

PT5275 Leadership & Discipleship

Fall 2026: Thursday 10 am – Noon

Office Hours: 1 pm – 4 pm, Tuesday & Wednesday

John R. Muether, Instructor

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Course Description

This course is a study of through philosophy, principles, and skills for a pastor can lead a session and a congregation in cultivating a culture of discipleship in the local church. A variety of discipleship and Christian education topics will be discussed.

Brief Outline of Class Lectures

1. The Crisis of Leadership in the Church
2. Toward a Theology of Discipleship
 - A. Old Testament
 - B. New Testament
 - C. Reformed Theology and Discipleship
3. The History of Discipleship
 - A. Catechesis: Christian Formation in Church History
 - B. The Rise and Fall of Sunday School
4. Leading in the Practice of Discipleship
 - A. Sunday School Curricula
 - B. Communicant Class Instruction
 - C. Youth Ministry
 - D. Theological Education
 - E. Family Worship
 - F. Home Visitation
 - G. Small Groups
5. Conclusion: Rethinking Leadership in the Church

Class Texts

Baxter, Richard. *The Reformed Pastor*, updated and edited by Tim Chester. Wheaton: Crossway, 2021.

Packer, J. I., and Gary A. Parrett. *Grounded in the Gospel: Building Believers the Old Fashion Way*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2011.

Witmer, Timothy Z. *The Shepherd Leader: Achieving Effective Shepherding in Your Church*. Phillipsburg, NJ: P&R, 2010.

Addition brief readings to be assigned.

Class Assignments

Descriptions of the four written assignments are found on Canvas.

- Curriculum for Focused Discipleship Assignment (20%)
- Discipleship in the Workplace Assignment (20%)
- Catechesis in the Local Church Assignment (30%)
- Leadership in the Local Church Assignment (10%)
- Catechism Memorization – WSC 85-90 (10%)
- Class Attendance & Participation (10%)

Course Objectives Related to MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes

Course: Leadership and Discipleship

Professor: Muether

Campus: Orlando

Date: Fall 2026

<u>MDiv* Student Learning Outcomes</u> <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> <i>*As the MDiv is the core degree at RTS, the MDiv rubric will be used in this syllabus.</i>		<u>Rubric</u> ➤ Strong ➤ Moderate ➤ Minimal ➤ None	<u>Mini-Justification</u>
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.	Minimal	Students will write an evaluation of a church's educational ministry (requires little or no research).
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.)	Moderate	Scriptural principles for Christian discipleship will be considered at some length.
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	Reformed spirituality and its connection to discipleship (e.g. Catechesis) will be a large burden of the class.
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Minimal	The importance of a love for the people of God will be underscored.
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	None	
Winsomely Reformed	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.)	Moderate	Christian and non-Christian wisdom in education be considered and appreciated.
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Minimal	The strengths and weaknesses of catechetical preaching will be discussed (briefly).
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Moderate	The importance of edification in the practice of worship will be highlighted.
Shepherd	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.	Strong	Home visitation, small group ministries, and other discipleship programs will be discussed.
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Minimal	Debates over Christian/home/public schooling will receive some attention.