

# ABCRGR Self-Study Baptist Polity Class

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Given the breadth of the region, the potential for inconsistency and inaccessibility of class offerings the Ordination Review Committee offers this alternative for fulfilling the requirements of a Baptist Polity Class. This option is provided for the ordination or recognition candidate for whom timely access to a traditional seminary class is not possible.

**The class is to be completed in a span of no longer than 3 months.**

## **Required Reading:**

Baptist Ways: A History by Bill J. Leonard, Judson Press 2003

The Baptist Identity by Walter B. Shurden, Smyth & Helwys Publishing Inc., 1993

The Story of Baptists in the United States by Pamela Durso and Keith Durso, Baptist History and Heritage Society 2006

A Capsule History of Baptist Principles by William H. Brackney, Baptist History and Heritage Society 2009

Baptist and Religious Liberty Series, Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs website  
<http://bjconline.org/hr-Baptists-and-religious-liberty/>

Why I Am A Baptist by Walter Rauschenbusch from ABCRGR website  
<http://abcrgr.org/18-articles/content/14-why-i-am-a-baptist>

The Baptist Style for a New Century – pamphlet series  
<http://centerforbaptiststudies.org/pamphlets/style/>

“Autonomy and Independence,” Policy Statements and Resolutions, Bylaws of ABC-USA from ABC-USA website  
<http://www.abc-usa.org/resources/abcusa-resources/board-of-general-ministries-documents/>

Bylaws and Constitution of ABCRGR  
<http://abcrgr.org/images/stories/documents/ConstitutionABCRGRRevised2007.pdf>

Common Criteria <http://abcrgr.org/images/stories/documents/CommonCriteria.pdf>

## **Assignments**

1. Read Baptist Ways: A History Chapters 1-7 writing 1 page reflections on each chapter highlighting key points, events and persons from your point of view. Turn in and discuss with your mentor.
2. Read The Story of Baptists in the United States writing 1 page reflections on each chapter highlighting key points, events and persons from your point of view. Turn in and participate in three on-line cohort conference calls (at mutually convenient times) with a regional facilitator. If there is no cohort then turn in reflections and discuss with your mentor.
3. Create a Bible study series based on A Capsule History of Baptist Principles and The Baptist Style for a New Century.
4. Read The Baptist Identity and Why I am a Baptist and write a five page double spaced treatise titled "Why I am a Baptist" If a learning cohort exists you will read and critique the papers or cohort members.
5. Visit the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs website, particularly reviewing the Baptist and Religious Liberty Series. Select a contemporary issue of importance and write a Letter to the Editor which advances the "Baptist" position/perspective
6. Review the ABC-USA website documents and the ABCRGR Bylaws and Common Criteria writing a two page double space reflection piece on how Autonomy and Interdependence are integrated into the governing documents.
7. Select a key Baptist hero/heroine from the list and write a sermon highlighting their life story and how Baptist Principles were exemplified in their lives and a biblical passage which serves as a foundation.
  - a. Helen Barrett Montgomery
  - b. Roger Williams
  - c. Adoniram Judson
  - d. Joanna P. Moore
  - e. Charles Evans Hughes
  - f. James Ireland
  - g. Lulu Fleming
  - h. Isabel Crawford
  - i. Concepcion Renteria
  - j. Jitsuo Morikawa
  - k. Lott Carey
  - l. Santiago Soto Fontanez
8. Write your own liturgy for an Infant Dedication Service, a Baptism Service, and a Celebration of the Lord's Supper. Contact your pastor or another American Baptist Pastor for "practicum" in conducting these ceremonies.
9. Write a first draft of your Ordination Paper or Recognition of Ordination Paper according to ABCRGR Guidelines
10. Visit 3 different American Baptist Congregations followed by an interview with Pastor about the character, practices and patterns of Baptist life. Write a five page double spaced paper on the similarities and contrasts. (Choose at least one congregation which has a different cultural/racial/theological difference from your own).