



**2007 IPTS Assignments, v.1.0**

**RTS/Orlando, Fall 2007**

ASSIGNMENT	DUE DATE	PERCENTAGE
"Deference Construct" Application Draft	Oct 3, 2007	5%
"Deference Construct" Application Review	Oct 24, 2007	5%
Guinness Existential Paper	Nov 7, 2007	15% or 20%
"Deference Construct" Application Final Draft	Dec 5 by 11:00 a.m.	15% or 20%
The "Deference Construct" in Kidd, WOV	Dec 5 by 11:00 a.m.	15% (not MAC)
Take home, open book Final Exam: Webber, ST, BT, Lectures	Dec 11 by 4:00 p.m.	25% or 30%
Reading Report	With Final Exam	10%
Discussion Group Participation	NA	10%

**“Deference Construct” Application Paper (25% for most students; 30% for MAC students)**

**1. Topics**

*Please understand that for virtually every subject listed below there will be people in the class who have had very personal – and wildly divergent – experiences. Welcome to the church. Topic “x” may be a total abstraction to you – but painfully personal to someone else. It is important not to assume glib, smug positions.*

(a) Discuss and defend your position on how a Christian citizen of the U.S. (of Reformed persuasion, or of a similar theological tradition to your own) ought to respond to this quote:

“... this nation is at war with Islamic fascists who will use any means to destroy those of us who love freedom, to hurt our nation” (Pres. George W. Bush, 11 August 2006).

(b) What is your pastoral responsibility, if any, to illegal immigrants (evangelized, perhaps, by your congregants) who seek to be baptized by you and to join your church? To join your worship team? How is your position on this issue complementary or contradictory to biblical statements on submission to authority?

(c) How does the weighing of normative, situational, and existential considerations help you discern where the bar should be for what women may do in ministry?

(d) The availability of *in vitro* fertilization raises what theological and ethical issues? Discuss and defend your view on whether *in vitro* fertilization can be a faithful and obedient path for Christians who are interested in parenthood.

(e) Using the normative, situational, and existential perspectives explain to what degree the church should “fence the table” (i.e., warn some people not to partake) during Communion.

(f) Discuss and defend your viewpoint on what someone (for example, a severely autistic teen or a senior citizen with Alzheimer’s) must cognitively understand/grasp in order to be “saved”? Discuss and defend how appropriate levels of understanding can be demonstrated.

(g) Should churches in the U.S. build the nicest buildings they can afford or the most cost-effective?

## 2. Draft

You will conduct independent research on a topic from the list above, and write a 2400-3200 word first draft position paper (this first draft is **due on Oct. 3.**)

The paper should:

- Consistently interact with the three perspectives of the “Deference Construct” (existential, normative, and situational);
- Discuss and seriously consider a variety of Christian resources, interactions, and viewpoints in relation to the topic;
- Exhibit a pastoral disposition toward the topic;
- Clearly deduce a conclusion or position on the topic from interaction with the resources, etc., relevant to the topic;
- Offer determining factors and a plausible analysis for how strongly you will hold to the position you formulate.

## 3. Review & Response

We will ask you to select a partner and exchange the first drafts of your papers. You will compose a written review of your partner’s paper, **due on Oct. 24.** This review will be no more than 1200 words long. We’re asking you to see if you can help your partner improve his or her paper in the following three areas:

- a) **Content**, which includes the breadth and relevance of evidence presented, accuracy and quality of dissenting viewpoints presented, thoughtfulness of evidential analysis, clarity of argument for supporting conclusions.
- b) **Tone** — that is, please evaluate whether the evidence, analysis, and conclusion are presented in a loving and edifying way, one which promotes honest and forthright debate on the topic even with those who hold differing positions.
- c) **Form**, which includes the statement and development of a thesis, clear and engaging writing, adherence to basic stylistic principles, and quality of grammar and spelling. The review of form will consist of written input in the response paper and a ‘mark-up’ of draft one.

#### **4. Final Draft**

You will then revise your first draft by incorporating your partner’s evaluation. Please turn in a final draft of no more than 4,000 words (along with your final draft, please turn in the first draft and your partner’s review). This will be **due on the seminary-wide paper deadline, Dec. 5, by 11:00 a.m.**

### **Existential Paper (15% for most; 20% for MAC)**

Based on *Steering Through Chaos*, choose one of the seven deadly sins with which you struggle. Explain why it is so easy to fall into this sin and how you can avoid it. Also include how you can cultivate the corresponding virtue. The paper is to be no more than 1,600 words and is **due Nov. 7.**

### ***With One Voice* & the “Deference Construct” Paper (15%) — not required of MAC students**

In the course of this class we have focused on the Normative, Existential, and Situational perspectives and the three components of each. Using the book, *With One Voice*, analyze how Kidd uses each aspect of these perspectives to support his conclusions. The paper is to be no more than 1600 words and is **due on the seminary-wide paper deadline, Dec. 5, by 11:00 a.m.**

## **Take Home, Open Book Final (25% for most; 30% for MAC)**

You will be asked to write two essays on issues discussed in Webber's book, *Listening to the Beliefs of Emerging Churches*. One essay will utilize Frame's book and class lectures to analyze "emerging" issues from the point of view of systematic theology. The second essay will utilize Goldsworthy's (for all students) and Horton's (for non-MAC students) books as well as class lectures to analyze "emerging" issues from the point of view of biblical theology. Each essay should be no more than 1000 words, and a hard copy of the final must be turned into Joyce Sisler **by the end of the final exam period, Dec. 11, by 4:00 p.m.**

## **Reading Report (10%)**

On the final exam, please indicate what percentage of the total course reading you were able to complete.

## **Small Group Participation (10%)**

To help you get started (or go further) in living in community here at RTS/O we are dividing you into five different small groups, under the tender care of one of the course sempaitachi. **For seven of the scheduled fourteen weeks of the class** we will be giving one hour of class time to your meeting together as a small group. Largely, you will be helping each other with your DefCon papers, but you will also have a chance to get to know each other and to interact with the course material. The small group sessions will take place during the **8:00 a.m. hour** for which the class is scheduled. Please come ... you'll enjoy it ... it'll be good for you ... and we will be keeping attendance. Also, one evening during the semester your small group will be invited to the Kidds' house for dinner ... we'll let you know as soon as we can when that will be. Hope you can make that!