

Dr. Mark I. McDowell
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Reformed Theological Seminary

Dallas, Fall 2026
Wednesday 9AM-12PM
ST5200
3 Credit Hours

ST5150 – Systematic Theology Scripture, Theology Proper & Anthropology

1. COURSE DESCRIPTION (3 credits)

To orient and familiarize the student to the biblical teaching and theological categories of the following doctrines: Scripture, the Triune God, Creation, Providence, Humanity & Sin.

2. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. *Class Participation*: includes attendance of all classes and active participation and contribution in class discussion
2. *Provisional Thesis & Bibliography (5%)*: Due by **October 9th by 5PM** Students are required to hand in a brief description of the topic for their research paper that also includes a provisional thesis statement and a working bibliography. This bibliography should include 10-18 books and articles.
3. *Final Exam (30%)* Exams will test understanding and comprehension of material covered in class, readings, and the ability to articulate and communicate theological material in a clear way. Each exam will consist of short and long questions. A final section will test the students understanding and recall of Westminster Shorter Catechisms that will be assigned in class. To be taken by **December 11th by 5PM**
4. *Theological Research Paper (40%)*: Students will write a 12–15-page paper (typed, double-spaced, 12 pt font). Papers will only be graded up to and including the 15-page limit. The paper must treat a doctrinal topic related to the content of the class, that is, broadly, Scripture, Theology Proper and Anthropology. Standard *SBL* format ought to be followed. Footnotes to be used (not endnotes). Students should discuss potential paper topics with the professor.
5. *Reading (25%)*: At the time of the final examination, students will be asked to report the percentage of required course material that they have read (not skimmed!) during the term

6. ALL WORK TO BE SUBMITTED ON CANVAS

TEXTBOOKS

Allen & Swain, (eds.), *Christian Dogmatics: Reformed Theology for the Church Catholic* (Baker Academic, 2016)

Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960) [selection]

Francis Turretin, *Institutes of Elenctic Theology* (Philipsburg: P&R, 1992). Vol. 1, Third Topic, pp. 181-310.

Gilles Emery, *The Trinity: An Introduction to Catholic Doctrine on the Triune God* (Catholic University of America Press, 2011)

Gray Sutanto, *For Us and for Our Salvation: The Biblical Doctrine of Humanity and Sin*. We Believe: Studies in Reformed Biblical Doctrine (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2026) – **NB**. students will receive an advanced pre-publication copy from the Professor, and will need to purchase the hardcopy upon publication.

Timothy Ward, *Words of Life: Scripture as the Living and Active Word of God* (IVP Academic, 2009)

The Westminster Confession of Faith (WCF)

* Additional Readings will be made available to students on canvas

**Course Objectives Related to MDiv Student Learning Outcomes
With Mini-Justification**

Course: ST 5150
Professor: Dr. Mark I. McDowell
Campus: Dallas
Date: Fall 2026

<u>MDiv Student Learning Outcomes</u>		<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.	Strong	Exams, theological reflections and theological research paper
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.)	Strong	Each theological locus finds its explanation and authority in the canonical teaching of Holy Scripture
Reformed Theology	Significant knowledge of Reformed theology and practice, with emphasis on the Westminster Standards.	Strong	Students are guided in this theology course by the Reformed Theology as it is articulated in the Westminster Standards
Sanctification	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids the student's sanctification.	Moderate	Students will read Calvin's book on sanctification in the relevant week but will see the deep value of the application of these doctrines to the Christian life
Desire for Worldview	Burning desire to conform all of life to the Word of God.	Strong	This course enables students to see the coherence these doctrines bring to the understanding of reality
Winsomely Reformed/ Evangelistic	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.)	Strong	Approaches theological loci of other traditions in a warm, courteous, respectful and appreciative manner
Preach	Ability to preach and teach the meaning of Scripture to both heart and mind with clarity and enthusiasm.	Strong	Emphasis on God in himself, God's works helps students to grasp deeper understanding of Scripture
Worship	Knowledgeable of historic and modern Christian-worship forms; and ability to construct and skill to lead a worship service.	Moderate	Studying identity and actions of God will lead the student into richer worship, both individually and corporately
Shepherd	Ability to shepherd the local congregation: aiding in spiritual maturity; promoting use of gifts and callings;	Moderate	Seeing God as the Great Shepherd of His people and the ways He Shepherds

	and encouraging a concern for non-Christians, both in America and worldwide.		in creation and providence shapes our pastoral imagination
Church/World	Ability to interact within a denominational context, within the broader worldwide church, and with significant public issues.	Minimal	Broad understanding of cultural issues are informed by a theological framework