
REFORMED  THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
DISTANCE EDUCATION



THEOLOGY OF C.S. LEWIS
DR. W. ANDREW HOFFECKER



Course Overview

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Course Description:

OST620 Theology of C.S. Lewis, 2 hours
Lecturing Professor: Dr. W. Andrew Hoffecker
Professor of Record: Dr. Guy M. Richard

This course will examine selected writings of C.S. Lewis which demonstrate his stature as a Christian apologist and mythologist. The goal is to gain a broader perspective on Lewis, the Christian man, and of the influence his theology has on the contemporary religious and cultural scene.

Course Objectives:

- To provide a comprehensive analysis and critique on the theology and apologetics of C.S. Lewis
- To examine and evaluate C.S. Lewis' theology on the Trinity, morality, virtue, epistemology, literature, history, miracles, education, and myth

Required Textbooks:

Lewis, C.S. *Christian Reflections*. Edited by Walter Hooper. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2014.

_____ *God in the Dock: Essays on Theology and Ethics*. Edited by Walter Hooper. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2014.

_____ *Mere Christianity*. New York: Harper One, 2015.

_____ *Miracles*. New York: Harper One, 2015.

_____ *Out of the Silent Planet*. New York: Scribner, 2003.

_____ *Perelandra*. New York: Scribner, 2003.

_____ *That Hideous Strength*. New York: Scribner, 2003.

Kilby, Clyde S. *The Christian World of C.S. Lewis*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995.

[These books may also be available in ebook format through various retailers]

Online Student Handbook:

The [Online Student Handbook](#) has been designed to assist you in successfully navigating the Distance Education experience, whether you are taking a single course or pursuing a certificate or degree program. In it you will find valuable information, step-by-step instructions, study helps, and essential forms to guide you through every aspect of your distance education opportunity from registration to graduation. Please use this resource as your first-stop reference manual.

Summary of Requirements:

1. Watch/listen to all recorded [Lectures](#)
2. Complete all [Readings](#)
3. Participate in [Forum Discussions](#) (with other students and the professor)
4. Submit [Research Paper](#)
5. Take the [Midterm Exam](#)
6. Take the [Final Exam](#)
7. Submit [Mentor Report or Course Application Paper](#)

Meet the Professors

Lecturing Professor:



[Dr. W. Andrew Hoffecker](#), Professor of Church History Emeritus, brings extensive teaching experience to the RTS campus. As a Professor of Religion at Grove City College for 25 years, he taught a wide variety of classes: Church History, Apologetics, Systematic Theology, Missions, Medieval Philosophy, C. S. Lewis' Apologetics, and Christianity and Culture, to name a few. He received his B.A. from Dickinson College, his M.Div. from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary and his Ph.D. from Brown University. He also served as a Captain in the United States Army. Dr. Hoffecker has contributed numerous historical articles in the *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* and the *Dictionary of Christianity in America* as well as longer pieces on Benjamin B. Warfield in

Makers of Christian Theology in America and C. S. Lewis in *The Cresset*. His doctoral work in the theology of Old Princeton resulted in *Piety and the Princeton Theologians* and in his biography of Charles Hodge. He has edited a sequel to *Building a Christian World View*, entitled *Revolutions in Worldview*.

Professor of Record:



[Dr. Guy M. Richard](#), is the Executive Director of the RTS Atlanta campus and Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology. Prior to his appointment at RTS, Dr. Richard had served as Senior Minister at First Presbyterian Church Gulfport, Mississippi since 2005. Dr. Richard earned an Engineering degree from Auburn, an M.Div. from RTS Jackson and a Ph.D. from the University of Edinburgh in Historical and Systematic Theology. He has published two books, *What is Faith?* (2012) and *The Supremacy of God in the Theology of Samuel Rutherford* (2009), in addition to other articles in various books and journals. Guy's interests include his family (he and his wife Jennifer have three children: Schyler, Jane Barton, and Ellie), college football, swimming, running, and most other sports.

Grades

Forum Discussions (15%):

The student is required to interact in two (2) forums:

1. Student-Professor Posts (15 total posts)
 - A. Personal Introduction Forum: The student is required to post a brief personal introduction to the professor/class. Suggested details include your vocation, where you live, your church background, why you chose RTS, and what you hope to gain through the course (1 required post).
 - B. 5 Topical Discussion Q&A Forums: The student is required to answer each topical discussion question with one (1) response. The professor will acknowledge the student's answer and will follow up with a subsequent question to which the student must also answer with one (1) response. Each topical discussion question, therefore, requires two (2) total posts/responses from the student (Total of 5 forums x 2 posts = 10 total posts).
 - C. Student-Professor Forum: The student is required to post four (4) times in this forum. Posts in this forum should focus on course-related content such as research paper topics, lectures and reading assignments, or other academic issues related to the course.
2. Student-Student Forum (5 total posts)

A post may be either a new topic or a response to an already existing topic.

Examinations (Midterm 20%, Final 20%):

The midterm exam is worth 20% of the final grade and will cover all the lectures, readings, and assignments from Lessons 1 through 5. The students should use the lesson objectives, lesson review questions, and topical discussion questions to aid in their preparation for the midterm exam.

The midterm exam consists of short and long essay questions. For the short essay questions, the student will be asked to identify and briefly answer in 1-2 paragraphs. For the long essay questions, the student will be asked to answer in 5-7 paragraphs.

The final exam is worth 20% of the final grade and will cover all the lectures, readings, and assignments from Lessons 6 through 8 (The Ransom Trilogy). The students should use the lesson objectives, lesson review questions, and topical discussion questions to aid in their preparation for the final exam.

The final exam consists of short essay, matching, and long essay questions. For the short essay questions, the student will be asked to identify and briefly answer in 1-2 paragraphs. For the long essay questions, the student will be asked to answer in 5-7 paragraphs. For the matching section, the student will be asked to match key terminology and descriptions with their appropriate counterpart.

Research Paper (30%):

Students will write and submit a 10-12 page paper (following Turabian formatting) critically analyzing an essay from either *God in the Dock* or *Christian Reflections*, or from another C.S. Lewis work. The student should choose from an essay or work which was not assigned or discussed in the class. See section titled “[Research Paper Instructions](#)” in this syllabus.

Reading Report (10%):

The student must complete all of the required reading. Reading assignments are broken down week by week within the LMS. The Reading Report will indicate the amount of required reading that has been completed during the semester and must be filled out and submitted at the end of the course.

Mentor Report OR Course Application Paper (5%):

If you are enrolled in an **RTS Global** degree program, you are required to submit a mentor report at the end of the course. Every portion of the form (goals, summaries, assessments, and signatures) should be filled out completely by both the student and the mentor to receive full credit. You can download the Mentor Report form in your Canvas classroom.

If you are receiving your degree through another **RTS campus** (Orlando, Jackson, Charlotte, et. al.), or are a certificate student, or special student (e.g. from another seminary), you are asked to write a 200-word summary of how you perceive what you have learned in this course will fit into the objectives you have for your ministry, your educational goals, or other objectives you wish to achieve in life. Course Application Papers (CAP) that fall well-short of 200 words will receive a grade deduction.

Assignments:

Best practice for your time management is for you to submit all assignments at the end of the week in which they fall, using the upload links provided in the LMS. All work must be submitted by midnight of the course end date, per your course start letter. You are responsible for turning in all assignments on time; no late submissions are permitted. Any student who needs an extension must get approval from the Registrar prior to that time.

Contact Information:

Reformed Theological Seminary, Distance Education
2101 Carmel Road
Charlotte, NC 28226
(704) 900-1257
1-855-854-6920
FAX: (704) 366-9295
E-mail: dess@rts.edu
Web site: www.rts.edu/global



Lessons

Lesson One

An Introduction to the Life and Theology
of C.S. Lewis

Lesson Two

Mere Christianity – Part 1

Lesson Three

Mere Christianity – Part 2

Lesson Four

Creativity and History

Lesson Five

Miracles

Lesson Six

Out of the Silent Planet

Lesson Seven

Perelandra

Lesson Eight

That Hideous Strength



Research Paper Instructions

Students will write and submit a 10-12 page paper (following Turabian formatting) critically analyzing an essay from either *God in the Dock* or *Christian Reflections*, or from another C.S. Lewis work. The student should choose from an essay or work which was not assigned or discussed in the class.

The paper should encompass an analysis and critical evaluation of Lewis' writing as an apologist and should be addressed to the modern-day audience. Your paper should contain some summary material, but over half of your essay should consist of an appraisal and critique of Lewis' argument. The student should shape his/her interpretive thesis in response to Lewis' original thesis.

To help focus the paper, some or all of these questions should be asked:

- Is Lewis a good apologist in the essay?
- Do you agree with Lewis?
- Does he argue consistently and coherently?
- Is the essay consistent with Lewis' own criteria for apologetics?
- Does he develop the essay in a compelling way, or does he digress from the theme or become fuzzy in his argument?
- Is his insight on an intellectual problem, the human condition, or some ethical/social issue valuable or trivial?
- Does the argument still carry validity in today's environment?

Course Objectives Related to MAR Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Theology of C.S. Lewis, OST620
 Professor: Lecturing: W. Andrew Hoffercker, Ph.D. | Record: Guy M. Richard, Ph.D.

MAR Student Learning Outcomes <i>In order to measure the success of the MAR curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the MAR outcomes.</i>		Rubric ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None	Mini-Justification
Articulation (oral & written)	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	- Analysis and critique of modernity / postmodernity. Essay exams and paper requiring analysis and synthesis of philosophical and theological themes in C. S. Lewis.
Scripture	Significant knowledge of the original meaning of Scripture. Also, the concepts for and skill to research further into the original meaning of Scripture and to apply Scripture to a variety of modern circumstances. (Includes appropriate use of original languages and hermeneutics; and integrates theological, historical, and cultural/global perspectives.)	Moderate	- Comparison and contrast drawn between biblical views and those of Lewis and his contemporaries.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	- Traditional reformed categories used for analyzing and critiquing Lewis' apologetics.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	- Personal application made to figures and ideas presented in class.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Strong	- Detailed analysis of modern and postmodern worldviews especially as manifested in Lewis' Ransom Trilogy.
Winsomely Reformed/ Evangelistic	Embraces a winsomely Reformed ethos. (Includes an appropriate ecumenical spirit with other Christians, especially Evangelicals; a concern to present the Gospel in a God-honoring manner to non-Christians; and a truth-in-love attitude in disagreements.)	Strong	- Evaluation of positions differing from classic reformed theology. Strengths of Lewis' position recognized.
Teach	Ability to teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Minimal	- Able to explain Lewis's understanding of Scripture and the allusions he makes throughout his fiction and non-fiction to scriptural themes.
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Strong	- Detailed attention to Lewis' impact on secular culture, especially in scientism.
MAR Specific SLO	An ability to integrate such knowledge and understanding into one's own calling in society	Strong	- Learn from Lewis's life and theology, with emphasis on apologetics and apply that to one's own work and calling in society.