

**HT 506 : The Church and the World**  
**Summer 2013 : Course Syllabus**

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**Texts, Required:**

Corbett & Fikkert, *When Helping Hurts*  
Crouch, Andy, *Culture Making*  
Gornik, Mark, *To Live in Peace*  
Niebuhr, H. Richard, *Christ & Culture*

\*Supplemental Readings (not required, distributed electronically by July 6): Van Drunen, Hart, Davis, etc.

**Exam:** The **Final Exam** will require students to answer questions about the lectures and readings. (Because of the compressed meeting schedule, the exam will not assume that all the reading has been completed.) This Exam will be given in class on Saturday afternoon, **July 27, 2013**. (Some portion of the exam may be assigned as a take-home exercise. Portions not completed in class will be due by midnight, August 3, 2013.)

**Written Assignment: Field Investigation:** Students will complete ONE of the following, EITHER the Report & Analysis OR the Literature Survey:

**1. Report & Analysis of a Christian effort at Cultural Engagement.**

This paper will consist of two parts, a Report and an Analysis:

**a. The Report:** Drawing upon published materials, first-hand accounts, or personal interviews, students will explain the goals, commitments and practices of an organized effort by Christians to live out the cultural mandate as faithful servants of Christ. The Report is due by midnight on **Aug. 10, 2013** and may include questions about what features of the organization's work that may deserve attention in the Analysis. Target length for the Report is 1000-1200 words;

**b. The Analysis** will be a reasoned assessment of the organization's efforts in light of biblical and theological considerations developed in the course. The Analysis is due by midnight on **August 24, 2013 OR one week following receipt of instructor's comments on the Report**. Target length for Analysis is 800-1000 words.

**2. Literature Survey regarding an area of Christian Cultural Engagement.** The Survey has two parts:

**a. Characterization & Bibliography**

**i. A Concise Account** of the area of culture for which resources are being described, and

**ii. An Annotated Bibliography** of 6-8 resources (books, websites, magazines, etc.) available. Each resource listed should be accompanied by a 3-4 sentence description of the resource's principal aims and value.

**iii. The Characterization and Bibliography are due by midnight on August 10, 2013.**

**b. A thoughtful Review** of the most significant or substantial resource in the bibliography. The review should bring course considerations to bear in its analysis. The annotations for the Bibliography should consist of three or sentences explaining the purpose and value of the work for Reformed Christians interested in the chosen area of cultural engagement.

**A final draft** of the entire Literature Survey is due by midnight on **August 24, 2013 OR one week following receipt of instructor's comments on the Characterization and Bibliography**. Target length for the whole Survey (both parts) is 1800-2000 words.

**Grading:** Grades will be calculated using the following percentages:

Final Exam.....	40%
First part of the Field Investigation.....	20%
Concluding portion of Field Investigation.....	25%
Participation (presence, active involvement).....	15%

## **Schedule of Topics, Readings & Assignments:**

**July 5-6 :** *The Enduring Challenge: Calling, Task & Culture* (The Biblical Call to Engage Culture without being Captured by It: a persistent and perpetually renewed challenge that is just as difficult today as it has ever been.)

**Reading Assignment:** Neibuhr (if possible)

**July 12-13:** *How Our Culture Came to Be* (The culture we are called to engage is the product of many competing influences, from the lingering effects of hopeful “modern” projects to the swelling current of “postmodern” forces both hopeful and cynical. Charting our way forward means taking stock.)

**Reading Assignment:** Crouch (all)

**July 26-27:** *Practical Models for Meeting the Challenge* (How Christians have and are fulfilling their calling with regards to culture: critical appreciation and setting biblical goals.)

**Reading Assignment:** Corbett & Fikkert, Gornik

**Final Exam** (in class for at least part)

**August 10, 2013** (postmarked or e-mailed by midnight): **Field Investigation Report OR Characterization & Bibliography Due**

**August 24, 2013** (postmarked or e-mailed by midnight): **Field Investigation Analysis OR Literature Review Due**

**Note:** *Work that is late more than one business day without warning or advance agreement will be assessed a penalty of one letter grade per business day.*

### **Extension Policy**

All assignments and exams are to be completed by the deadlines announced in this syllabus or in class.

Extensions for assignments and exams due within the normal duration of the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. Extensions of two weeks or less beyond the date of the last deadline for the course must be approved beforehand by the Professor. A grade penalty may be assessed.

Extensions of greater than two weeks but not more than six weeks beyond the last deadline for the course may be granted in extenuating circumstances (i.e. illness, family emergency). For an extension of more than two weeks the student must request an Extension Request Form from the Student Services Office. The request must be approved by the Professor and the Academic Dean. A grade penalty may be assessed. (RTS Catalog p. 42 and RTS Atlanta Student Handbook p. 14)

Any incompletes not cleared six weeks after the last published due date for course work will be converted to a failing grade. Professors may have the failing grade changed to a passing grade by request. (RTS Catalog p. 42)

**Course Objectives Related to MDiv\* Student Learning Outcomes**

Course: HT 506 The Church & the World

Professor: William C. Davis

Campus: Atlanta

Date: Summer 2013

<b><u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u></b>		<b><u>Rubric</u></b>	<b><u>Mini-Justification</u></b>
<p><i>In order to measure the success of the MDiv 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 MDiv outcomes.</i></p> <p><i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i></p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strong</li> <li>➤ Moderate</li> <li>➤ Minimal</li> <li>➤ None</li> </ul>	
<b>Articulation (oral &amp; written)</b>	Broadly understands and articulates knowledge, both oral and written, of essential biblical, theological, historical, and cultural/global information, including details, concepts, and frameworks.	Strong	Field Investigation requires students to analyze current cultural trends and ministry efforts in light of biblical norms and purposes. Lecture/discussion and Final Exam focus on the development of the concepts and commitments that define the context for Christian cultural involvement.
<b>Scripture</b>	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	Lecture/discussion and classroom activities (collaborative exercises, dialogue on key issues) make routine and systematic reference to the text of Scripture and the challenge of understanding and applying Scripture faithfully.
<b>Reformed Theology</b>	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Moderate	Field Investigation analysis asks students to deploy traditional Reformed models (there are more than one!) for engaging culture and setting appropriate goals.
<b>Sanctification</b>	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	Lecture/discussion insists upon the necessity of putting faith and the love of the Triune God into action, serving both the church and the world outside the church. Field Investigation focuses on appreciating the efforts of other Christians to live out their faith.
<b>Desire for</b>	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Strong	All course elements are concerned

<b>Worldview</b>			with discerning and resisting the pressures that contemporary culture exert on Christians to conform their worldview to worldly patterns rather than to a biblical worldview.
<b>Winsomely Reformed</b>	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	Assigned readings survey a broad range of evangelical approaches to faithful cultural involvement. Field Investigation encourages efforts to understand and praise the efforts of Christians and non-Christian efforts to craft healthy cultural models.
<b>Preach</b>	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Minimal	Lecture/discussion reflects upon the role of preaching in orienting Christians to cultural tasks.
<b>Worship</b>	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Minimal	Lecture/discussion and readings survey the role that worship plays in the life of the church in its efforts to be a hermeneutic of the gospel to the watching world.
<b>Shepherd</b>	Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings; and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.	Moderate	All course elements deal with the practical necessity of church leaders (shepherds) to model for fellow believers a faithful witness to the world in both word and deed.
<b>Church/World</b>	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Strong	All course elements confront the obligation of the church to understand its own identity and the place of service (both internally and externally) in a faithful Christian life.