

**Introduction to Pastoral and Theological Studies
(4ST502)
Course Guidelines, Syllabus, and Assignments
Summer 2011**

Presenter – Dr. James Saxon

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Course Description:

The catalogue course description for 4ST502, Introduction to Pastoral and Theological Studies, states that the purpose of this course is “An introduction to biblical, theological, and practical ministry studies within the Reformed tradition.”

Class Schedule:

Tuesdays/Thursdays – 4:30-7:30pm
June – 14 & 16, 21 & 23, 28 & 30
July - 5 & 7, 12 & 14
Saturday – 8:30-4:30pm
July 23

Objectives:

1. To offer a comprehensive overview of foundational theological terms that will orient each student to the world of theology and empower them toward authentic, meaningful reflection, conversation, and influence in the theological arena.
2. To offer a comprehensive overview of the history of theology that will orient each student to theological development as it occurred in time.
3. To offer a summary of the core elements of a basic philosophy of ministry, flowing out of a theological foundation.

4. To review the core elements of a Life Calling and have each student submit a personal assessment of where they are in God's calling to personal ministry.
5. To familiarize students with the Westminster Confession of Faith, the basic conceptual framework of Reformed Theology.

Course Content – Topics to be Covered Interactively

Comparison of Major Systems of Theology
Theological Essentials verses Distinctives
Gospel – Core Elements
Creeds, Councils, and Confessions
Types of Theology – Biblical, Systematic, Historical, Practical
Divisions of Theology - Anthropology, Christology, Soteriology,
Ecclesiology, Eschatology
Doctrines of Grace
Covenant Theology
Call To Ministry
Brief Overview of Philosophy of Ministry

Texts - Books List of Required/Recommended Readings:

Roger E. Olson and Adam C. English
Pocket History of Theology
InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois - Copyright 2005

Louis Berkhof
A Summary of Christian Doctrine
The Banner of Truth Trust, Carlisle, PA - Copyright 2002

Westminster Confession of Faith – free online – at
www.reformed.org/documents/wcf_with_proofs/

Various Assigned Articles – “*Life Calling To Personal Ministry*” and “*Philosophy of Ministry*” - access through the course materials posted on the website.

Required for Purchase and Class Reference (not to be read):

Stanley J. Grenz, David Guretzki & Cherith Fee Nordling
Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms
InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois - Copyright 1999

Highly Recommended (but not required for purchase):

Louis Berkhof
The History of Christian Doctrine
The Banner of Truth Trust, Carlisle, PA –
Copyright 1975

A.A. Hodge
Outlines of Theology
The Banner of Truth Trust, London WIM IPS
Copyright 1972

Writing Assignments: (All papers emailed into the professor must have your name and the specific paper assignment on the cover sheet)

1. **Life Calling Reflection Paper** – A summary of your current perception of how God is shaping your Life Calling to Personal Ministry. **Due Thursday, June 30th**
2. **Church Theological Vision & Philosophy of Ministry Paper** - Submit a 3-page, double-spaced paper on the Theological Vision/Philosophy of Ministry of the church where you now attend. Allow yourself to attend on a Sunday as a ‘visitor’ and see the church through eyes of a new person. In order to collect data, attend a Sunday school class, a small group, a worship service, and talk with the church leaders. Carefully observe what you see and hear. Pick up literature from the church and visit the church website. And then, after having collected sufficient data, write a three page double spaced paper on this basic question: What theological vision did you see at that church? Remember, every church has a theology, whether explicitly stated or not, which drives everything it does. It also has a style of ministry that shapes what it does. So, what did you observe? What did the church present about God, about Christ and the gospel, or anything else you observed about its priorities? For instance, if the church had 15 minutes of announcements, 5 minutes of

singing and 40 minutes of preaching, what does that tell you about the church's priorities, and thus about its theological vision? I would encourage you to pair up with another student, and after visiting each other's churches, share observations of each other's churches. This will help you not miss the obvious. **Due Thursday, July 14th**

3. **Westminster Confession of Faith Chapter Summary** – Read the Confession and submit a one paragraph (not less than 5 sentences) summary of each chapter. **Due Friday, August 5th**

Quizzes: Lists of Theological Terms will be given in the Tuesday classes from which a brief quiz will be given at the following Thursday class.

Final Exam: A final exam consisting of theological terms from the weekly quizzes and a few reflection questions on the course material will be emailed to everyone on Friday, July 29th and must be sent back in by 5pm on Monday, August 1, 2011.

Attendance, Grading, and Late Assignments

Class attendance and interaction – 10% of the final grade – this includes active participation in all of the classes including the all day Saturday class.

Life Calling to Personal Ministry Reflection Paper – 10% - **Due Thursday, June 30th**

Reading of Assigned Texts - 15% of the final grade - Each assigned reading requires a one page single spaced report highlighting the main theses as well as key principles and insights gathered from the reading. **Due Thursday, July 14th**

Philosophy of Ministry Reflection Paper – 10% - **Due Thursday, July 21st**

Summary of the Westminster Confession – 15% - **Due Friday, August 5th**

Weekly Quizzes – 20% - **Given on the Thursday class meetings**

Final Exam – 20% - **Due by Monday, August 1, 5pm**

*****Late Assignments must be cleared by the professor.**

- I. **Course Grading Computation:** The standard RTS grading scale.
 - A (97-100)
 - A- (94-96)
 - B+ (91-93)
 - B (88-90)

B- (86-87)
C+ (83-85)
C (80-82)
C- (78-79)
D+ (75-77)
D (72-74)
D- (70-71)
F (below 70)

Teacher/Professor – This course will be led by Dr. James Saxon, an ordained PCA minister since 1979, who has actively served in the pastorate for the last 31 years. He was converted to Christ at the age of twenty while a student at the University of Alabama. His conversion was so dramatic that he decided against going into the business world with his Marketing Degree and instead began pursuit of his call to pastoral ministry by enrolling in RTS Jackson in the summer of 1975. After serving as a youth director for two summers, and taking a year internship at the well-known Spanish River Presbyterian Church in Boca Raton, Florida, he discerned God’s calling to go into church planting. He founded and pastored the Tampa Bay Presbyterian Church, in Tampa, Florida for 20 years and had oversight of the founding of one daughter church, Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Brandon, Florida. He joined the staff of the fast-growing, outreach-minded Church of The Apostles in Atlanta in the fall of 2000. Since coming to Apostles, he has served in a variety of staff roles and has recently assumed the role of Director of ApostlesLife

In addition to being a successful church-planter, James spearheaded the founding of the Southwest Florida Presbytery in the early 1990’s, and then led the effort to host the 2000 General Assembly in Tampa by that presbytery. He graduated from the RTS Doctorate of Ministry program in the spring of 2005, completing his dissertation entitled, “Empowering the Local Church through Mentoring” which featured a practicum that field-tested mentoring seminary students as a part of their theological education.

He is currently the director of the ministry initiative entitled ApostlesLife, the outreach ministry strategy for the next twenty years of the church. This core ministry of The Church Of The Apostles is a cutting-edge evangelism strategy that inculcates many current ideas and approaches that are successfully being utilized in soul-winning around the country.

He also supervises three departments – Children’s, Student, College and Young Adult ministries. Since 2005, he has served as a guest lecturer at RTS Atlanta and has taught two courses, Evangelism and Pastoral Care. This summer he will be teaching Introduction to Pastoral and Theological Studies. Though he is currently involved in outreach ministry, he is a pastor at heart and his life ministry verse is Colossians 1:28, “And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, that we may present every man complete in Christ.”