
REFORMED  THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
DISTANCE EDUCATION



THE CHURCH AND THE WORLD
DR. JAMES N. ANDERSON



Course Overview

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Course Description:

OHT506 The Church and the World, 2 hours
Lecturing Professor and Professor of Record:
Dr. James N. Anderson

This is a survey course on the major cultural, theological, and historical developments of the Christian Church in the twentieth century to the present. The course will deal with the impact of Christianity on contemporary culture as well as include key figures and movements.

Course Objectives:

- To familiarize the student with the theological landscape of the 20th century - its major movements and its most influential figures.
- To introduce the student to the various ways in which Christian thinkers from different traditions have engaged with their culture - philosophy, science, politics, etc.
- To help the student understand the forces that have shaped modern evangelicalism (i.e., to understand “how we got to where we are now”).
- To give the student an appreciation of the contemporary challenges faced by the church through its call to be “in the world but not of the world.”

Required Textbooks:

Frame, John M. “How to Write a Theological Paper”, Appendix F in *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 1987.

[Download-able from the Learning Management System (LMS)]

Grenz, Stanley J. and Roger E. Olson. *20th-Century Theology*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1992.

Jenkins, Philip. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007.

[Be sure to get the revised edition.]

Niebuhr, H. Richard. *Christ and Culture*. New York, NY: HarperCollins, 2006.

[Be sure to get the 50th-anniversary expanded edition.]

Machen, J. Gresham. *Christianity & Liberalism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1923.

[Various reprints are available.]

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

Meet the Professors

Lecturing Professor and Professor of Record:



Dr. James Anderson is an ordained minister in the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church. Dr. Anderson came to RTS from Edinburgh, Scotland, and specializes in philosophical theology, religious epistemology, and Christian apologetics. His doctoral thesis at the University of Edinburgh explored the paradoxical nature of certain Christian doctrines and the implications for the rationality of Christian faith. His research and writing has also focused on the presuppositionalism of Cornelius Van Til, particularly his advocacy of the transcendental argument. Dr. Anderson has a longstanding concern to bring the Reformed theological tradition into greater dialogue with contemporary analytic philosophy. Before studying philosophy, Dr. Anderson also earned a Ph.D. in Computer Simulation

from the University of Edinburgh. He is a member of the Society of Christian Philosophers, the British Society for the Philosophy of Religion, and the Evangelical Philosophical Society. Prior to joining RTS Charlotte, Dr. Anderson served as an assistant pastor at the historic Charlotte Chapel in Edinburgh where he engaged in regular preaching, teaching, and pastoral ministry. He is active now in service at Ballantyne Presbyterian Church in Charlotte. He is married to Catriona and they have three children. You can follow his blog at www.proginosko.com or on Twitter [@proginosko](https://twitter.com/proginosko)

Selected Publications by Dr. Anderson

Paradox in Christian Theology: An Analysis of Its Presence, Character, and Epistemic Status. Paternoster Theological Monographs. Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock, 2007.

What's Your Worldview?: An Interactive Approach to Life's Big Questions. Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2014.

"The Lord of Noncontradiction: An Argument for God from Logic" co-authored with Greg Welty, *Philosophia Christi* 13:2. 2011.

Review of *Analytic Theology: New Essays in the Philosophy of Theology* edited by Oliver Crisp and Michael Rea, *Ars Disputandi* 11. 2011.

"No Dilemma for the Proponent of the Transcendental Argument: A Response to David Reiter," *Philosophia Christi* 13:1 2011.

Review of *The Reformed Objection to Natural Theology* by Michael Sudduth, *Themelios* 35:2 2010.

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 25%):

The midterm exam will cover lessons 1-6. The format of the exam will be a series of multiple-choice questions based on the material covered to date. Use the Lesson Questions and Topical Discussion Questions to assist you in your study. You have one hour to complete the exam.

The final exam will be cumulative covering all lessons, 1-15. You should review all of the class material and all of the required reading in preparation for the exam. Use the Lesson Questions and Topical Discussion Questions to assist you in your study. You will be given a series of ten (10) short essay questions and are required to choose three (3) to respond. Responses should be approximately three paragraphs (500 words) in length. You have two hours to complete the exam.

The midterm and final exams for this course are to be taken online in the Learning Management System (LMS). Please note that you will need to have a proctor for your exams. Your proctor can be anyone except a relative or current RTS Student. After clicking on the exam link you will be given detailed instructions about the exam. Please read these instructions carefully before entering the exam.

Research Paper (30%):

The student is required to write a paper (between 3500 and 4000 words, excluding footnotes) based on **one** of the thinkers covered in class (Machen, Barth, Bultmann, Tillich, Moltmann, Hick, McLaren, Niebuhr, etc.). You are free to choose whichever one you want, but be sure to choose one that gives you the scope to write a good paper. If you're in any doubt,

consult the professor first using the Student to Professor Forum. See section titled “[Research Paper Instructions](#)” in this syllabus.

Reading Report (5%):

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. No partial credit is given for readings that have not been completed.

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 completely filled out 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 (i.e. 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:

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Lessons

Lesson One
The Background of the Enlightenment

Lesson Two
Major Thinkers of the Enlightenment

Lesson Three
Three Major Figures of Liberalism

Lesson Four
Liberalism and Fundamentalism

Lesson Five
The Neo-Orthodox Reaction to Liberalism

Lesson Six
Existentialist Theology

Lesson Seven
Process Theology

Lesson Eight
Theologies of Hope/History

Lesson Nine
Liberation Theologies

Lesson Ten
The Postmodern Turn

Lesson Eleven
Postliberal Theology

Lesson Twelve
Radical Orthodoxy

Lesson Thirteen
Post-Evangelicalism

Lesson Fourteen
Christ and Culture

Lesson Fifteen
Concluding Observations

Research Paper Instructions

The student is required to write a paper (between 3500 and 4000 words, excluding footnotes) based on one of the thinkers covered in class (Machen, Barth, Bultmann, Tillich, Moltmann, Hick, McLaren, Niebuhr, etc.). You are free to choose whichever one you want, but be sure to choose one that gives you the scope to write a good paper. If you're in any doubt, consult the professor first using the Student to Professor Forum.

The paper should be themed as follows: Imagine if your chosen thinker were to attend your local church for a year (either your home church or the church where you currently worship). Based on your understanding of the main concerns and claims of your chosen thinker, what recommendations would he (or she) give as to how your church could more faithfully or effectively engage with the world around it? (Clearly you will have to consider what would count as "faithful" or "effective" for this particular person!)

In essence, the paper requires (a) analysis of your chosen thinker, (b) analysis of your church's current engagement with culture/society, (c) application of the former to the latter, and (d) an evaluation of this application in the light of Scripture and reason.

Your paper should include all of the following:

1. An explanation (not merely a statement) of what your chosen thinker would recommend for your church, documented from at least one primary source and any number of secondary sources.
2. An explanation of why these recommendations would be made for your church.
3. A positive appraisal of these recommendations (i.e., how your church could benefit from the insights of this person). If you can't find anything positive to say, then you should choose another thinker!
4. A critical assessment of these recommendations in the light of your reading of Scripture.

Your paper will be graded according to the following criteria, in no particular order: responsible use of Scripture, responsible use of sources, creativity, clarity, structure and coherence, cogency of argument, practical relevance, evidence of critical thinking, and good writing style (including grammar, spelling, and punctuation).

The paper should cite at least 8 scholarly sources (not including Scripture).

1. For the purposes of this paper, a scholarly source is a book or article by a recognized expert in the field (and not aimed at a popular level for a general audience)-ideally one that has been peer-reviewed.
2. Wikipedia is clearly not a scholarly source.
3. That said, with sufficient discernment, Wikipedia can be a useful pointer to scholarly sources and is generally reliable for fact-checking on uncontroversial issues.
4. Please consult the professor (using the Student to Professor Forum) if you have any doubts about whether a source is scholarly.

The paper should be word-processed, not hand-written.

1. Use a 12-point font and double line-spacing for the main text.
2. Use section headings where applicable to improve readability.
3. Use footnotes (10-point font) rather than endnotes.
4. Use the guidelines in the current edition of *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, by Kate L. Turabian.

The paper should be submitted with a title page containing all of the following: the name and year of the course; your name; the professor's name; the title of the paper; and the exact word count for the paper (obtained from your word processor's word-count feature).

You will be penalized if you do not observe the requirements and guidelines above.

Course Objectives Related to Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Church And The World
Professor: James N. Anderson

Student Learning Outcomes		Rubric	Mini-Justification
<i>In order to measure the success of the 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 outcomes.</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None 	
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.	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Integrative research/application paper based on primary sources 2. Short essay exam tests knowledge and articulation of course topics
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.)	Minimal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discusses use/misuse of Scripture by modern theologians
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards..	Minimal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contemporary theologies contrasted with confessional Reformed views of God, humanity, Scripture, etc.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	None	
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Highlights role of anti-biblical presuppositions in theological movements 2. Emphasizes consequences of low view of Bible for subsequent theology
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.)	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explores Machen's position in Fundamentalism-Liberalism debate 2. Notes points where the Reformed can learn from non-Reformed and non-Evangelical theologians
Teach	Ability to teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Minimal	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Notes challenges involved in communicating Christian doctrines to people in modern/postmodern age
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Strong	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Interaction with many prominent non-Evangelical theologies 2. Discusses challenges of secularism 3. Discusses global Christianity
MAR Specific SLO	An ability to integrate such knowledge and understanding into one's own calling in society	Moderate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Awareness of theological ideas and movements that can influence individuals and local congregations