

Birmingham Theological Seminary

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Birmingham, AL 35243
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Spring 2012
PT 5527 Communications I
Instructor: Dr. Bruce Moulton

Class Hours: 2
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Course Purpose

The basic principles of effective communication for the church and the Christian worker's overall task will be considered with special emphasis on written communication skills. The students will be involved in several writing projects during the course of the semester. Oral communication within the congregation and the broader community will be covered as well.

Course Objectives

1. The student will be able to do careful research.
2. The student will be able to write a thesis, which reflects his or her understanding and perspective of the research.
3. The student will be able to organize, synthesize and state the results of research in theological papers and theses.
4. The student will be able to effectively revise and edit written work.
5. The student will be able to properly cite sources in accordance with the Turabian style guide.

Required Texts

- Langan, John. *College Writing Skills with Readings*. ISBN: 0072381213.
- Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. ISBN: 022682337-7. (7th edition is required)
- Vyhmeister, Nancy Jean. *Quality Research Papers*. ISBN: 0310274400. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.

Course Requirements

1. Class attendance is required. Any student taking more than two unexcused absences will have their final grade dropped one letter grade.

2. All papers must be formatted in accordance with the Turabian Style Guide. Meticulous attention should be given to grammar, spelling and other editing mistakes. All papers should be double spaced with appropriate concern for wasted space. Times New Roman is the required font. The required font size is 12. Though the required pages of each paper are noted below, the following should not be included in the page count: cover sheet, title page, index page or bibliography page. Further instructions about the assignments below will be discussed in class.

3. **Part 1:** The student will be required to cite 15 different sources. Each source will include a footnote and a bibliography entry. Each source will reflect a different type of citation students may encounter. For example, one source may reflect a book by two authors, while another source will reflect a book by three or more authors. **Part 2:** This assignment will also include a clearly written thesis statement. This assignment will be due **February 21**. It will account for **10 percent** of the final grade.

4. Each student will be required to write a Book Review (Book Critique) on a Christian book. The book has to be approved by the professor. A book of 150 to 200 pages should be read. The book should not be too technical; thus, learning to write a book critique is the emphasis of this assignment. Students should carefully take notes and follow the guidelines discussed in the lecture on writing book reviews. This book review should be approximately 5 to 7 pages. This assignment will be due **March 20**. It will account for **20 percent** of the final grade.

5. Each student will be required to write a short reflection paper after studying an article, which will be distributed in class. Students should carefully take notes and follow the guidelines discussed in the lecture on writing reflection papers. This reflection paper should be approximately 2 pages. Further instructions about this assignment will be discussed in class. This assignment will be due **March 6**. It will account for **10 percent** of the final grade.

6. Each student will be required to write a 2 to 3 page paper on "How I will Use Information Systems to Format my Papers." This assignment will be due **April 3**. It will account for **10 percent** of the final grade.

7. Each student will be required to write a 10 to 12 page research paper. The subject for research must be approved in advanced by the professor. This assignment will be due **April 24**. It will account for **40 percent** of the final grade.

Grading Criteria

1. Class attendance and participation	10%
2. Turabian Citation Practice Document & Thesis Statement	10%
3. Book Review	20%
4. Short Reflection Paper (Single Meaning)	10%
5. "How I will Use Information Systems to Format my Papers"	10%
6. Research Paper	40%

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.

Course Schedule

January 24	Introduction / Grammar Review
January 31	Grammar Review/ Overview of a Research Paper
February 7	Formulating a Thesis Statement / Collecting Resources
February 14	Turabian Style Guide
February 21	Writing Book Reviews / Reflection Papers <i>Turabian Citation Practice Document & Thesis Statement Due</i>
February 28	Parts of a Research Paper / Formatting a Paper
March 6	Parts of a Research Paper / Formatting a Paper <i>Short Reflection Paper Due</i>
March 13	SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS
March 20	Parts of a Research Paper / Effective Computer Use <i>Book Review Due</i>
March 27	Understanding the Writing Process
April 3	Revising / Editing Your Work <i>“How I will Use Information Systems to Format my Papers” Paper Due</i>
April 10	How to Improve Your Writing Skills
April 17	Writing a Thesis / Dissertation
April 24	Written and Oral Communication in a Church Setting <i>Research Paper Due</i>

Bibliography

- Cetuk, Virginia S. *What to Expect in Seminary: Theological Education As Spiritual Formation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998.
- Cook, Claire K. *Line by Line: How to Edit Your Own Writing*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1985.
- Core, Deborah. *The Seminary Student Writes*. St. Louis, Mo: Chalice Press, 2000.
- Davis, Gordon B. and Clyde Alvin Parker. *Writing the Doctoral Dissertation: A Systematic Approach*. Hauppauge: Barron's, 1997.
- Elliott, Rebecca and Laurie Hamilton. *Painless Grammar*. Hauppauge: Barron's, 2006.
- Heffernan, James A. W. and John E. Lincoln. *Writing: A College Handbook*. New York: Norton, 1994.
- Hudson, Bob. *The Christian Writer's Manual of Style*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004.
- Rico, Gabriele L. *Writing the Natural Way: Using Right-Brain Techniques to Release Your Expressive Powers*. Los Angeles: J.P. Tarcher, 1983.
- Strunk, William, Jr. and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 3rd ed. New York: Macmillan, 1979.
- Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996.
- _____, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *Student's Guide to Writing College Papers*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2010.
- Virkler, Henry A. *A Christian's Guide to Critical Thinking*. Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 1993.
- Vyhmeister, Nancy J. *Quality Research Papers*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2001.
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- Yaghjian, Lucretia B. *Writing Theology Well, A Rhetoric for Theological and Biblical Writers*. New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group, Inc., 2006.