

# PRESBYTERIAN HERITAGE

SPRING 2010

CHRISTOPHER ELWOOD

[celwood@lpts.edu](mailto:celwood@lpts.edu)

T/W/Th, 8:30 am – 9:50 am

Hundley Hall (plenary)

Gardencourt 206 & 213 (discussion)

## Course Description:

This course serves as an introduction to the Reformed tradition as embodied in the history, faith, institutions, and practices of the Presbyterian churches, with particular attention devoted to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The course surveys major figures and movements, recurring theological themes, and perennial and recent challenges to the life of the church. The course also provides for close and contextual readings of Reformed creeds and confessions.

The course assumes a basic knowledge of Christian theology and of church history as a prerequisite. The completion of *Faith Seeking Understanding* (FQI) and *History of Christian Experience I & II*, or equivalent previous course work in theology and history, is required to participate in this intermediate level of instruction and learning.

## Objectives:

Students will explore both the diversity and the common witness of expressions of Reformed faith across time, examine the nature of a religious tradition and its ethos, and develop the analytical and interpretive skills necessary to participate faithfully in the ongoing witness of the church today.

## Requirements:

1. **Preparation and participation.** Your preparation and thoughtful contribution to class discussion (especially on discussion section days) will represent 5% of your final grade.

2. **Short discussion papers:** You are asked to write **5** one-page (single-spaced) papers out of **7 possible options**, as indicated in the Calendar of Lectures and Discussion Topics for **2/24, 3/3, 3/10, 4/7, 4/15, 4/20, and 4/25**. They are to be handed in (via the CAMS course site or to the instructor's email inbox) before class time on the day indicated in the syllabus. *No late papers will be accepted.* These papers will represent 35% of your final grade.

3. **Analysis of a point of Reformed doctrine in the *Book of Confessions*.** You will prepare a 10-12 page (double-spaced) paper analyzing Reformed confessional positions as reflected in *The Book of Confessions* on the topic you are assigned (see A. and B. below). In addition you (and your partner) will be expected to facilitate a discussion on the date indicated in the syllabus for your topic. Discussion will be expected to center around a theology ordination exam question that you will devise which presents a scenario in ministry relating to the point of Reformed doctrine you have been assigned (see B. below). Please make copies of your ordination question for your classmates. In your class discussion time, please have the class divide into small groups to work on all or part of the question you devise. Then have the class come back together to discuss the question as a whole. You are encouraged to have your paper completed by the date on which your assigned topic is due to be discussed. Please include your answer to the ordination question in your paper. All papers will be due no later than **May 19**. This paper and your leadership in the assigned discussion period will represent 35% of the final grade.

The chart on page 7 of this syllabus lists the most obvious locations for theological discussions of particular doctrines in *The Book of Confessions*. **Please note** that locations have not been provided for the Apostles' Creed, the Nicene Creed, or the Brief Statement of Faith since their brevity allows you to peruse them quickly for relevant comments on the doctrines listed.

*The Book of Confessions* is also available in searchable form on the computers in the Seminary's computer lab. If you are not presenting on a particular day, you are expected to perform a computer search of the *BoC* for the doctrinal topic(s) assigned for that day. This exercise will both enhance your own learning and support your classmates' efforts in leading discussion on those topics.

In your paper you should:

A. Discuss the unity and diversity of the Reformed witness.

i. Begin by identifying the general contours of "a Reformed position" on your topic. What is distinctive about the Reformed ways the confessions treat the topic? In the process of identifying what the confessions say about your topic, do *not* go through each confessional document outlining in detail what each says. Be restrained and judicious in your use of quotations and citations. Do cite passages that seem particularly important or illustrative of common or distinctive themes.

ii. Once you have attempted to find a common thread or witness in the confessions as a whole, pay attention to differences. Where do you find divergent emphases? Where do you see outright disagreement? Where do you note development in positions over time? As part of your analysis, it will be as important to attend to what is *left out* as it will be to note what *is* said. If your topic is not taken up in a confessional document, think about possible reasons for the omission.

B. Discuss practical applications of the point of doctrine.

Devise a theology ordination exam question centered around the doctrine you have been assigned. Look at some actual theology exams questions before you write your own. (The library has several CD's of the questions from previous ordination exams. This content is also available on the web at [http://www.lpts.edu/Academic\\_Resources/OrdExamsnewaccess.asp](http://www.lpts.edu/Academic_Resources/OrdExamsnewaccess.asp) under the category Theological Competence.) You will be devising a question for Section I of the exam, in which you are allowed to use an unmarked *Book of Confessions*. Outline a realistic scenario in the practice of ministry on which the confessional doctrinal positions you have discussed in part A of this assignment would have some significant bearing. The test of a "good" question is how well it facilitates your exploration of the practical dimensions of theological convictions. In your class presentation you should spend some time indicating how you would answer this ordination exam question. If you are working with a partner for this assignment, you may devise one exam question together, and collaborate on the class presentation, but you should each hand in a paper. In your paper, answer the ordination exam question that you devise for class discussion.

#### 4. Midterm

A midterm exam will be given on March 30. The midterm exam will count as 35% of your final grade.

**N.B. In order to pass the course, students must complete and submit all assigned work: discussion papers (at least 80% of those assigned), Confessions paper (including facilitating discussion), and midterm.**

#### Required Texts:

James H. Smylie. *A Brief History of the Presbyterians* (Geneva Press). (Referred to in the syllabus as *Smylie*)

Christopher Elwood. *Calvin for Armchair Theologians* (W/JK). (Referred to in the syllabus as *Elwood*)  
PCUSA. *The Book of Confessions, Study Edition* (W/JK). (Referred to in the syllabus as *BoC*)

Milton J Coalter, John M. Mulder, Louis B. Weeks. *The Re-Forming Tradition: Presbyterians and Mainstream Protestantism* (W/JK). (Referred to in the syllabus as *Re-Forming Tradition*)

Other readings are on e-reserve at the CAMS site for this course (R).

### **Policy on late work:**

Written assignments submitted late, when no extension has been granted, will be penalized in the grading by one letter grade increment for every day (i.e., a B+ paper becomes a B if one day late, a B- if two days, a C+ if three days, etc.). Assignments submitted more than ten days after the due date will not be accepted. Note that this policy applies to all work for the course, *except for the short discussion papers*.

### **Citation Policy:**

Citations in your papers should follow the Seminary standard, which is based on these guides:

- Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 15<sup>th</sup> ed. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2003.

Copies of these guides are available at the library and in the Academic Support Center.

### **Academic Honesty:**

All work turned in to the instructor is expected to be the work of the student whose name appears on the assignment. Any borrowing of the ideas or the words of others must be acknowledged by quotation marks (where appropriate) and by citation of author and source. Students unfamiliar with issues relating to academic honesty can find help from the staff in the Academic Support Center and should make use of the available resources at an early date, since violations of seminary policy on academic honesty can lead to a failing grade for the course.

### **Accessibility and Accommodation:**

Students requiring accommodation for a physical or learning disability should be in contact with the Director of the Academic Support Center (ASC; [kmapes@lpts.edu](mailto:kmapes@lpts.edu)) within the first few days of the course and should speak with the instructor as soon as possible to arrange appropriate adjustments. Students with environmental or other sensitivities that may affect their learning are also encouraged to speak with the instructor.

### **Inclusive Language:**

The use of inclusive language in course work is a policy of Louisville Presbyterian Seminary. Direct quotations from theological texts and translations of the Bible do not have to be altered to conform to this policy. In your own writing, however, avoid language for people that leaves out part of the population or perpetuates stereotypes. Do not assume masculine gender when the gender of the person is unknown. When referring to God, you are encouraged to use a variety of images and metaphors. See [http://www.lpts.edu/Academic\\_Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp](http://www.lpts.edu/Academic_Resources/ASC/avoidinggenderbiasinlanguage.asp).

## Calendar of Lectures and Discussion Topics

\* indicates discussion section (see groups and meeting locations on p. 8)

(\* indicates a plenary discussion)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
Th 2/11	Introduction	
T 2/16	(*Nicene and Apostles' Creeds	"The Confessional Nature of the Church," <i>BoC</i> , pp. 351-369 Nicene Creed and Apostles' Creed, <i>BoC</i> (also available as a pdf file: <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/oga/publications/boc.pdf">http://www.pcusa.org/oga/publications/boc.pdf</a> ). Note: For each assignment in the <i>BoC</i> , read the introduction that accompanies each document in the Study Edition.
W 2/17	Emergence of Reformed Protestantism	<i>Elwood</i> , ch. 1-4
Th 2/18	*Heidelberg Catechism	Heidelberg Catechism, <i>BoC</i> <i>Elwood</i> , "Some Notes on the Translation of the Heidelberg Catechism" (R)
T 2/23	Scottish Reformation	Hans Hillerbrand, <i>The Reformation</i> , pp. 298-304; 356-69 (R)
W 2/24	*Scots Confession <b>Discussion paper 1:</b> <i>What authority is given to Scripture in this confession? Does this set up Reformed churches to be contentious? Explain.</i>	Scots Confession, <i>BoC</i>
Th 2/25	*Second Helvetic Confession	Second Helvetic Confession, <i>BoC</i>
T 3/2	Calvinism in a Confessional Age	<i>Elwood</i> , ch. 5 Samuel T. Logan, "The Context and Work of the Assembly," in <i>To Glorify and Enjoy God</i> , pp. 29-46 (R)
W 3/3	(*Westminster Confession <b>Discussion paper 2:</b> <i>Explain the view of covenant presented in chapter 6 of this confession. What implications does this view have for biblical interpretation? For Christian praxis?</i>	Westminster Confession, <i>BoC</i>
Th 3/4	Puritanism	Westminster Catechisms, <i>BoC</i>
T 3/9	Colonial Presbyterianism	<i>Smylie</i> , chapters 4-6

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
W 3/10	(*)Subscription Controversy <b>Discussion paper 3:</b> <i>What lessons are to be learned from the controversies over subscription in American Presbyterianism? Give an account of and critically respond to the positions/arguments of both New Wineskins and William Stacy Johnson.</i>	New Wineskins Association of Churches, available at: <a href="http://www.newwineconvo.com/documents/Essential_Tenets_of_the_Reformed_Faith.doc">http://www.newwineconvo.com/documents/Essential_Tenets_of_the_Reformed_Faith.doc</a> ; <a href="http://www.newwineconvo.com/documents/White_Paper_on_Subscription.doc">http://www.newwineconvo.com/documents/White_Paper_on_Subscription.doc</a> William Stacy Johnson, "Revisiting the Confessional Nature of the Church" <i>Presbyterian Outlook</i> , Feb. 4, 2002, available at : <a href="http://www.pres-outlook.org/opinion/guest-commentary/64-revisiting-the-confessional-nature-of-the-church.html">http://www.pres-outlook.org/opinion/guest-commentary/64-revisiting-the-confessional-nature-of-the-church.html</a>
Th 3/11	Trends in 19 <sup>th</sup> -c Presbyterianism	<i>Smylie</i> , chapter 7
T 3/16	Old School Presbyterianism	<i>Smylie</i> , chapter 8 Katie Cannon, "Surviving the Blight," in <i>Inheriting our Mothers' Gardens</i> , pp. 75-90 (R)
W 3/17	Presbyterians and Race	Francis J. Grimke, "Victory for the Allies and the United States a Ground of Rejoicing, of Thanksgiving" (R) Joel Alvis, "A Presbyterian Dilemma," and Gayraud S. Wilmore, "Identity and Integration," chs. 8-9 in <i>The Diversity of Discipleship</i> , pp. 187-233 (R)
Th 3/18	Presbyterian Women <b>Midterm study questions distributed today</b>	Rosemary Radford Ruether and Rosemary Skinner Keller, <i>Women and Religion in America: Vol. 1 The Nineteenth Century</i> . pp. 13-18, 25-27, 33-39, 208-217, 229-238 (R)
3/22-26	<b>Research and Study</b>	
T 3/30	<b>Midterm exam</b>	
W 3/31	<b>No class</b> (recovery day)	
Th 4/1	<b>Easter Recess</b>	
T 4/6	Religious Cultures, Denominations, and Incorporation	<i>Re-Forming Tradition</i> , chapters 3 and 7

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
W 4/7	(*)Expanding Traditions: Mission and Global Encounters <b>Discussion paper 4:</b> <i>In what ways does the experience and practice of William H. Sheppard reflect opportunities and challenges for Reformed witness in the late-19<sup>th</sup>/early-20<sup>th</sup> century?</i>	Westminster Confession, <i>BoC</i> 6.187-6.193 William H. Sheppard, "Light in Darkest Africa" <a href="http://books.google.com/books?id=ICYBAAAYAAJ&amp;dq=southern%20workman%20%22light%20in%20darkest%20africa%22&amp;as_brr=1&amp;pg=PA218#v=onepage&amp;q=southern%20workman%20%22light%20in%20darkest%20africa%22&amp;f=false">http://books.google.com/books?id=ICYBAAAYAAJ&amp;dq=southern%20workman%20%22light%20in%20darkest%20africa%22&amp;as_brr=1&amp;pg=PA218#v=onepage&amp;q=southern%20workman%20%22light%20in%20darkest%20africa%22&amp;f=false</a> John G. Turner, "A 'Black-White' Missionary on the Imperial Stage: William H. Sheppard and Middle-Class Black Manhood," <i>Journal of Southern Religion</i> 9: <a href="http://jsr.fsu.edu/Volume9/Turner.htm">http://jsr.fsu.edu/Volume9/Turner.htm</a>
Th 4/8	Modernist/Fundamentalist Controversy	<i>Re-Forming Tradition</i> , chapter 4 <i>Smylie</i> , chapter 9, 10 "The Auburn Affirmation" available at <a href="http://www.opc.org/cce/AuburnAf.html">http://www.opc.org/cce/AuburnAf.html</a> J. Gresham Machen, "The Truth about the Presbyterian Church," <i>Selected Shorter Writings</i> , pp. 243-249, 262-266 (R)
T 4/13	Neo-orthodoxy and other 20 <sup>th</sup> -century trends	Karl Barth, <i>Church Dogmatics: A Selection with Introduction</i> , pp. 53-65 J. S. Conway, "The German Church Struggle," in <i>The Church Confronts the Nazis</i> , pp. 93-111 (See also Brief Glossary for this article.) (R)
W 4/14	(*)Barmen Declaration	Barmen Declaration, <i>BoC</i> <i>Smylie</i> , chapter 10 Confession of Belhar <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/theologyandworship/confession/belhar.pdf">http://www.pcusa.org/theologyandworship/confession/belhar.pdf</a>
Th 4/15	(*)Confession of 1967 <b>Discussion paper 5:</b> <i>How does this confession handle the issue of theological authority? In other words, what is the foundation for what should be said theologically? What ramifications does this have for the confession as a whole?</i>	<i>Confession of 1967</i> , <i>BoC</i> See an inclusive language version at <a href="http://www.creeds.net/reformed/confess67.pdf">http://www.creeds.net/reformed/confess67.pdf</a> <i>Smylie</i> , chapter 11
T 4/20	Presbyterian Evangelism and Mission <b>Discussion paper 6:</b> <i>Your sister congregation in a part of Colombia that has suffered from recurring violence asks you to help plan their first-ever revival week. From a Reformed perspective as guided by the readings, what considerations, concerns and</i>	Banker, "Of Missionaries, Multiculturalism, and Mainstream Malaise" <i>Journal of Presbyterian History</i> (Summer 2003): 77-99 (R) "Turn to the Living God: A Call to Evangelism in Jesus Christ's Way" A resolution adopted by the 203rd General Assembly (1991) (R) "Gathering for God's Future" (R)

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
	<i>recommendations would you bring to that planning meeting and why?</i>	“The Church and its Mission,” Chapter III of the Book of Order (R)
W 4/21	Ecumenism and Interfaith Relations	<p>“Presbyterian Principles for Interfaith Dialogue”:  <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/interfaith/study/principles.htm">http://www.pcusa.org/interfaith/study/principles.htm</a></p> <p>Jane Dempsey Douglas at a WARC related conference in Princeton in the 90s entitled, A Reformed Perspective on the Ecumenical Movement. It can be found on line at <a href="http://www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=421">www.religion-online.org/showarticle.asp?title=421</a>.</p> <p>Presbyterian Understanding of the Successor to Peter  <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/ecumenicalrelations/images/peter.pdf">http://www.pcusa.org/ecumenicalrelations/images/peter.pdf</a>.</p>
Th 4/22	Postmodernism and Pluralism in Contemporary Presbyterianism	<p>“Living the Vision: becoming a multicultural church” (distributed); also available at <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/multicultural/livingthevision.pdf">http://www.pcusa.org/multicultural/livingthevision.pdf</a></p> <p>Beau Weston, “Rebuilding the Presbyterian establishment” <a href="http://www.pcusa.org/reformingministry/papers/rebuilding.pdf">http://www.pcusa.org/reformingministry/papers/rebuilding.pdf</a></p> <p><i>If time</i>, visit the websites of these PCUSA advocacy groups:</p> <p>Presbyterians for Renewal: <a href="http://www.pfrenewal.org/">www.pfrenewal.org/</a>  Confessing Church Movement: <a href="http://www.layman.org/home/evangelism/confessingchurches.aspx">http://www.layman.org/home/evangelism/confessingchurches.aspx</a>  Covenant Network: <a href="http://www.covenantnetwork.org/home.htm">http://www.covenantnetwork.org/home.htm</a>  That All May Freely Serve: <a href="http://www.tamfs.org/">www.tamfs.org/</a></p>
M 4/25	<p><b>Festival of Theology optional lecture:</b> Standing Where God Stands: The Confession of Belhar – A Call for Unity, Justice, Reconciliation and Inclusion, Allan Boesak (11:30-12:30)</p> <p><b>Discussion paper 7:</b> <i>Using Allan Boesak’s argument regarding the Belhar Confession as a reference point, present your own view of the contemporary significance of this confession for the PC(USA) and the ecumenical church.</i></p>	
T 4/27	(*)Brief Statement of Faith <b>Class meets today in GC 206</b>	Brief Statement of Faith, <i>BoC</i>

<u>Date</u>	<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment</u>
W 4/28	<u>Student Presentations Begin</u> Scripture, Trinity <b>Class meets today in GC 206</b>	Read pertinent sections of the <i>BoC</i> for Scripture and Trinity (or the doctrine of God)
Th 4/29	Creation and Providence; Sin and Covenant	Read pertinent sections of the <i>BoC</i> for Creation and Providence, and Sin and Covenant
T 5/4	Election; Law and Gospel	Read pertinent sections of the <i>BoC</i> for Election, and Law and Gospel
W 5/5	Jesus Christ; Justification, Sanctification and Repentance	Read pertinent sections of the <i>BoC</i> for Jesus Christ, Justification, Sanctification and Repentance
Th 5/6	Faith and Works and the Christian Life, Holy Spirit	Read pertinent sections of the <i>BoC</i> for Faith and Works and the Christian Life, and the Holy Spirit
T 5/11	Church, Worship and Sacraments	Read pertinent sections of the <i>BoC</i> for Church, Worship and Sacraments
W 5/12	Resurrection and Last Things, State	Read pertinent sections of the <i>BoC</i> for Resurrection and Last Things, and the State
Th 5/13	Concluding Reflections	<i>Re-Forming Tradition</i> , chapter 9
W 5/19	<b>Confessions paper due</b>	

### **Discussion Groups (for days marked with an asterisk [\*])**

Gardencourt 206  
 Ryan Althaus  
 Mike Beckman  
 Shannon Burford  
 Marvin Dandurand  
 Kate Davidson  
 William Gossett  
 Linda Lotspeich  
 Tom Rudzinski  
 Jenny Stevens  
 Sonja Williams

Gardencourt 213  
 Rebecca Barnes-Davies  
 Dawn Black  
 Megan Case  
 Kathleen Daniels  
 Aaron Flucke  
 Jenny Howard  
 Brennan Pearson  
 Garrett Schindler  
 Michael Whitman  
 Eric Wright



## Themes in the Reformed Confessions

	Scots Confession	Heidelberg Catechism	Second Helvetic	<i>Westminster Confession</i> (UPC numbering)	Barmen Declaration	Confession of 1967
<i>Scripture</i>	XVIII-XX	21	I-II	I	1	Preface, 3, 27, 30, 49
<i>Trinity</i>	I	25	III	II		5, 7
<i>Creation &amp; Providence</i>	I-II	1, 26-28	VI-VII	IV-V		16-17
<i>Sin &amp; Covenant</i>	III-V	3-11, 19,74	VIII-IX, XX	VI-VII, IX, IXX		12-14, 18-19
<i>Election</i>	VII-VIII	26, 31, 52, 54	X	III,X		(18-20)
<i>Law</i>	XIV-XV	3-4, 92-115	XII	XIX (VII, XIII, XX)		
<i>Gospel</i>	IV-V	19, etc.	XIII	VII,VIII, XXXV		6, 7, 18, etc.
<i>Jesus Christ</i>	V-XI	29-52	XI	VIII	1-2	3, 8-11, 15, 24, 32
<i>Justification, Sanctification, Repentance</i>	(XII, XV)	31-34, 60-64	XIV-XV	XI-XV		21-22
<i>Faith, Works, the Christian Life</i>	XII-XIV	1-2,21,32,53, 60-61,63,74, 86,91-92, Part III	XVI	XIII, XIV,XXVI, XIX-XX	2-3	10, 21-26, 41-47
<i>Holy Spirit</i>	XII	53-64	III, etc.	XXXIV		Part I, section C
<i>Church</i>	V, XVI-XVIII, XX-XXII, XXV	54, 85	XVII-XVIII, XXVIII	XXV-XXVI, XXX-XXXI	3-4	20, 22, 25, 31-42, 43-47
<i>Worship &amp; Sacraments</i>	XVI, XXI-XXIII	65-82	IV-V, XIX-XXII	XXI, XXVI-XXIX		36-37, 48-52
<i>Resurrection &amp; Last Things</i>	XI, XXV	45, 52, 57-59, (75)	In XI (5.075), XXVI	In XXIX (6.161), XXXII-XXXIII		26, Part III
<i>State</i>	XXIV		XXX	XXIII	Entire	17, 25, 43-47