04ST530 : Apologetics
Winter 2016 : Course Syllabus

Instructor: William C. Davis, Adjunct Professor of Systematic Theology, RTS; Professor of Philosophy, Covenant College
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Texts, Required:

Davis, “Frame in the Context of Recent Apologetics” (from *Speaking the Truth in Love*, pre-publication draft sent via e-mail)

(Texts, Recommended: Oliphint, Scott, *The Battle Belongs to the Lord*)

Exams: Final Exam distributed January 5, due by February 5, 2016 (postmarked or e-mailed)

Papers: Students will complete one of the following. Final Draft is due February 12, 2016 at midnight (by e-mail or postmark).

#1. Apologetic Exchange: focused and annotated e-mail text of an apologetic exchange with a non-Christian. Target length (total): 3500 words. [Notes: (a) A first exchange (at least one substantive e-mail from each party) showing the potential of the contact is due on January 29. (b) Annotation/commentary should not exceed 50% of this exercise.]

#2. Meta-Apologetic Critical Assessment: a 3000-word explanation and assessment of a source published in the last ten years (2003 or later) dealing with apologetics. The assessment should focus on methodological matters. [Notes: (a) If a Rough Draft is submitted by January 29, it will receive comments and suggestions. The Final Draft would then be due one week after the comments were returned or February 12, whichever is later. (b) Only one student may write on a particular source, so first-come, first-served.]

#3. Apologetic Response: a 3000-word response to an attack leveled against the faith published in the last five years (2008 or later). [Notes: (a) If a Rough Draft is submitted by January 29, it will receive comments and suggestions. The Final
Draft would then be due one week after the comments were returned or February 12, whichever is later.  (b) Only one student may write on a particular source, so first-come, first-served.]
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: ST 530 Apologetics

Professor: William C. Davis, PhD

Campus: Atlanta

Date: January 2016

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.

As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric</th>
<th>Mini-Justification</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Course Essay (Apologetic Exchange, Meta-Apologetic Assessment, or Apologetic Response) each require students to analyze and assess current challenges to the rational viability of Christian faith commitments. Successful essays will be able to articulate command of key biblical and theological concepts and presuppositions. Required readings and class lectures provided background material and clarification of the needed concepts of presuppositions.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>The Reformed tradition in Apologetics is rich and subtle, but more in the practices of the tradition than in the doctrinal standards and symbols. Close attention is given to the history of Reformed practice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Reformed Apologetics insists on defending faith in the Triune God of the Bible (and not just a general theism); moreover, faithful defenses of Christian faith start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td></td>
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### Rubric

- **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.

- **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.)

- **Reformed Theology**
  - Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.

- **Sanctification**
  - Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student’s sanctification.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Desire for Worldview</strong></th>
<th>Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Lives detached from the Word of God will be apologetically inert, but the primary desire must be a desire to see the lost won and Christ’s honor defended.</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Winsomely Reformed</strong></td>
<td>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.)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>The principal focus on classroom discussion and the course assignments is love for and outreach to non-Christians. Close consideration is given to the importance of ecumenical peace as part of the church being a hermeneutic of the gospel, however.</td>
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<td><strong>Preach</strong></td>
<td>Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>The focus is dialogue with non-Christians, but some time is devoted to strategies for teaching other believers how to deal with doubt and defend the faith.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Worship</strong></td>
<td>Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>The worshipping community is the truth embodied, and thus plays a part (albeit secondary) in the study of apologetics.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Shepherd</strong></td>
<td>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.</td>
<td>Strong</td>
<td>Because effective defenses of the faith depend on love for the lost and a vital body life, the task of nurturing the local congregation gets extensive attention in classroom discussion and lectures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Church/World</strong></td>
<td>Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.</td>
<td>Minimal</td>
<td>Consideration of work within denominational structures focuses on the importance of dealing charitably with fellow believers who approach apologetics differently. The rubric for the Meta-apologetic Critical Assessment option among the Essays includes an evaluation of this (charity with others who disagree).</td>
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