PROSPECTUS
FOR INTAKE BEGINNING
2015

35 Knockbracken Road
Carryduff
Belfast
BT8 9FJ
CONTENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION

Faculty
Introduction
History
Constitution
Admissions Procedure
Education Fund
Bursaries & Prizes
Reformed Theological Journal

CURRICULUM INFORMATION

Department of Old Testament Language & Literature
Department of New Testament Language & Literature
Department of Systematic Theology, Apologetics & Ethics
Department of Pastoral Theology & Homiletics
Department of Church History

2
FACULTY AND STAFF

Principal

Professors
Pastoral Theology and Homiletics:

Theology and Christian Ethics and Apologetics:

Old Testament Language and Literature:
Rev. W Norris S Wilson, M.A., M.Th., Ph.D.

New Testament Language and Literature:

New Testament Professor Emeritus

Lecturers
Church History: Rev. C Knox Hyndman, B.A.

Librarian
Dr Trevor McCavery

Secretary of Committee of Superintendence
Rev. John A Hawthorne

Treasurer
Mr Irwin Lockington
Introduction

The Reformed Theological College is dedicated to training men for the ministry of the gospel. It is committed to the historic Reformed faith, particularly as set forth in the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms and expressed in the Testimony of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland. The faculty, in addition to their lecturing responsibilities, are all involved in pastoral ministry, which results in teaching with a uniquely practical emphasis. Training in college focuses not only on encouraging a high level of scholarship but on personal godliness and the development of spiritual gifts and ministry skills.

History

The college, one of the oldest in Ireland, was established in 1854 as the Reformed Presbyterian Theological Hall. In the previous century, students were trained at the Theological Hall of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Scotland at Paisley.

Six students attended the first classes, which for sixteen years were held during the summer months. From 1869 a winter session lasting four months was approved, increased to six months in 1931.

From 1854 until 1896 there were two Chairs – of Systematic Theology and of Exegetical and Pastoral Theology, with Church History and Hebrew. These have been sub-divided over the years, with four chairs and three lectureships at present.

From 1854 until 1972 the College was accommodated in central Belfast in the premises of College Street South, later Grosvenor Road, congregation. It then transferred to Cameron House, Lisburn Road, where it remained until 2005. In that year the College moved into its present premises, a new purpose-built building at Knockbracken, Belfast.
Library

The Library dates from 1854 and contains a good selection of books, especially of the Reformation and Puritan periods. It has been considerably enlarged in recent years and now provides a well-balanced working resource.

Constitution

The College is under the control of the Synod of the Reformed Presbyterian Church of Ireland. A Board of Examiners consisting of six ministers of the Church is appointed annually by Synod. This board, together with the faculty and the college treasurer, forms the Committee of Superintendence.

The theological course consists of eight terms spread over a three-year period. Classes each year begin and end with a public address delivered by a member of the faculty or by a minister or elder nominated by the Committee of Superintendence and approved by Synod.

The professor of systematic theology is responsible for teaching the distinctive principles of the Reformed Presbyterian Church and the professor of pastoral theology a course of lectures on Covenanting history.

Members of the faculty are appointed by Synod from ministers of the Church whose godly character and academic qualifications are considered satisfactory. On appointment, and at the beginning of each Session, members of the faculty sign a declaration to perform faithfully the duties of the Chair, and to teach, maintain and defend the standards and principles of the Covenanting Church.

Each student at the College is required in each of the summer terms of the first and second years to spend two months in practical training for the Christian ministry.
Admissions Procedure

Every student preparing for the ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church shall, before being accepted for admission to the College, be a member of a congregation, have placed himself under the care of a Presbytery of the Church and be approved by the Committee of Superintendence. During his training Presbytery shall investigate the student’s progress and development at each stage of his course.

No candidate shall be admitted as a regular student until he has obtained a degree or a suitable certificate in higher education. Mature students, or candidates whose circumstances are exceptional, may be admitted by special permission of the Committee and Synod provided they have attained to a suitable level in secondary education.

The courses are open to students of other denominations, provided that their academic standing is acceptable to the College and that they have the approval of their respective Churches. Guest students are not eligible for bursaries or for grants from the Education Fund.

The professors may at their discretion admit auditors to classes. Such auditors receive no formal credit for classes taken.

A Diploma in Theology (Dip.Th.) is awarded to students who complete the full course.

Education Fund

The object of this Fund is to assist in educating suitable men for the ministry of the Gospel who are under the care of a Presbytery of the Reformed Presbyterian Church.
Bursaries and Prizes

On the results obtained at the examinations in each session, the following bursaries and prizes are awarded to students for the ministry of the Reformed Presbyterian Church:

- The Mawhinney Bursary
- The Archibald Bursary
- The John Kerr Bursary
- The James G Thompson Bursary
- The Stewart Allen Bursary
- The Lyons Memorial Prize
- The William Wasson Memorial Bursary
- The John Donnelly Memorial Bursary
- The Robert Buchanan Bursary
- The Dodds Memorial Prize
- The Elizabeth Graham Prize
- The Margaret Graham Prize
- The David Magee Bursary
- The Frederick S Leahy Bursary
- The Dromore Bursary
- Doggart Bursary

Reformed Theological Journal

This journal is published annually by the college faculty and, together with articles written by faculty members, includes contributions from Reformed scholars throughout the world.
CURRICULUM
OLD TESTAMENT LANGUAGE

Year 1

OTL 1.1  Elementary Hebrew
Initial intensive language course, supplemented by weekly instruction in term time, covering the basic grammar, vocabulary, syntax and morphology of Old Testament Hebrew. Instructor: Rev. Andrew Kerr.

OTL 1.2  Hebrew Translation
Reading and translation form the Hebrew Pentateuch, with focus on grammar, use of lexicons, concordances, dictionaries and commentaries as ground work for exegesis and application on preaching. There will also be a focus on computer tools.

Year 2

OTL 2.1  Hebrew Exegesis 1
Reading and translation from the Hebrew Prophets, as above. In addition attention will be given to advanced grammar, syntax and the lexical, literary and theological features of the text.

Year 3

OTL 3.1  Hebrew Exegesis 2
Reading and translation from the Hebrew Writings, as above. In addition attention will be given to outlining the steps and providing practical experience in the interpretative process from translation to sermon.
OLD TESTAMENT HISTORY

A Biblical-Theological analysis of Old Testament history and literatures with a focus on the themes of the Old Testament as well as the historical detail, especially the covenantal structure of the kingdom of God and consideration of the Near Eastern historical and cultural setting of the biblical events.

Year 1
OTH 1.1 From the Beginnings to the Judges.

Year 2
OTH 2.1 From the Monarchy to Impending Exile.

Year 3
OTH 3.1 From the Exile to the Inter-Testamental Period.

OLD TESTAMENT INTRODUCTION

OTI Sum. Old Testament English Bible.
Over the three years, as required summer work, students will do a detailed reading of the English text of the Old Testament Books, following the threefold division of the Pentateuch, Prophets and Writings. In addition a set text on Old Testament survey will be used and notes kept for presentation.

OTI 1.1,2 and 3 Matters of General Introduction.
Over the three years there will be lectures on such subjects as: The Authority of the OT; The Text of the OT; Textual Criticism of the OT; The Canon of the OT; The work of the Scribes and Massoretes; The Septuagint; Higher Criticism (from the Documentary Hypothesis to the present day); OT Geography; OT Archaeology; Apocryphal Books; OT Chronology; Use of the OT in the NT; etc.
OTI 2.1, 2 and 3 Introduction to specific Books.
These lectures focus on such matters as authorship/composition/sources, genre, form/structure, text, historical background, dating, position in the canon, themes, purpose/significance, style, special characteristics, problems of interpretation, NT fulfillment, application, guide to best commentaries, etc as basic groundwork for preaching the OT.

Year 1
OTI 2.1 Introduction to the Books of the Law (or the Pentateuch)

Year 2
OTI 2.2 Introduction to the Prophets ('Former' and 'Latter'. A chronological approach will be followed).

Year 3
OTI 3.2 Introduction to the Writings (Poetical, Wisdom and Postexilic Historical Books).

OLD TESTAMENT BIBLICAL THEOLOGY

(1) A Biblical-Theological analysis of the Covenant of Grace, tracing the development of its key elements and themes through the different epochs of redemptive history.

Year 1
OTB 1.1.1 The LORD as Covenant initiator
OTB 1.1.2 Man as Covenant recipient.

Year 2
OTB 2.1.1 Sin as showing the need for the Covenant
OTB 2.1.2 Salvation as the blessing of the Covenant
Year 3

OTB 3.1.1  The life of the Covenant-keeper
OTB 3.1.2  The consummation of the Covenant (OT eschatology).

(2) Lectures will be given in three associated areas:

Year 1

OTB 1.2  Old Testament Hermeneutics.
A book or extended passage will be outlined and studied in detail, in order to present models of expository sermons and give practical guidance in varied types of preaching in different OT genres. (This may be extended through other years)

Year 2

OTB 2.2  Old Testament Covenants
Lectures will be given on the unfolding theology of the historical covenants and will follow an exegetical, Redemptive-Historical approach.

Year 3

OTB 3.2  Old Testament ethics (lectures on various key topics).
NEW TESTAMENT LANGUAGE

Year 1

NTL 1.1 Elementary Greek
Initial intensive language course, supplemented by weekly instruction, covering the basic grammar, syntax & morphology of New Testament Greek. **Instructor: Rev Warren Peel**

NTL 1.2 Greek translation
Translation of easier portions of the Greek New Testament

Year 2

NTL 2.1 Advanced translation
Extensive reading and translation from the Greek New Testament, with focus on word usage studies, commentaries and computer research tools as a foundation for exegesis and preaching.

Year 3

NTL 3.1 New Testament Exegesis
An exploration of the principles and practice of Greek exegesis, with attention to textual criticism, advanced grammar and syntax and the lexical, literary and theological features of the text.
NEW TESTAMENT INTRODUCTION

Year 1

NTI 1.1 New Testament Background
An overview of the historical, political, cultural and religious background of the Mediterranean world of the 1st century.

NTI 1.2 The Life and Teaching of Jesus Christ
A study of the life and teaching of Christ, together with an introduction to the background, content and special emphasis of each of the gospels.

Year 2

NTI 2.1 Hermeneutics
An introduction to the history, theory and practice of biblical interpretation, with emphasis on the various genres and on the transition from hermeneutics to preaching.

NTI 2.2 The Life and Letters of Paul
A study of the life and ministry of the apostle Paul, together with a detailed introduction to the Book of Acts and each of the Pauline epistles.

NTI 2.3 Christ-centred preaching
An introduction to preaching Christ from the whole Bible, particularly the Old Testament.

Year 3

NTI 3.1 The General Epistles
A detailed examination of the background, content and special emphases of the General Epistles and the book of Revelation.

NTI 3.2 Case-studies in Paul
An examination of the Pauline epistles from the perspective of the work of pastoral ministry.
NEW TESTAMENT THEOLOGY

Year 1

NTT 1.1 The Kingdom of God in the New Testament
With emphasis on the mediatorial kingship of Christ.

Year 2

NTT 2.1 The cross in the New Testament
Including an evaluation of current reinterpretations of justification and the atonement.

Year 3

NTT 3.1 The person and work of the Holy Spirit
Including an evaluation of the modern charismatic movement.

NEW TESTAMENT EXPOSITION

These courses are designed to offer a thorough analysis of the content and theology of each book, to present models of expository sermons and to provide practical experience in varied types of preaching.

Year 1

NTE 1.1 The Gospel according to Mark

Year 2

NTE 2.1 The Epistle to the Romans

Year 3

NTE 3.1 The Book of Revelation
SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Year 1

SYS 1.1 Introduction to Systematic Theology
The nature and sources of theology, general and special revelation, and the nature and place of Scripture.

SYS 1.2 Theology Proper: The Doctrine of God
The existence of God, the Trinity, the attributes of God, the decrees of God, creation and providence.

SYS 1.3 Anthropology: The Doctrine of Man
Man as originally created, the image of God, the Covenant in Eden, the Fall and its consequences.

Year 2

SYS 2.1 Christology: The Doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ
The Covenants, the person of Christ, the offices of Christ, the atonement, the lordship of Christ and covenancing.

SYS 2.2 Soteriology: The Doctrine of Salvation
The ministry of the Holy Spirit, calling, regeneration, union with Christ, conversion, repentance, faith, justification, sanctification, perseverance.
Year 3

SYS 3.1 Ecclesiology: The Doctrine of the Church
The nature, government and power of the Church, worship, sacraments, ministry, mission. Church and State.

SYS 3.2 Eschatology: The Doctrine of the Last Things
Death and the intermediate state, the return of Christ, the millennium, the resurrection, the Last Judgment, the final state of saved and lost.

ETHICS

Year 1

ETH 1.1 Introduction to Ethics
The basic elements of ethics, including salvation and the moral life, the ministry of the Holy Spirit and the role of conscience, with emphasis on the place of Scripture and the nature of ethical decision-making.

ETH 1.2 Old Testament Ethics
A consideration of the general features of the Old Testament ethical material, including the place of the law and moral problems in the Old Testament.

Year 2

ETH 2.1 New Testament Ethics
A survey of the ethical content of the Gospels, the Pauline Epistles and the other New Testament books.

ETH 2.2 Practical Ethical Issues (1)
A variety of issues will be covered, including the following: marriage, family, divorce and remarriage, homosexuality.
Year 3

ETH 3.1 History of Christian Ethics
A consideration of the significant figures and movements which have shaped Christian ethics from the first to the twentieth centuries, providing background for an understanding of the contemporary ethical scene.

ETH 3.2 Practical Ethical Issues (2)
The focus will be on medical issues such as the nature of medicine, the beginning of life, the nature of persons, abortion, in vitro fertilisation, genetic engineering, euthanasia.

APologetics

Year 1

APL 1.1 Introduction to Apologetics
A study of the basic principles of an apologetic method which is faithful to Scripture, together with a consideration of the place of apologetics in preaching and ministry, and an examination of the use of arguments for the existence of God and of approaches to the problem of evil.

APL 1.2 Survey of Western Thought
An examination and critique of the most influential thinkers, from the Greek philosophers through to the Existentialists, who have shaped modern western culture.

Year 2

APL 2.1 Modern Trends in Theology
A critical evaluation of the main theologians and movements which have influenced twenty-first century theology, including Karl Barth, Liberation Theology, Feminist Theology, Open Theism and New Covenant Theology.
APL 2.2 World Views
A consideration of some of the most influential contemporary world views, including Marxism, the New Age Movement and Postmodernism.

Year 3

APL 3.1 Contemporary Challenges
A survey of the challenges posed to the Christian faith by developments in psychology, sociology, and science, together with the threat of pluralism.

APL 3.2 Cults and religions
PASTORAL THEOLOGY

Year 1

PTH 1.1 Biblical and Historical context of Pastoral Ministry

PTH 1.2 The Calling, Character and Ordination to Pastoral Ministry

PTH 1.3 The Personal Dimensions to the Pastoral Office
  - The pastor’s home and family life
  - The pastor’s study and his reading

PTH 1.4 The Practical Responsibilities of the Pastoral Office
  - The relationship between preaching and pastoral care
  - Biblical leadership
  - Discipleship training
  - The pastor as a watchman
  - Promotion of outreach

Year 2

PTH 2.1 Biblical Eldership
  - Pastoral Leadership
  - Shared Leadership
  - Male Leadership
  - Qualified Leadership
  - Servant Leadership

PTH 2.2 Biblical Diaconate
  - The Biblical warrant for the diaconate
  - The function of diaconal ministry in the local church
The relationship between the diaconate and the eldership
Church finances

PTH 2.3 Biblical Worship
The nature of worship
The elements of worship
Historic views and practice of worship
Leadership of worship
Church prayer meetings
Open air preaching
Conventicles

Year 3

PTH 3.1 Pastoral Visitation
Pastoral care of church families
Elderly
Sick
Special needs
Bereaved and dying

PTH 3.2 Conducting Funerals

PTH 3.3 Conducting Weddings
Marriage preparation classes

PTH3.4 Preparation and Reception of Communicant Members

PTH 3.5 Administering the sacraments

PTH 3.6 Church Discipline

PTH 3.7 Pastoral Counselling
Evaluation of current approaches to counselling
Counselling those with spiritual physical and emotional problems
Special consideration given to stress and depression

**PTH 3.8 Church Polity**
The different types of church government are presented and evaluated in the light of Scripture
Attention is given to the practice of Presbyterianism in relation to: Congregation, Session, Presbytery and Synod
The Book of Government and Order of RPCNI
Relationships with local churches and sister denominations.

---

**HOMILETICS**

**Year 1**
HOM 1.1 Reading of Scripture and priority
HOM 1.2 The history of preaching
HOM 1.3 Resources available in sermon preparation
HOM 1.4 Theological foundations for preaching
HOM 1.5 Principles of expository preaching
HOM 1.6 Preparation of expository sermons
HOM 1.7 Principles and techniques of effective public speaking

**Year 2**
HOM 2.1 Sermon introductions, conclusions and transitions
HOM 2.2 Sermon structure and flow
HOM 2.3 Delivery of sermons
HOM 2.4 Sincerity and earnestness in preaching
HOM 2.5 Courage and humility in preaching
HOM 2.6 Preaching Christ-centred messages.

Year 3
HOM 3.1 Applicatory preaching
HOM 3.2 Pastoral preaching
HOM 3.3 Powerful preaching
HOM 3.4 Illustrations in preaching
HOM 3.5 Sermons for special occasions: weddings, funerals, anniversaries, etc.
HOM 3.6 Speech production

EVANGELISM (Year 1)

This course aims to develop principles and methods of evangelism consistent with the Biblical doctrine of salvation. The place and importance of evangelism within the context of the local congregation are given priority.

E VN 1.1 Principles of Biblical evangelism
E VN 1.2 Context of evangelistic ministry
EVN 1.3 Practice of evangelism

COVENANTER HISTORY (Year 2)

CVH 2.1 Pre-Reformation Scotland

CVH 2.2 The Impact of the Reformation on Scottish Society

CVH 2.3 Opposition to Reformation and development of Presbyterianism

CVH 2.4 Events leading up to the 2nd Reformation (1638)

CVH 2.5 The National Covenant (1638) Solemn League and Covenant considered with respect to the context in which they were signed and the impact they had in the three kingdoms

CVH 2.6 The Restoration (1660) leading to persecution of Covenanters (1660-1688)

CVH 2.7 The Revolution Settlement

CVH 2.8 The Society people leading to establishment of Reformed Presbytery (1743)

CVH 2.9 Subsequent Reformed Presbyterian history

MISSIOLOGY (Year 3)

MIS 3.1 Reformed Perspective on Missions

MIS 3.2 The Great Commission and the Missionary Objective
MIS 3.3 Contextualization
MIS 3.4 Paul’s missionary principles and practice
MIS 3.5 The Incarnational approach to mission
MIS 3.6 Reaching the world’s cities

CHURCH PLANTING (Year 3)

CPL 3.1 Vision for church planting
CPL 3.2 Leadership qualities of an organising pastor
CPL 3.3 Principles that shape the priorities and practice of the organising pastor
CPL 3.4 Opportunities and pitfalls in a church plant context
CPL 3.5 Evangelistic methods and opportunities
CPL 3.6 Essential elements in church planting goals
CPL 3.7 Relationship of the church plant to the Presbytery
Year 1

CHT 1.1 The Early Church
The spread of the church
The persecution of the church
The early heresies and how they were answered by councils and creeds
Notable theologians
Church organization

CHT 1.2 The Mediaeval period
Developments in Roman Catholicism
The appearance and spread of Islam
The Eastern and Western division of the church
The Crusades
The Conciliar movement and its attempts at reform
The Renaissance
The witness of John Wycliffe, John Hus and the Waldensians

Year 2

CHT 2.1 The Reformation Period
Background to the Reformation
The dawn of the Reformation
The Reformation in Europe
The lives, work and witness of Luther, Zwingli and Calvin
The Scottish Reformation
The Reformed Confessions
The inroads of the counter Reformation
Year 3

CHT 3.1 The Eighteenth, Nineteenth and Twentieth centuries

The years of revival
The spread of Methodism
Background to the Modern period
Anglo Catholic resurgence
The cold winds of liberalism
Missionary vision in the nineteenth century and some notable missionary pioneers
The modern ecumenical movement
Reformed churches around the world.