professor of Practical Theology and Director of Advanced Studies at Westminster Theological Seminary California from 1990–1997 before becoming the first president of Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Taylors, South Carolina. Dr. Pipa continues to serve as both Professor of Historical & Systematic Theology and President of GPTS.

Rev. Gerald Procee is Visiting Instructor of Historical and Systematic Theology at PRTS. He served as pastor of the Free Reformed Church of Hamilton, Ontario for 22 years before moving to the Netherlands in 2012 to pastor a church. He serves on the board of the relief organization Come Over and Help. Rev. Procee holds a Master of Business Administration in Information System Development from the State University of Groningen in the Netherlands, as well as a Master of Divinity and a Master of Theology degree from the Theological University of Christelijke Gereformeerde Kerken in Apeldoorn, the Netherlands. He has written Holy Baptism: The Scriptural Setting, Significance, and Scope of Infant Baptism and is a regular contributor to The Messenger.

Rev. Cornelis Pronk is Visiting Instructor of Church History and Systematic Theology. He holds a Bachelor of Divinity and Masters of Theology in Historical Theology from Calvin College and Seminary, as well as a Bachelor of Arts in English and Philosophy from McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario. After having served several Free Reformed churches in North America for decades, he is now an emeritus minister of that denomination and resides in Ontario. Along with numerous published articles, he is the author of Expository Sermons on the Canons of Dort, and the translator of several books. He served for more than thirty years as radio pastor of the Banner of Truth broadcast.

Rev. Maurice J. Roberts is Visiting Instructor of New Testament. He has a Bachelor of Divinity from the University of London and a Bachelor of Arts as well as a teaching degree from the University of Durham. He has served in the ministry and as teacher since 1960; recently, he retired as pastor of the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing) in Inverness. He is the former editor of The Banner of Truth and has authored several books, including The Thought of God. He frequently speaks at conferences around the world.

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. 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. Geoff Thomas is Adjunct Professor of Historical Theology. He has been the minister of Alfred Place Baptist Church in Aberystwyth, Wales, since 1965. He has served as the chairman of the Grace Churches of England and Wales, and of the Association of Evangelical Churches of Wales; he presently serves as an Associate Editor of the *Banner of Truth* magazine and is the major contributor of articles and reviews for their website. He is the author of several hundred articles and several books, and is a frequent speaker at worldwide conferences. He is a graduate of the University College of Cardiff, Wales, and earned a Master of Divinity degree from Westminster Theological Seminary. He also received an honorary doctorate from WTS in 2011.

Dr. Daniel Timmer is Adjunct Professor of Biblical Studies. A graduate of PRTS (MA), he obtained the ThM and PhD degrees with a specialization in Old Testament from Trinity Evangelical Divinity School in Deerfield, Illinois. He served as Professor of Biblical Studies at FAREL, Faculté de théologie réformée, in Montreal, Quebec, and is currently serving as associate professor of Old Testament at Reformed Theological Seminary, Jackson, Mississippi. He has published articles on the ancient Near East, the Old Testament, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and biblical theology, and served as a ruling elder in the Eglise Réformée du Québec.

Dr. Carl R. Trueman is Professor of Historical Theology and Church History at Westminster Theological Seminary (Philadelphia), where he also serves as Vice President for Academic Affairs. He formerly served on faculties at the Universities of Nottingham and Aberdeen (UK). He has an MA from the University of Cambridge and a PhD from the University of Aberdeen. His publications include *Luther's Legacy: Salvation and English Reformers, 1525–1556* (Oxford University Press); *The Claims of Truth: John Owen's Trinitarian Theology* (Paternoster); and *John Owen: Reformed Catholic, Renaissance Man* (Ashgate). He is a member of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church.

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). Chad has lectured at RTS DC since 2008 where he teaches church history and practical theology.

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 Presbyterian Seminary 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.

Dr. Jason Zuidema, PhD (2006) in Religious Studies, McGill University, is Dean and Professor of Historical Theology at Farel Reformed Theological Seminary in Montreal Quebec. He is editor of *French-Speaking Protestants in Canada* (Leiden: Brill, 2011), co-author of *Early*

French Reform (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011) and author of *Peter Martyr Vermigli (1499–1562) and the Outward Instruments of Divine Grace* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2008). Dr. Zuidema is an ordained minister in the Église réformée du Québec.

Admission Procedures

Admission

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary considers applications from interested students who affirm their agreement with 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) or ThM degrees.

PRTS accepts applications year-round. To begin the online application process, please visit 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.

Alternatively, you may complete the application in hard copy form; please mail the general application form, together with all applicable requested documents (your academic and church references, transcripts reflecting all post-secondary education, application essays, TOEFL scores, and admission fee), to PRTS.

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 letters of recommendation: an ecclesiastical letter of recommendation from the pastor or consistory (i.e., session or council) of the church of which the applicant is a member, and an academic letter of recommendation from a college professor under whose guidance the applicant has pursued studies. Both letters should reflect on the Christian character of the applicant and the purpose of his study (see our website for reference forms). In certain circumstances, the academic dean or president may approve obtaining letters of recommendation 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,

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 (ThM applicants only). All ThM 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 230 or higher on the computerized TOEFL, 575 on the paper-based TOEFL, and 90 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 will be applied as a credit towards tuition if the applicant is accepted.

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 six times a year 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 2 years; 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 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. At graduation, a formal degree will not be given to those without a prior bachelor's degree; such students will receive a diploma rather than a degree.

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 academic dean 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 (MA, MDiv, or ThM) 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

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)

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 Reformed Theological Research (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)
- 324 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)
- 516 Homiletics III: Sermon Preparation for Special Services (2 credits)

- 521-526 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)
- 626-628 (or 629) Ministry Practicum I-III (3 credits)

Missiology (600-number courses) – 4 required credits

- 631 Foundations of Reformed Missions (2 credits)
- 632 Evangelism and Church Planting (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 Reformed Theological Research 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 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 president and 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 Reformed Theological Research (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:

- 324 Puritan Theology (2 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)
- 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 Reformed Theological Research (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:

- 324 Puritan Theology (2 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)
- 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) – 21 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 Reformed Theological Research (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:

- 324 Puritan Theology (2 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)
- 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 (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) – 16 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 Reformed Theological Research (1 credit) – to be taken in student's first semester
- 3 additional credits from any Historical Theology course (3 credits)
 - These 3 credits may include ThM-level courses; special permission must be granted

Systematic Theology (400-number courses) – 20 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)

Ten credits from the following:

- 324 Puritan Theology (2 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)
- 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 24-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. Research will not be necessary for answering these questions. Rather, the questions will be designed to allow the student to draw upon the course work and any research materials.

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. One copy of the final, corrected thesis must be submitted prior to graduation to the seminary librarian, whom the student should previously consult regarding proper form and procedure.

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. Turabian (current edition), and is to be between 7,500 and 12,500 words in length (excluding notes and bibliography).

Reformed Theological Research (322) and English Grammar and Syntax (099)

All incoming MA students should be aware that Reformed Theological Research 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) – 31 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.

It is recommended that applications for admission to the ThM degree program at PRTS be received by the registrar's office by May 1 for the fall semester and by September 1 for the spring semester. Online applications can be initiated through the seminary's website at www.prts.edu. Applications received after either of these dates may also be considered; we cannot, however, ensure that immigration forms for international students will be satisfactorily processed should the applicant be admitted after the dates given.

Applicants to the ThM should include in their application packet:

- A completed PRTS application for admission.
- Evidence of the possession of a Master of Divinity Degree or its equivalent. If, at the time of application, the applicant has not completed his previous degree work, any admission to PRTS would be conditional on the completion of the degree. Evidence of this degree should be presented prior to enrolling in any ThM coursework.

- An academic writing sample, preferably a research paper previously submitted in a graduate-level course.
- A letter of recommendation from a former instructor (preferably in the area specified as the major for the ThM degree), indicating ability and promise for the ThM program.
- A letter of recommendation from a minister or, in the absence of a minister, the consistory or equivalent (session, council, board) of the student's local church. This letter should indicate, among other things, membership in good standing in this local church. Also helpful, though not required, is a letter of a denominational leader or body, indicating the usefulness of this course of study for this individual, and the body of which he is a part.

ThM Requirements

322 Reformed Theological Research

All ThM students must successfully complete (B- or better) 322 Reformed Theological Research. Reformed Theological Research is offered every fall semester as a modular course; it is strongly recommended that students complete this course as their first course (or in conjunction with their first three-credit course). It should be noted that 322 must be completed on campus; there is no distance learning equivalent.

Concentrations and coursework requirements

A total of 31 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).

If a ThM student, admitted to the classes only track, desires during the program to pursue a ThM by the classes and thesis track, the student may apply to the faculty for permission to do so providing the successful completion of at least one 3-credit ThM course. The student should then pursue the thesis track by presenting a thesis proposal of approximately five pages outlining the originality, viability, and potential of the thesis to his academic advisor. The application will then

be brought forward for faculty consideration. Admission to the thesis track requires approval of both the general faculty, as well as that of the faculty member who would serve as thesis supervisor.

All students admitted to the ThM by classes and thesis track will complete 25 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 31 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 be asked to fulfill a higher standard of course requirements, amounting to no less than 30% more work. Normally, the ThM student choosing this option will not take introductory MDiv/MA courses;
- Completion of ThM-specific courses. Special ThM level classes will be offered in the above-mentioned concentrations (see course descriptions below). These classes may be offered as individual classes, or special tutorial seminars. These seminars will meet five times for three hours, either as a module, or throughout a semester.
- 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 required to audit one MDiv course a semester, the course to be chosen in consultation with the faculty. 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, matriculating in the program as of the fall semester of the 2013–14 academic year, 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).

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)
- 324 Puritan Theology (3 credits)
- Final Project (3 credits)

Course Descriptions

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](#) or [Michael Barrett](#)

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.

162 Old Testament Seminar (1 credit) / 163 Old Testament Seminar (3 credits) – staff

A seminar treating a specific theme or book of the Old Testament. It may be based on the English text or the Hebrew text. If based on the Hebrew text, OT 111-112 or equivalent is required, unless special permission is granted by the instructor.

New Testament

201 Greek I (3) – staff

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) – staff

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) – [Gerald Bilkes](#) or [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. Prerequisite: 111, 112, 201, and 202.

261 New Testament Seminar (1 credit) / 262 New Testament Seminar (3 credits) – staff

A seminar treating a specific biblical topic or theme, or a book of the New Testament. If based on the Greek text, NT 201-202 or equivalent is required, or special permission from the instructor.

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 Reformed Theological Research (1) – [Joel Beeke](#), 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.

324 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.

325 Post-Reformational Theological Leaders (2) – Bartel Elshout, Michael Haykin

A study of Wilhelmus à Brakel and Jonathan Edwards. Looks first at a historical assessment of à Brakel's life and ministry and a study of his magnum opus, *The Christian's Reasonable Service*, with special emphasis upon the experiential and practical applications of his theology. Secondly, introduces students to the doctrinal, experiential, ethical, and philosophical thought of Edwards, America's greatest theologian, with an emphasis on his formative role in shaping subsequent American theology and spirituality through his most important treatises and sermons. Particular attention is paid to Edwards's conception of the Trinity.

326 Post-Reformational Dutch Theological Traditions (3) – Cornelis Pronk

Studies the Nadere Reformatie or Dutch Further Reformation covering the period between the mid-16th and late-18th centuries, setting this movement in the wider context of Reformed Pietism, particularly English Puritanism, and highlighting both similarities and differences between these closely related movements. The theology of some leading representatives of the Dutch Further Reformation will be examined, especially their views on the church, Holy Scripture, and the work of the Holy Spirit. Next, this course includes an examination of the main representatives of the Secession from the Dutch State Church in the 19th century, such as H. de Cock, A. Brummelkamp, and H. P. Scholte, and their theological contributions.

327 Post-Reformational British Theological Traditions (2) – [William VanDoodewaard](#), Robert Oliver

Covers Scottish Presbyterianism and English Non-conformity. The study of Scottish Presbyterianism gives special attention 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 prominent theologians. English Non-conformity is studied in light of its role in English religious life since the Reformation, tracing its development before it experienced the impact of the Great Awakening. Special attention will be paid to three threats which led to the following controversies: Neonomianism, Arianism, and hyper-Calvinism.

328 Covenant Theology (2) – [Joel Beeke](#)/[Gerald Bilkes](#)

An overview of the historical development of covenant theology in continental and British Reformed thinking. Attention will be paid to some of the biblical concepts underlying the idea of covenant, the question of internal or external covenantal holiness, and the struggle related to the consequences of some of these views in the Dutch churches after the 1834 Secession.

329 Contemporary Theology & Preachers (2) – Laurens Bilkes, Geoff Thomas

A critical examination of liberal Protestant theology from Schleiermacher to Barth with special attention to the fundamental principles of this departure from the faith and to the distinctive views of the leading theologians, including Schleiermacher, Ritschl, Herrmann, Troeltsch, Harnack, Kierkegaard, and Barth. Also a study of the lives, preaching, and theology of

influential Reformed British preachers such as John Murray, D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones, and Iain Murray.

Systematic Theology

401 Basic Systematic Theology: The Compendium (1) – [Joel Beeke](#)

An introductory course on Reformed theology for students with a weak background in theology. The course is based on The Compendium, a shortened form of the Heidelberg Catechism compiled by Herman Faukeel in 1611 and later recommended by the Synod of Dort.

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) – [Joel Beeke](#)

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) – [Joel Beeke](#) or [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) – Anthony Curto

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.

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.

433 Critical Thinking for Ministry (1) – Joey Pipa

The principles and evidence to test both inductive and deductive inferences. Students will learn to identify the informal fallacies of reasoning as well as the nature of propositions and their use in reasoning.

441 Symbolics: Creeds & Confessions (3)

*441b The Three Forms of Unity (2) – Gerald Procee

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

*441c The Westminster Standards (2) – Chad Van Dixhoorn and/or Sinclair Ferguson

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 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.

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?

513 Homiletics III: Sermon Preparation for Special Services (2) – [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. Guidance is provided for speaking on other 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.

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-VI (5) – [Michael Barrett](#), [Joel Beeke](#), [Gerald Bilkes](#), and [David Murray](#)

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 Carl Schouls

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 (3) – [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) – staff

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).

626 Ministry Practicum I (1) – 1 week winter internship with a minister

The student resides in the locality of a pastor for one week and performs various pastoral duties: leading and preaching in worship services, teaching adult Sunday school, teaching catechism classes, and accompanying the pastor on a variety of pastoral calls, family visitations, consistory meetings, etc. The local pastor should supervise and evaluate the student's work throughout the process.

627 Ministry Practicum II (1) – 2 week summer internship with a minister

The student resides in the locality of a pastor for two weeks (usually after his second year of studies) and performs various pastoral duties: leading and preaching in worship services, teaching adult Sunday school, teaching catechism classes, and accompanying the pastor on a variety of pastoral calls, family visitations, consistory meetings, etc. The local pastor should supervise and evaluate the student's work throughout the process.

628 Ministry Practicum III (1) – 1 week winter internship with a minister

The student resides in the locality of a pastor for one week and performs various pastoral duties: leading and preaching in worship services, teaching adult Sunday school, teaching catechism classes, and accompanying the pastor on a variety of pastoral calls, family visitations, consistory meetings, etc. The local pastor should supervise and evaluate the student's work throughout the process.

629 Ministry Practicum IV: 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 elenctics, 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.

636 The Intercultural Missionary (2) – Ken Herfst

Explores decisions and developmental tasks involved in preparing for a missions career, adjusting to another culture, learning a language, rearing a family overseas, managing conflict, and handling intercultural stress. The spiritual formation of the missionary is emphasized.

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 1 (3) – Todd Restor

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

102 – Latin 2 (3) – Todd Restor

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

BS800 Language and Exegesis: Old Testament (3) – staff

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.

BS801 Language and Exegesis: New Testament (3) – staff

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 Advanced Old Testament Biblical Theology (3) – staff

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 Advanced New Testament Biblical Theology (3) – staff

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](#) or staff

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 Problems of Interpretation in the Old Testament (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 Scholarship (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 Scholarship (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) – Carl Trueman

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) – Carl Trueman

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'Etapes, 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](#)

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.

CH854 The Reformation in the Netherlands (3) – Robert Godfrey

A historical study of the development of the Reformation in the Netherlands, including the Lutheran period (1517–26), the Sacramentarian period (1526–31), the Anabaptist period (1531–45), and the most influential period of Calvinist infiltration through the Synod of Dort (1545–1619).

CH855 The Dutch Further Reformation (3) – Cornelis Pronk

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) – Bartel Elshout

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) – Sherman Isbell

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) – [William VanDoodewaard](#)

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 and/or Sinclair Ferguson

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

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](#)

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) – Cornelis Pronk

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) – Michael Haykin or 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) – [David Murray](#) or [William VanDoodewaard](#)

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) – [Joel Beeke](#)/[Gerald Bilkes](#)

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.

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.

CH868 Anabaptism (3) – Robert Oliver

A study of Anabaptist theology, practice, and relation to the world, as well as how Anabaptism interacted with Lutheranism and Calvinism. The influence of Anabaptism on later developments in issues such as tolerance, church and state relations, and pacificism will also be explored.

CH869 French Protestantism (3) – Jason Zuidema

This course will survey major developments in the history of doctrine and practice within French reformed churches in the 16th and 17th centuries. Although Jean Calvin has a preponderant place in that history little is known about the so-called lesser figures during his time or the history of French Protestant thought after his death. This course attempts to complete that picture to add depth and richness.

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 controversies 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](#)

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) – Bartel Elshout

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 Sinclair Ferguson

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

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](#)

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) – Cornelis Pronk

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) – Michael Haykin or 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) – [Joel Beeke/Gerald Bilkes](#)

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) – [Joel Beeke](#)

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) – [Joel Beeke or 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.

ST 886 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

322 Reformed Theological Research (1) – [Joel Beeke](#), 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.

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

Academic Information

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
- 14th 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 office 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. Each credit hour consists of 14 sessions of 50 minutes, with the exception of ThM level courses.

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.
- S or P: Satisfactory or pass; adequate achievement of course objectives, but no grade points given.
- U: Unsatisfactory; insufficient achievement of course objectives.
- 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:

- 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

Throughout the academic year the student can view an unofficial copy of his transcript through the seminary's online student software (Populi). Any discrepancy between the transcript and the student's personal record must be brought to the attention of the registrar.

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 = 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.

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 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 distance learning courses must be administered by the registrar and are not subject to the late enrollment fee.

Auditing Courses

If a prospective student wishes to audit a class, he or she must first submit an online condensed application; instructions regarding this mini-application can be obtained from the registrar. Regular students may audit a class provided there is sufficient room in the classroom. Classes may be audited at the cost of \$60 per credit hour for MDiv/MA courses and \$100 per ThM course.

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.

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 MDiv, MA, and ThM degrees. PRTS uses an online course management system to engage students, facilitate interactions between students, and to distribute course materials.

Students who are not able or interested in pursuing a traditional degree can enroll in the courses that best suit their interests and time availability. Whether you wish to take a course in New Testament Greek, or study Ancient Church History, we will work closely with you.

Another valuable opportunity is our certificate program, which allows non-matriculating students to complete a series of courses on a concentrated subject and receive a certificate. See below for detailed information on the available online certificate programs.

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. On-campus students must have the permission of the registrar before they take a distance course.

All distance learning classes are overseen by Chris Engelsma, Director of Distance Learning (chris.engelsma@prts.edu or phone 616-977-0599 ext. 137).

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 \$250 per credit hour (\$60 per audited hour of MDiv/MA courses; \$100 auditing fee for a ThM course). *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 (refundable towards tuition if student is accepted)
- Accepted student deposit: \$100 (confirming accepted student's decision to enroll and is applied towards student's tuition)
- Distance Education fee: \$50.00
- 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.

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 is able to administer VA benefits.

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:

- 4 weeks or more prior to the first day, an 80% refund is granted
- 3 weeks or more prior to the first day, a 60% refund is granted
- 2 weeks or more prior to the first day, a 50% refund is granted
- Within two weeks of the first day, no refund is granted.

For scholarship students, the above drop/add policy applies. For students in the Veteran program, the refund percentage will be prorated according to the Veteran program specifications.

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

Seminary commencement exercises are held each academic year at the end of the spring semester. Each student who is eligible to receive a degree is expected to participate in the commencement, unless he has compelling reasons for being absent. In such cases, a student will receive the degree in absentia.

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

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) only with the written permission of the instructor and 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. 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 under certain conditions. 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 an F/D. Such work must be completed within one month after notification of the failing grade. If the grade is raised to an F/D, the student receives credit for the course but no grade points are counted in calculating his general standing.

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.

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, he may request an incomplete (I), provided that he is in agreement with his professor for that course. The incomplete will be removed from the transcript upon completion of 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 and President.

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, sentence, and paragraphs)—or even thoughts and ideas—without properly accounting for them in footnotes or endnotes.

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 dean of students and the incident is recorded and entered into the student's permanent record.
- 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 determined 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 president, 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 who desires to take a course via distance learning should submit the “Start Your Application” form available on the seminary website. This will initiate the process of enrolling in your desired course. The student will be billed \$250 per credit hour for the course, as well as a non-refundable distance learning fee of \$50.00. 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 \$250 per credit hour for the course, as well as a non-refundable distance education fee of \$50.00. 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 \$250 per credit hour for the course, as well as a non-refundable distance learning fee of \$50.00. 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.

General Student Policies

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.

Internships

Internships not only provide invaluable learning to the students, but also provide feedback to our faculty that is unattainable otherwise. How will the student incorporate what the classroom has taught him into practice as a pastor, counselor, and teacher? When faced with situations he has previously only discussed hypothetically, how will he handle them and himself? This can only be discerned through practicums and internships.

MDiv students are required to complete 3 credits as an intern. These three credits are completed through three short-term internships with established pastors (see courses 626–628; each worth one credit), or through a longer internship (see course 629; worth 3 credits). The shorter internships include preaching for Sunday services, visiting the sick or elderly, attending church meetings or functions, and several sessions of counseling and guidance with the pastor. The long-term internship usually occurs over a summer, or possibly even a semester. The long-term internship is designed to allow students to settle into a church, become part of its body, and develop relationships with its members. It also provides the student with a better grasp of the common stresses and responsibilities of pastoring; students have no other means of implementing the time-management and organization necessary for preparing sermons each week while also serving the congregation in the myriad of weekly responsibilities. Some denominations may require the long-term internship as additional credits of their students.

The supervising pastor for the internship is selected by the student in consultation with the dean of students. Students are encouraged to choose pastors with years of experience whose schedules will allow for detailed, comprehensive oversight of the student. Married pastors with families impart valuable wisdom on how a Christian minister is to balance his pastoral responsibilities and family responsibilities.

Outside of the formal internship, students are also encouraged to preach and teach in local churches, nursing homes, jail ministries, schools, Bible studies, and homeless shelters. This gives them experience in preaching and allows them to become involved in the community they live in while studying at our seminary. For opportunities, contact the dean of students.

Student Opportunities/Information

Library

PRTS Library

The library of Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary currently contains about sixty thousand volumes. Most of the collection is English, though about five thousand books are Dutch and a few hundred titles are in other languages. The library is strong in the areas of church history and systematic theology, with special focus on Reformed theology and Puritan spirituality. The library subscribes to about two hundred periodicals and journals, but additionally provides online access to over two thousand journals through its subscription databases (ATLA-Religion and the Religion and Philosophy Collection, for example). The 125,000 titles in Early English Books Online covering the years 1475 through 1700 are also available to students via the website. Authentication by proxy server provides access to current students off-campus.

The library also contains a large collection of mp3 sermons, conference addresses, and seminary courses, most of which are freely available via the online library catalog. The library owns 5,000 pamphlets which are catalogued, searchable, and may be checked out. These include sermons, tracts, and brochures on a variety of religious topics. A small collection of hymnal materials is housed in our library.

The library has a unique online Scripture reference index called the Puritan Electronic Research Tool (PERT) of about three hundred thousand entries. Students can easily find commentary, devotional material, or sermons on any Scripture text. All the entries reflect actual books within the PRTS library.

PRTS Library shares an online library catalog through a cooperative effort with neighboring Cornerstone University Library. The Cornerstone University Library Network (CULN) includes Kuyper College in addition to PRTS and Cornerstone. This provides faculty and students with access to the combined collections of 400,000 volumes. Students are permitted to borrow materials from all of three libraries at no cost. The PRTS library is also part of OCLC and its affiliate, the Michigan Library Consortium, 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, and articles.

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 Research Center includes a full-text collection of several thousand primary and secondary source articles called the Puritan Studies Index (PSI). The searchable index is available on the library website.

The seminary advertises the Puritan Research Center in order to foster study of the Puritans by ministers, seminary professors, and theological students throughout the world. Those engaged in doctoral studies or on sabbatical leave are also welcome. Office space is available for visiting scholars.

For more information about the PRTS Library, visit the seminary's website or contact the Library staff at (616) 977-0599 ext. 129.

Seminary Bookstore

The nonprofit ministry of [Reformation Heritage Books](http://www.heritagebooks.org) 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

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 three 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 our registrar, Jonathon Beeke (jonathon.beeke@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 the years students spend at PRTS. Throughout the year the society sponsors spiritually-enriching, 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. All students are encouraged to be actively involved.

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 by the seminary as full-time students (at least 12 hours/semester for MDiv and MA students, or at least 6 hours/semester for ThM students) and meet all enrollment requirements. 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 admissions office or on 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 616-977-0599, x135; e-mail: ann.dykema@prts.edu. Send manuscripts to the editor, Dr. [Joel R. Beeke](#), 2965 Leonard St., N.E., Grand Rapids, Michigan 49525; telephone 616-977-0599, x123; e-mail: jrbeeke@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. Our Admissions Director and other staff members can be reached via phone at (616) 977-0599 or via email at info@prts.edu.

To be placed on the “PRTS Update” mailing list, to schedule a seminary presentation, or to give a donation to the seminary, contact Chris Hanna at (616) 977-0599, x 138. Our federal ID number for tax exempt status is 20-2394341; the seminary is registered as a non-profit institution with the US Internal Revenue Service, permitting us to write receipts for federal tax deductions by our US donors. Canadian donors are encouraged to send their gifts via the Burgessville Heritage Reformed Church attention PRTS 685 Main Street P.O. Box 105, Burgessville, Ontario N0J 1C0.

For written inquiries, please send mail to:

Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary
2965 Leonard Street, NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49525 USA

Directions to PRTS, 2965 Leonard Street, NE, Grand Rapids, Michigan:

- From the north: Follow US-131 South to I-96 East. Follow I-96 East to exit 36 (Leonard Street). Turn left from the exit ramp onto Leonard Street eastbound. Proceed through first traffic light to 2965 Leonard Street on left.
- From the south: Follow US-131 North to I-196 East (Gerald R. Ford Freeway). Take exit 38 (East Beltline Avenue); turn left onto East Beltline Avenue. Proceed north to Leonard Street (third traffic light). Exit to the left immediately after light to loop south and turn right onto westbound Leonard Street. Proceed to 7th driveway on the right – 2965 Leonard Street.
- From the east (Lansing): Follow I-96 West to exit 38 (East Beltline Avenue). Turn right from exit ramp onto East Beltline Avenue. Proceed to Leonard Street (2nd traffic light). Exit to the left immediately after light to loop south and turn right onto westbound Leonard Street. Proceed to 7th driveway on the right – 2965 Leonard Street.
- From the west (Chicago, Holland): Follow I-196 East to exit 38 (East Beltline Avenue); turn left onto East Beltline Avenue. Proceed north to Leonard Street (third traffic light). Exit to the left immediately after light to loop south and turn right onto westbound Leonard Street. Proceed to 7th driveway on the right – 2965 Leonard Street.

See the website for a map of the area.

Appendix: The Call to the Ministry

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 unreprouvable 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* (*nephalios*) — 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.