



IRTC

INTERNATIONAL REFORMED THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE

The Direct Impact of Distance Learning on the Local Church

All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

– 2 Timothy 3:16-17 ESV

Deciding to embark on a journey of theological study is never straightforward. However, for me, Filipe Filgueiras, the International Reformed Theological College (IRTC) presented an ideal opportunity to balance my professional and personal commitments with my passion for learning more about my faith. The IRTC's strong confessional stance distinguished it from other educational institutions and drew me in. Its distance learning courses were a perfect solution for me, given that my work life precluded me from attending an in-person seminary.

Juggling studies with other responsibilities, such as work, family, and ministerial commitments, was no easy feat. It required establishing a study routine to avoid a pile-up of courses. There were times when I lagged behind in one subject or another, requiring extra effort to catch up.

Despite these challenges, my experience at the IRTC was enriching and unforgettable. Lessons with Rev. Ralph Boersema in the Oral Communication course were particularly impactful. The Marriage and Family course, taught by Rev. Fernando de Almeida, served as an excellent example of how the knowledge gained in my studies could be applied to Christian life. With a robust theological foundation, supported by instructors who not only taught us but also guided our in-depth readings, I felt more secure in navigating the field of theology. This education allowed me to grow both personally and spiritually.

My mentor, Rev. Jean Joás, played a crucial role in my academic success at the IRTC. He periodically guided me, monitoring my progress and encouraging me to complete my coursework. Throughout my journey, each course became a tool with which to better serve



Filipe Filgueiras and his mentor, Rev. Jean Joás

the church. This has been my intention all along: to continue using what I've learned to support the church community.

All theological knowledge acquired is useful for serving the local church. As I progressed through the program, I began to understand that there's no separation between academic life and practical life in the church; knowledge becomes a foundation and tool for practice. I aim to continually apply what I learned at the IRTC in the Sunday school classes I teach and in the sermons I preach. The College's instructors share in this vision, conducting their studies and offering their knowledge under Christ's Lordship so that the He may be glorified, and His church may be built up.

In the future, I hope to delve deeper into the study of original languages and advance in systematic

theology. Although my theological education at the IRTC has ended (for now, as I would like to get a M.Div. in the future), my journey is just beginning. I aim to continue learning throughout my life, growing in my knowledge of God's Word, and sharing what He teaches me.

For those considering braving this journey of online theological studies, I would recommend choosing a program that best meets your personal objectives. If in doubt, trying out a course as a guest student can be an excellent way to understand the program's dynamics. In order to stay motivated, you must be prepared and eager to engage with other students and your instructors as much as possible.

Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to the IRTC's financial maintainers. Their support has allowed people like me to study Reformed theology at an affordable cost. The IRTC has been a blessing in my life and the lives of many other students, and we are grateful for the immeasurable contributions they make to our growth and development.



The Presbyterian Church of Cariru, MG, Brazil, where Filipe applies what he has learned

Volunteer Program Promotes Mutual Investment

Theological learning at the IRTC is not confined to virtual classrooms. As an institution, we understand that students' spiritual and professional growth also comes through practical service. Our new volunteering program is an initiative that not only benefits the College but also provides significant benefits to the students involved.

The available areas for participation include Text Review, Web Design, Social Media, Video Editing, Fundraising, Translation, and Digital Marketing. This array of options allows each student to find a unique way to contribute, aligned with their own gifts and skills.

The program also offers academic incentives: actively collaborating students may be rewarded with partial scholarships. This is a tangible way to recognize and reciprocate the effort and dedication these students

have shown. Additionally, the practical experience gained from their involvement can be invaluable for students' professional development, preparing them for future vocations or ministries.

This engagement also immensely contributes to the IRTC's quality and reach as an institution. Whether enhancing educational or communications content through text review, improving the college's online presence, or helping to raise funds for new initiatives, each volunteer contribution makes a significant impact.

Ultimately, the volunteering program serves as a mutual investment between the College and its student body. The IRTC gains the invaluable support of engaged students, while they receive practical opportunities for growth and development, both spiritual and professional.

\$208,890
2023 Budget

57%

\$118,652
Raised (Jul 31)



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