

Birmingham Theological Seminary
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DM9120 Research and Design
Spring 2012
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Read through this syllabus in its entirety and call or e-mail with any questions.

Course Description:

This course will prepare the adult learner to do the necessary research for his dissertation or project. Adult learners will become acquainted with the latest in research methods and research tools, including the internet.

Course Objectives:

1. To encourage adult learners to investigate research topics, both online and conventionally, that will enhance their understanding of and practical application of Scripture.
2. To give adult learners the opportunity to demonstrate intellectual and spiritual growth by acquiring, organizing, analyzing, and communicating research results in an effective and timely manner.
3. To challenge adult learners to formulate and develop their methods of online research and communication and to give evidence of this through the completion of applications (focused ministry or professional projects).

Class Meetings:

Classes will meet 9:00 am to 4:30 pm

 First class Feb. 24

 Second class Mar. 23

 Third class Apr. 20

 Final papers due Apr. 27

Online internet schedule will be given within weekly course work

Course Process:

This course will also consist of online communication and discussions as well as live lectures and student interaction. Each adult learner is required to participate in the online discussions in substantive ways each week. To contribute in substantive ways will require that you build and reference the textbooks for this class in each discussion, being specific in the citations. Interact one to another in these discussions. Use the respective textbooks to support your responses. Critical thinking is an integral part of the research process, think through carefully. Plan out your work do not wait until the last second to post.

Proper Prior Planning Prevents Poor Performance

Required Textbooks:

For additional texts used in the course, see the Selected Bibliography at the end of the syllabus.

Vyhmeister, Nancy J. *Quality Research Papers: For Students of Religion and Theology*. 2nd ed. Zondervan Grand Rapids 2008 ISBN: 0310274407

Leedy, Paul D. and Jeanne Ellis Ormrod *Practical Research: Planning and Design* 8th ed.

Pearson Publishing Upper Saddle River, New Jersey 2005 ISBN: 0131108956

[You will need to find a used copy. The cheapest ones are located on www.half.com from there look under textbooks and type in “Leedy” in the search bar. Or follow this link: <http://tinyurl.com/nhjxg9>

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb and Joseph M. Williams *The Craft of Research* 3rd ed.

University of Chicago Press. Chicago ISBN: 0226065669

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London ISBN: 0226823377

Yaghjian, Lucretia B. *Writing Theology Well: A Rhetoric for Theological and Biblical Writers*

The Continuum International Publishing Group Inc. New York ISBN: 0826418856

Logos Bible Software with Journal add-ons (See www.birminghamseminary.org)

StyleEase for Chicago and Turabian Style www.StyleEase.com, StyleEase Software, LLC

Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

Course Work:

Week One: Jan. 23-28

Log in to <http://www.birminghamseminary.org/forum/viewtopic.php?f=4&t=3> scroll down to Doctor of Ministry program – D.Min. Research and Design (click here). Click on new topic and introduce yourself. Give information about yourself, where you live, your ministry, your family, etc. Tell us what you might select as the topic for your dissertation and why, also list your personal learning objectives for this course.

Week Two: Jan. 29-Feb. 4

Read chapters 1-2 (Leedy), chapter 1 (Booth, Vyhmeister and Turabian), and chapter 5 (Yaghjian) OWL

What is research/what is it not? Why do research? Research has been described as a different way of thinking than normal cognitive processes. Do you agree or disagree with this statement and why? How does a person’s worldview affect their research? Compare and contrast the different authors in regards to their respective definitions of research. What do you now understand differently about research than previously?

Week Three: Feb. 5-Feb. 11

Read chapters 2-3 (Vyhmeister), chapters 3-4 (Turabian) and chapters 4-6 (Booth) OWL

The internet presents characteristically different methods of communication. A majority of communication now occurs electronically as opposed to face-to-face communication. Can we communicate as effectively via the internet (why or why not), and what does one need to know about the internet to do research? What makes online communication unique or is it the same as sending a letter? What are the pitfalls and advantages in using the internet for research? How does one evaluate resources as to reliability, validity and viability? Is there a standard for acceptable internet resources? If so, what is it? Is it more difficult to evaluate the internet as opposed to traditional resources, if yes why, if no why?

Week Four: Feb. 12- Feb. 18

Read chapters 7-8 (Vyhmeister), chapter 3 (Leedy), chapters 4-7 (Booth) and chapter 2 (Yaghjian) chapters 3-4 (Turabian) OWL

Research begins with the problem, how do we decide the problem for our research? When you have a problem, what do you do with it? Compare and contrast the contributions of the different textbooks to this subject. How does one determine if the problem is real or perceived? What is the motivation behind the problem? What are the importance /relationship of objectivity and presuppositions to the problem? Referring back to the previous weeks readings what part does the evaluation of resources play?

Week Five: Feb. 19- Feb. 25 [Class meets W203 Briarwood Presbyterian]

The lectures will focus on the previous month's readings and weekly assignments. Each student must come prepared to fully participate. Be prepared to engage verbally, this will be an interactive session. Review the respective articles/exercises in the Purdue Online Writing Lab.

Week Six: Feb. 26-Mar. 3

Read chapter 15 (Turabian), pgs. 8, 84, 191-195, 197, 274-276 (Booth) pgs. 129-143 (Yaghjian) pgs. 61, 80 (Vyhmeister) OWL

Interact with the authors as to the importance /reasons for citations. Discuss how to prevent plagiarism and the possible /potential problems with the failure to cite sources properly. What knowledge did you gain from reading Defining and Avoiding Plagiarism: The WPA Statement on Best Practices (be specific)?

Week Eight: Mar. 4- Mar. 10

Read chapters 7-8 (Leedy) and chapter 17 (Vyhmeister)

What is qualitative research? What is quantitative research? What are the differences between them? Provide examples of both. Which would best fit your prospective dissertation topic and why?

Week Nine: Mar. 11- Mar. 17 **Spring Break**

Week Ten: Mar. 18- Mar. 24 [Class meets W203 Briarwood Presbyterian]

Read chapters 1, 7, 8 (Yaghjian) chapter 14 (Vyhmeister) chapter 11 (Booth)

Choose three good research topics, what are the potential problems in research and what type of research would be involved qualitative or quantitative? What is the importance of sociohistorical/exegetical context in theological writing? What is the role of hermeneutics?

Interview three people that have earned doctoral degrees. Ask the following: (1) What were their greatest difficulties/challenges in the research process (2) What were the greatest opportunities and benefits from their research personally? (3) What were the greatest opportunities and benefits from their research to their ministries or occupation? Be prepared to present orally, did this exercise provide any assistance or encouragement?

Week Eleven: Mar. 25- Mar 31

Read chapter 4 (Leedy), chapter 6, 20 (Vyhmeister) chapter 16, 17 (Turabian), pgs. 85-87, 202, 70-73, 80 (Booth) OWL

What is the role of the literature review? What are some methods to use to search for literature related to your topic? List three online data bases that would be pertinent resources for your research. Access them and cite five pertinent references and the specific location to obtain them. What would be your preparation steps prior to visiting a library to make the most efficient use of your time?

Week Twelve: Apr. 1-Apr. 7

OWL pg. 148 (Turabian)

Continuing from last week's lesson review annotated bibliographies in OWL. Using the topic of "The Logos" write three annotated bibliographies, approximately one paragraph each, state a brief description of the works' content and the relevance to the subject matter.

Week Thirteen: Apr. 8- Apr. 14

Begin working on the final project, it will be due on April 27th. Please e-mail the project as an attachment. Think through on the topic for your dissertation, in 750-1000 words state the problem, your motivation and the research methodology you will use. Then create a list of fifteen (15) scholarly books, five (5) viable, scholarly internet sources, five (5) scholarly journals articles and one (1) monograph or manuscript. Write an annotated bibliography of one to two (1-2) paragraphs on each source, designate them as primary, secondary or tertiary sources. These bibliographies must be in Turabian format. Also detail how you found each resource.

Week Fourteen: Apr. 15- Apr. 21 [Class meets W203 Briarwood Presbyterian]

Peer discussions, course review, discussions of previous month's assignments

Week Fifteen – Apr. 22- Apr. 27

Final project due April 27th

BTS Format and Style Standards:

Note: All research papers must be formatted in accordance with Turabian Chicago standards including the title page. All papers are to use Time New Roman #12 Font. Any paper not conforming to these standards will automatically be dropped one letter grade and you will be asked to reformat the paper.

All course materials must be submitted by the last day of class. Thereafter, course materials may be submitted for up to six (6) weeks after the end of the semester directly to the office of the Registrar with the permission of the professor. If a student submits course materials after the end of the semester but within the six (6) weeks grace period, the student's grade will be lowered by one letter grade. The course materials will not be accepted after the six (6) week grace period and a failing grade will be posted to the student's transcript.

Selected Bibliography:

- Adams, Tyrone and Norman Clark *The Internet: Effective Online Communication* Harcourt College Publishers Orlando 2001 ISBN: 0155070819
- Creswell, John W. *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches* Sage Publications Thousand Oaks 2009 ISBN:1412965576
- Hart, Chris *Doing a Literature Review: Releasing the Social Science Research Imagination* Sage Publications London 1998 ISBN: 0761959750
- Hewson, Claire and Peter Yule, Dianna Laurent, Carl Vogel. *Internet Research Methods: A Practical Guide for the Social and Behavioural Sciences*. Sage Publications. London 2003 ISBN: 0-761959203
- Madsen, David *Successful Dissertations and Theses: A Guide to Graduate Student Research from Proposal to Completion* Jossey-Bass Publishers San Francisco 1992 ISBN: 1555423892
- Maner, Martin *The Research Process: A Complete Guide and Reference for Writers* 2nd ed. McGraw Hill New York 1996 ISBN: 0767411390
- Mann, Thomas *The Oxford Guide to Library Research: How to Find Reliable Information Online and Offline* 3rd ed. Oxford University Press Oxford 2005 ISBN: 0195189981
- Merriam, Sharan B. and Edwin L. Simpson. *A Guide to Research for Educators and Trainers of Adults*. Krieger Publishing Company Malabar, Fl. 1995 ISBN: 1-57524-142-0
- Merriam, Sharan B. and Associates *Qualitative Research in Practice: Examples for Discussion and Analysis* Jossey-Bass Publishing San Francisco 2002 ISBN: 0-787958956
- Rugg, Gordon and Marian Petre *A Gentle Guide to Research Methods* The McGraw-Hill Companies New York 2007 ISBN: 0335219276