



REFORMED THEOLOGICAL  
SEMINARY



# Student Handbook

## Atlanta Campus

### 2010 – 2011

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## WELCOME

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Greetings, we extend to you our warmest welcome! We are glad you have chosen to prepare for ministry at RTS Atlanta and we hope to make your adjustment to seminary life as easy and pleasant as possible. This Student Handbook is designed to help you know what to expect at RTS Atlanta and what is expected of you. Please read it carefully and keep it for future reference. The Student Handbook contains useful pointers, policies, and procedures designed to help you settle in and stay on track.

Faculty and staff are accessible. All administrators and faculty members have office hours. Feel free to contact the appropriate person when you have a question, a suggestion, or a need. We are here to assist you. At RTS Atlanta, we desire to be a place where close, cordial relationships can be developed between students, faculty, and staff in the Spirit and love of Christ.

Please be patient during your first few weeks and months on campus. While the workload is substantial and challenging, you will be able to master the assignments with diligence, hard work, and fervent prayer. Refuse to let temporary discouragements tell you otherwise. Remember, we do everything in the presence of the Lord and for his glory.

We want your life at RTS Atlanta to be characterized by four commitments:

- 1) a commitment to the truth of the Scriptures and their application to all of life;
  - 2) a commitment to thorough academic work offered to the Lord as your immediate vocation;
  - 3) a commitment toward genuine loving relationships with God and one another, reflecting the self-sacrificing love of our Savior for us;
- and 4) a commitment to minister to the larger community and to the church as God provides the opportunity.

### A. Spiritual Life

"Watch your life and doctrine closely," Paul wrote to Timothy (1 Tim. 4:16a). While RTS will help you watch your doctrine, your personal walk with God merits your first priority. If your academic studies, even of Scripture and its teaching, take the place of your private devotions and personal Bible study, your spiritual life will quickly become dry and joyless. You can expect this to happen to you unless you take some steps to prevent it:

**Spend time with God.** Do not neglect to examine yourself, to pray, and to seek the Lord in his Word. Knowing God is not the same thing as knowing about him. As the Word of God shapes your mind, the Spirit of God is at work to shape and transform your heart. "Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life" (Prov. 4:23). How is the Holy Spirit currently at work to form Christ within you?

**Develop honest relationships with others.** RTS is more than an academic institution: it is a community of believers who help each other on to godliness. "But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness" (Heb. 3:13). There is no sweeter fellowship with others than that of intimate, broken-hearted prayer to the Father. Who can you pray with in this way?

**Look for present ministry beyond your studies.** While your studies are a high priority, they are not the only way to prepare for ministry. You have come to RTS to receive an education, and ministry preparation requires pastoral experience. We encourage internships for all students and require Field Education as well. Ongoing present ministry helps to bring about a merger of your learning and your life. Those who are truly called by God cannot help speaking about what they have experienced (cf. Acts 4:20). What have you deeply learned about God that you cannot keep to yourself?

Please remember that study is your immediate stewardship. Thorough preparation for class may be a spiritual exercise to the glory of God. This is the present vocation your enrollment at RTS indicates.

### B. Activities

Devotional exercises in class are conducted regularly and are a key element in maintaining the emphasis of spiritual formation in our students. Singing, prayer, and Bible exposition allow us both to worship God and to be built up as a community of his people. The glory of God that draws us to study at RTS draws us first to worship him. Hearts that have received the grace of God are hungry for his praises.

**The Lord's Day** is set aside for worship and rest. Students are expected to participate actively in a local congregation as a member or associate member. In addition to being their community of faith,

for seminarians the local church is both their ministry observatory and laboratory. The congregation where you are active should be a valuable part of your seminary experience. Invest your life in someone else: **get involved in a local church!**

Having said all this, remember that study is your immediate stewardship. Thorough preparation for class may be a spiritual exercise to the glory of God. This is the present vocation (calling) that your enrollment at RTS indicates.

### **C. Help When You Need It**

Every student needs assistance from time to time. Sometimes that will be as simple as getting some information. Sometimes it will involve help with a financial, personal, or family issue which needs an objective viewpoint. Sometimes it will involve academic matters. Whatever your need, there is someone available to help. Let us know you are having difficulty.

### **Privacy of Student Records**

RTS maintains the security and confidentiality of student educational records.

All student records are kept in locked rooms and in locked file cabinets. In addition, all transcribed information for current degree-seeking students is digitally “backed-up” at an off-site location.

Since RTS does not accept Title IV student loan monies, RTS is not bound by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). However, RTS’ confidentiality policies are generally consistent with FERPA. RTS policies are as follows:

A student may inspect and review his/her academic file and transcript after a written request has been made to the Registrar’s office. The Registrar will make arrangements for access and notify the student of the time and place where the records may be inspected. The Registrar will be present during this inspection and review.

If a student believes his/her academic file and/or transcript are inaccurate or misleading, the student may request to amend the file and/or transcript. The student should write the Registrar, clearly identifying the portion of the record that the student wishes to change and specifying what is inaccurate or misleading. If RTS decides not to amend, the student may use the appeal process outlined elsewhere in this Handbook.

RTS will not disclose, without the student’s consent, personally identifiable information found in the student’s academic file or transcript, excepting legitimate educational interests and directory information.

Directory information includes, but is not limited to, name, address, telephone number, email, date and place of birth, spouse’s name, home state, previous schools attended, denomination and presbytery affiliation, grade level, dates of attendance, photo and photo of

spouse, degree program, enrollment type (full-time, part-time), and degrees with date of graduation.

### **Sexual Harassment**

The seminary expects all members of its community to apply sanctified common sense and Biblical principles to their relationships. It will not tolerate offensive or inappropriate sexual behavior and requires all faculty, staff and students to refrain from any action or conduct which could be viewed as sexual harassment. Any such harassment is contrary to and prohibited by seminary policy and will be considered grounds for disciplinary action. It should be noted that for academic purposes, some appropriate teaching and discussion of sexual information may occur, particularly in a counseling program; however, these discussions are necessary for the formation of a competent counselor or pastor and therefore does not constitute sexual harassment.

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other offensive verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature is expressly prohibited. Examples of prohibited conduct include but are not limited to lewd or sexually suggestive comments; off-color language or jokes of a sexual nature; verbal, graphic or physical conduct inappropriately relating to an individual's gender; or any display of sexually explicit pictures, greeting cards, articles, books, magazines, photos, computer images or cartoons.

The seminary must have the cooperation of all faculty, staff and students in order to implement its sexual harassment policy. It is the individual's responsibility to report immediately any incident which they believe to constitute sexual harassment. Even if they believe the act is isolated or infrequent, they should report it to the campus Dean of Students or President. The seminary will promptly investigate the situation and take whatever corrective action is necessary and appropriate. The seminary prohibits any retaliatory action against persons reporting conduct which is believed by the reporting individual to be in violation of this policy.

### **Notice of Non-Discrimination**

Reformed Theological Seminary has a non-discriminatory (race, sex, or handicap) admissions policy. The seminary's policy is to admit students to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities at the seminary and to make no discrimination on the basis of race, sex, or handicap in the administration of educational policies, applications for admission, scholarship or loan programs, and extracurricular activities.

### **Students' Role and Participation in Institutional Decision Making**

The seminary recognizes that students may contribute positively to institutional decision making. Therefore, an open-door policy exists throughout the institution, through which students may voice their concerns, suggestions, and needs. In addition, pertinent matters may be brought to the attention of the faculty, administration, or Board of Trustees through the student government and its officers.

## **Non-Compliance with Accreditation Standards**

Reformed Theological Seminary maintains a goal to comply fully with the standards of accreditation of the Association of Theological Schools (ATS) in the United States and Canada and the Commission on Colleges of Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). Students who believe that RTS has violated ATS and/or SACS standards in any way should submit their complaint in writing to their respective campus Academic Dean. The Dean will consult with the Chief Academic Officer, who serves as the coordinator of matters related to institutional accreditation. The complaint will be reviewed and a written response provided to the student in a timely fashion related to the receipt of the complaint.

At this point, if the student is not satisfied with the written response from RTS, the student may file a complaint directly with ATS and/or SACS. Contact information for ATS and SACS may be found in the RTS Catalog.

## **Student Conduct**

Students are expected to conduct themselves at all times as mature believers. Exemplary Christian conduct should control our words and our actions, both public and private. In today's technological environment our words can include texting, emails, social networking and blogging, in addition to our speech. Godly behavior, expected of all Christians, is especially required of those who are preparing themselves to become ministers of the Word or servants in the church. Classroom manners should also reflect this maturity. Students should be respectful of professors, attend all class periods, and hand in assignments on time. Classroom etiquette also includes leaving cell phones turned off, refraining from surfing the Internet and laptop computer games and communicating to your neighbor during lectures.

Student conduct is under the supervision of the Dean of Students. The seminary reserves the right to dismiss any student whose conduct is found to be unsatisfactory on the basis of spiritual or moral principles found in the Scriptures. If desired, the student can appeal the dismissal according to the stated policy.

## **Student Appeals**

An appeals process exists to resolve any behavioral or academic problem that cannot otherwise be settled in a Biblical manner and assures fairness to all parties concerned. This process is rarely needed and should only be used after all other means have been exhausted. For example, in academic matters that pertain to a class or a grade, the student should first work directly with the professor and/or Registrar. Concerning behavioral or community issues, the student should first consult with the Dean of Students.

If the matter cannot be resolved by the above means, the following appeals process exists:

1. The student should submit a written appeal to the Academic Dean regarding the issue. Depending on the issue, the Academic Dean may request input from the Faculty. The Academic Dean will render a written decision.
2. If the student is not satisfied with the decision of the Academic Dean, then the student may submit a subsequent written appeal to the campus President requesting a hearing. The campus President may or may not grant the request. If granted, the campus President will appoint an ad hoc committee that may consist of trustees, faculty, staff, and/or institutional officers to hear the case. This committee is authorized to meet with any or all concerned parties to resolve the issue and will render a written decision concerning the case.
3. The decision of the President or the ad hoc committee is considered final, subject only to review by the Executive Committee of the Board to affirm the appeals process was properly observed.

## CAMPUS LIFE

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Being good stewards of what the Lord provides means prudent use of our time, talent, assets, and opportunities. The seminary calls on each student to exercise responsible stewardship of the resources afforded here.

### **A. Campus Buildings and Grounds**

We have been blessed with excellent facilities at RTS Atlanta for our use, study, and enjoyment. We all bear common responsibility to maintain and treat them considerately. Each student **is** expected to share that responsibility in at least the following ways:

1. Wherever you see litter or trash, please pick it up and pitch it in.
2. Turn off lights that are not being used. Turn off coffee pots if you take the last cup.
3. Dogs, cats, and other pets that could cause damage or be an offense to others are not allowed in seminary buildings.
4. Alcoholic beverages are not permitted on seminary property.
5. Automobiles should be parked only in designated areas.
6. Children should not be allowed to run through the halls or be left unattended. Children are not allowed in the Library.
7. Smoking is not permitted on campus.

**CAMPUS BUILDINGS:** Generally, all campus buildings are open from 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., except when campus is open later for evening courses.

1580 Building South Wing- Houses the Chapel, the Library, the Office of the President, the Development Office, the Business Manager, classrooms, and a seminar room.

1580 Building North Wing – Houses the dining area, the Admissions Department, the Registrar, and faculty offices.

### **Children on the Campus**

Because of the many seminary activities usually in progress, as well as the lack of supervisory personnel available, students, faculty, and staff are discouraged from bringing their child(ren) on the campus except for activities that involve children such as parties and picnics. It is recognized that

there are certain times when an individual has to have their child(ren) with them on campus; and, when this is the case, the individual should make certain that their child(ren) stay with them and are not allowed to wander unattended around the campus or in any seminary buildings.

## **B. Library Information**

RTS Atlanta is in the process of building and organizing its library. Look for additional resources to be made available to students in the near future.

Until that time, two types of library resources are available to you: borrowing privileges at local university and theological libraries, and the services of the RTS library system.

Atlanta Campus students are privileged to have access to the outstanding resources and services of the RTS Library. Services include inter-library loans and research assistance. The Orlando Campus library may be reached by calling 407/366-9493.

Locally, RTS students have enjoyed the bibliographic holdings of nearby theological libraries. In some instances, usage fees may be required for checkout. Please remember to honor the generosity of those entities by exercising great respect and responsibility. Those libraries include:

- The New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary campus (1000 Johnson Ferry Road, Suite C-115, Marietta, GA 30068);
- The [superb!] Pitts Theology Library of Emory University (505 Kilgo Circle, Atlanta, GA 30322, 404/727-4166);
- The Columbia Theological Seminary library (701 S. Columbia Dr., Decatur, GA 30030, 404/687-4610);
- Luther Rice University (3038 Evans Mill Road, Lithonia, GA 30038, 770/484-1204), and,
- The theology library of the nearby Psychological Studies Institute (2055 Mount Paran Rd., Atlanta, GA 30327, 404/233-3949).

Georgia residents also have the privilege of utilizing the Georgia Public Library Service (<http://www.gpls.public.lib.ga.us/>), which is a unit of the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. A list of the extensive network of branch libraries may be downloaded at <http://www.public.lib.ga.us/pls/publibs/plsites.html>.

Georgia residents also have free access to GALILEO, which is Georgia's electronic library. The acronym stands for **GeorgiA LIbrary LEarning Online**. A Web-based virtual library, GALILEO provides access to multiple information resources, including secured access to licensed products. The free service allows access to over 100 databases, including WorldCat, EBSCO Databases, ProQuest, and many more, indexing thousands of periodicals and scholarly journals. Over 2000 journal and magazine titles are provided in full-text. Other resources

include encyclopedias, business directories, and government publications, as well as resources related to philosophy and religion. Through GALILEO, Georgia citizens have access to authoritative, subscription-only information that is not available through free search engines or Web directories.

Consult the web site: <http://www.galileo.usg.edu/welcome/>

OR

<http://www.galileo.peachnet.edu/>

Password access (changed quarterly) is available to registered Georgia public library borrowers.

#### OTHER LIBRARY RESOURCES

**ATLA Religion Index** and other online databases allow students to search for periodical articles and dissertations by several different search keys (author, title, subject, keyword, etc

Most of these databases require a password. The login info will be available through the Registrar until such time as a Librarian joins the staff. Passwords are changed from time to time; students are responsible to obtain the new passwords from the Registrar.

The RTS Libraries website ([www.rts.edu/site/resources/library.aspx](http://www.rts.edu/site/resources/library.aspx)) has an extensive listing of added resources for study, many of which are online. This includes a listing of periodicals owned by all three campus libraries.

#### INTER-LIBRARY LOAN

Books and articles not found in any RTS library can be sought through Inter-Library loan. This process generally takes longer than borrowing from other RTS campuses, so students need to initiate the process early enough in the semester to allow for the process. The library may reserve the right to pass along fees associated with ILL; any copies received through ILL will be charged to the student at **10 cents per page**. Books requested from a non-RTS library may take as long as 1-3 weeks to arrive.

#### **Financial Protection for Students**

**a. Medical insurance** must be maintained by all full-time (12 hours or more) students. If you have such coverage now, and it can be continued at reasonable rates, it is wise to keep it. If you have none, a student accident and sickness policy is available to RTS students. Details may be obtained from the Registrar. (Purchase this insurance by separate check at Fall and Spring Registration).

**b. Life insurance** is desirable, though not required. Seminarians are occupationally eligible for attractive rates from Covenant Life Insurance Company (formerly, The Presbyterian Ministers' Fund) and Ministers' Life and Casualty Union.

**c. Financial Aid.** The seminary expects students both to trust God to supply their needs (Matt. 6:25-34) and to work to meet them (2 Thess. 3:6-10). The seminary experience for many students is a test both of their faith and their endurance, but there are no qualities more essential to ministry than these two. We challenge you, therefore, both to trust confidently in the providence of God and to work diligently.

To request financial aid, you must complete a Financial Aid Application, available from the Admissions Office. Since awards are based solely on need, please do not apply unless your financial need cannot be met in any other way. Consult with the Admissions Office to see what types of financial aid may exist to assist you in your seminary education.

During the year financial aid recipients **will be asked to send a letter of appreciation to donors** who have provided funds for their scholarships; recipients of financial aid are expected to write these letters when requested to do so. Failure to comply may result in loss of the student's scholarship. Even when granted, financial aid is to be considered supplementary, rather than primary, income. While the seminary will make every effort within its Scholarship Budget to assist needy students, those with accounts in arrears may not be allowed to register for additional courses, at the seminary's option, until their accounts have been brought up to date.

### **Student Directory**

RTS maintains an online, secure directory available through Self-Service. Please remember to update any of your contact information that changes by using the My Profile tab in Self-Service.

### **Website**

RTS maintains a website at [www.rts.edu](http://www.rts.edu) with information of help to both students and the general public.

### **Student Associations**

Information concerning student organizations can be found in the seminary catalog.

### **Women's Ministry**

Women students, faculty, staff, and wives of students, are offered a variety of growth opportunities, fellowship activities, and community ministries. For detailed information on events or to offer input and ideas, please see the Administrative Assistant, Mrs. Ann Coleman.

**1. RTS Courses.** Spouses of full-time students (12 credit hours or more) may take courses for credit at no charge. They may also audit courses without charge, provided there is room in the class and they have registered with the Registrar. These courses not only provide opportunity for spiritual growth, but help spouses get acquainted with professors and others in the seminary community. To take a course for credit, please apply with the Admissions Office. To audit a course, contact the Director of Student Services.

**2. Women of RTS.** The purpose of the *Women of RTS* program is to provide a course of training that will help prepare women for life in the ministry, to promote joy and confidence in their callings to serve Christ for the furtherance and strengthening of his kingdom, and to promote fellowship among all women on campus, married as well as single. *Women of RTS* is led jointly by a team composed of students' wives, student women, and RTS staff. Together this team leads a program of fellowship, prayer, and teaching. Teaching is done by faculty members, faculty wives, and occasional outside speakers. Student testimonies and music are also part of the program. Small groups give student wives the opportunity to get to know and pray with one another.

You may have come to RTS with a clear sense of your calling to ministry. Then again, you may have little sense of the kind of ministry for which the Lord is preparing you. Whatever your state of mind and heart, the seminary's goal is to provide an opportunity for self-evaluation and analysis before you commit yourself to a career.

Several courses of study have been developed to meet a wide range of student needs for basic and advanced preparation for Christian ministry. The catalog is designed to acquaint you with the different degree programs and their requirements.

### A. Class Information

**1. Scheduling.** Be sure to consult the catalog and the semester schedule available from the RTS website under Upcoming Classes as you plan your schedule of classes. The Director of Student Services is available to meet by appointment to discuss your degree progress.

Generally, each course meets approximately thirteen classroom hours for each semester hour of credit offered. A classroom hour includes fifty-five (55) minutes of teaching time. Thus, a three credit hour course would normally meet for approximately thirty-nine (39) classroom hours. As a rule, courses taught at RTS Atlanta will be offered for the same credit value and bear the same course title and description as outlined in the current catalog.

The formats most often used at RTS Atlanta are the *traditional* format, the *weekend* format, and a *modular* format. In the *traditional* arrangement, a course meets one evening or day each week for three hours for thirteen weeks. This format is used when resident and local instructors are utilized.

When faculty members must travel greater distances, classes may be scheduled on a *weekend* format. Usually this will mean three to five "weekends" over the span of six to ten weeks. While there are variations in the schedules, a typical weekend format is:

Friday 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Saturday 8:30 - 11:30 a.m.

12:30 -3:30 or 4:30 p.m.

*Modular* classes are normally completed within a single week. For example a 3-credit class might meet Monday through Friday, 8:30 - noon and 1:00 – 4:30.

**2. Class attendance.** You are responsible to attend class, even when term papers or exams are pending, or your work schedule conflicts. You should obtain the professor's permission if you must be absent from class, particularly one week intensives.

3. **Pedagogy.** Adjust yourself to each professor's teaching method. Part of your education consists of learning how to learn. Decide what kind of notes you need for each class to master the material. Most courses have a syllabus. All classes, however, have an aim. Find out what it is, and adjust your studies to meet that goal.
4. **Tests/exams** are developed and administered according to each professor's requirements. Most professors indicate their exam schedule at the beginning of the semester, but this does not preclude unscheduled exams. Ask your professor what his policy is and the kind of response he expects on his examination. And be prepared!
5. **Extensions.** Incomplete and late assignments after the course ends without approved extension requests may result in failure of the course. Students should apply for an extension through the Student Service's Office **prior to the last day of the term.** Extensions are only granted for significant emergencies or unforeseen circumstances.
  - Students are required to state the reason for the extension on the form.
  - Permission is obtained from both the professor and the academic dean.
  - All work must be completed by the deadline given by the professor and academic dean.
6. **Extended absence** of more than a week requires permission of the Academic Dean and is never granted without a written request. If you need special consideration in any course, consult the professor involved.
7. **Grades** are posted on Self-Service as they become available. Papers and tests may be returned to you — either directly from the professor or if a visiting professor through the Director of Student Services. For information about the RTS Grading Scale and Academic Probation, please see the RTS Catalog.
8. **Retaking a course.** Students may retake a failed course. The student must pay for the course again and all grades will be recorded on the transcript, including failures.
9. **Study**, or lack thereof, is the primary reason for success or failure in any course. Students are expected to spend at least two hours of study for each hour of class. Self-discipline is indispensable. Do not procrastinate. Get into a good study routine as quickly as possible. Take full advantage of our library resources. Schedule your work with your own deadlines well in advance of due dates. Then, work your schedule. When you do, you are most fully able to enjoy the academic, communal, and recreational aspects of your seminary experience.
10. **Confusion.** Students often express feeling bewildered by new terminology and overwhelmed by the mass of new information. Do not hesitate to ask questions, when you do not understand what a professor is talking about. The only really dumb question is the one that is not asked. Persevere in your studies, seek faculty help if necessary, and you will master the material.

**11. Books** are both tools and temptations for seminarians. Get good advice before you buy. Most professors provide bibliographies of recommended works. Use the seminary Library to acquaint yourself with other authors. Then buy books which will have lasting value for you. You will probably want to keep your text books for future reference. Check your whole library from time to time to identify weak areas. Buy books of lasting value, but watch your budget.

## **12. Plagiarism**

Research papers require borrowing other people's ideas and words. However, the source of such borrowing must be acknowledged properly so that your ideas are clearly distinguished from ideas that you borrowed. If the source is not acknowledged properly, your work is plagiarism. For an excellent summary on what constitutes plagiarism, see Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (rev. by Wayne C. Booth, etc.; 7<sup>th</sup> ed.; Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), pp. 77-80 (section 7.9).

Plagiarism includes word-for-word copying, lifting terms, restatement of someone's argument or line of thought, etc. – all without acknowledgment of source. Plagiarism also includes giving a source partial credit when more is taken from that source than indicated.

Plagiarism, whether intentional or unintentional, is very serious. All plagiarism cases are referred to the Academic Dean for resolution. Consequences may include some of the following:

- repeat the assignment and receive a maximum of a D on the assignment
- receive an F on the assignment
- receive an F in the course
- expulsion from the seminary

**13. Lack of payment** for tuition may result in no credit for the semester. All fees and balances must be cleared before the next semester begins. An official transcript and grades will be unavailable until all balances and fees are paid.

**14. Extraordinary academic requests** for Atlanta students, such as directed studies, must be initiated with the Professor and approved by the Academic Dean and Director of Student Services at the beginning of the semester. Please see the Director of Student Services for appropriate forms.

**15. Transcripts.** Official transcripts must be requested in writing with a check for \$10 payable to RTS. Transcript request forms can be printed from the website ([www.rts.edu](http://www.rts.edu)). An unofficial student transcript may be obtained from the Director of Student Services at no charge.

**16. Drop/Adds:** Students may drop/add courses via Self-Service until the online drop or add deadline. After the online deadline you may be able to drop a class through the Director of

Student Services if you are taking a weekend or modular course (see distinctions below). After the term begins, there is a fee for each course dropped or added. Thus, it is recommended that you finalize your schedule before the first day of the term. See the most recent Schedule of Fees for the current drop/add fee. If a student drops a course prior to the drop deadline (through the first five weeks of a regular semester schedule, the second weekend of a weekend course, the second day of a week-long intensive, or the equivalent in other formats), the course is erased from the student's permanent record and the tuition is refunded. If a student withdraws from a course after the drop deadline, the grade "W" will be entered on the student's permanent record and the tuition is not refunded. The Director of Student Services should be consulted whenever a student considers withdrawing from a course

**17. Recording of Courses by Students:** The video taping of RTS courses by students is prohibited. Audio taping of classes by students is allowed if the taped material is to be used solely for personal study and spiritual edification and is not distributed privately or publicly in any manner.

### **B. English Bible Exam**

Master of Divinity and Master of Arts (Biblical Studies) students at RTS Atlanta must take the English Bible Exam (EBE) at the beginning of their seminary career (entrance EBE) and again at the end (exit EBE). The purpose of giving the EBE twice is (a) to allow RTS to assess the biblical literacy of the average student when arriving at seminary, and (b) to trace the student's progress during the course of his/her degree. Each student must pass the EBE in order to graduate (a grade of "C"/80% is needed to pass). The guidelines for fulfilling this requirement include the following:

(1) The EBE is required to be taken before first registration. Please contact the Registrar to make an appointment to take the exam.

(2) Students need not study for their first attempt at the EBE. It is designed primarily as a tool to help RTS in the evaluation of its students and their progress during their degree. However, each student is expected to perform to the best of their ability while taking the EBE.

(3) The EBE is required to be taken as an exit exam during the student's senior year (as measured by degree hours towards the MA or MDiv.) A student cannot take the EBE a second time prior to his senior year. But, during a student's senior year, he can take it as many times as necessary to pass. See "Graduation Requirements" below for more details and deadlines.

(4) If a student passes the EBE the first time, he will still need to take it again during his senior year. It does not matter if he passes it the second time; one pass is sufficient to graduate.

(5) Although study guides were permitted in the past, as of the 2002-2003 academic year, students are not allowed to consult a study guide in preparation for the EBE. Use of a study guide to prepare for the EBE will be considered a violation of the RTS Honor Code.

(4) The best method for preparing for the EBE is for the student to familiarize himself with:

(a) the broad flow of biblical history,

- (b) the main themes and historical setting of the books of the Bible,
- (c) the location (book and chapter) of significant biblical events, and verses, and
- (d) the life and historical circumstances of significant biblical characters.

Helpful resources include: William Hendriksen, *A Survey of the Bible*, and Willem A. VanGemeren, *The Progress of Redemption*.

### **C. WCF Shorter Catechism**

The Westminster Confession of Faith's **Shorter Catechism** is to be memorized as a part the M.Div. requirements. You may memorize the Catechism in Old English or Modern English. A study guide is available from the Director of Student Services. Students should plan to take Catechism exam in their senior year like the EBE. See "Graduation Requirements" below for more details and deadlines.

### **D. Graduation Requirements**

RTS only has one graduation ceremony in May. The procedure and requirements for graduation are detailed below.

1. Students intending to graduate in May must make application for graduation during their final fall semester. The application deadline is November 15. This application can be made with the Director of Student Services. Please note that a 2.0 average is required in order to graduate. A graduation fee of \$200 is required.
2. The student should set up an appointment with the Director of Student Services to "audit" the student academic record, confirming all course work is in process.
3. Graduation requirements:
  - a. Catechism exams must be completed by all potential M.Div. graduates by the Spring Break Deadline.
  - b. English Bible Exam must be taken by all potential graduates by the Spring Break Deadline.

### **E. Student Field Education (please consult the FE Guidelines)**

M.Div. students are required to have **400 field education hours and Field Education Seminar**. Each student is asked to have some kind of ministry internship during his/her time in seminary. This may be completed over a year long period (or longer) or a full-time summer experience.

#### **1. Beginning Field Ed Internship Requirements.**

Students should register for the 4PT536 Field Education Internship and contact Dr. Bruce Lowe, the Director of Field Education, in order to begin their 400 hour field education internship. During internships, students are under the supervision of pastors/mentors and the Director of Field Education at the seminary.

Students should consult the "Field Education Guidelines" concerning the necessary paperwork required for the completion of Field Education internships.

#### **2. Field Education Seminar Course (4PT534).**

Once you have enrolled for 4PT536 you will be automatically registered for the 4PT534 Field Education Seminar each term until you complete your 400 hours and attend this seminar. This allows the Director to maintain a comprehensive list of all students who are involved in the Field Education process at any given time.

This seminar provides opportunity for theological reflection and discussion of problems, needs, and experiences in ministry. Students are required to write papers about their field experiences and present them to the class for discussion led by the professor. This may be taken in the fall or spring semester.

This course is required for graduation for all M.Div. students.

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