

Birmingham Theological Seminary
2200 Briarwood Way, Birmingham, Alabama 35243
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Fall 2019
PT5521 Introduction to Theological Studies
Credit hours: 2

Professor: Dr. Jim Maples
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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 organize, connect, and state the results of that research in theological papers and theses.
3. The student will be able to revise and edit papers and theses to produce papers that are effective and error free.
4. The student will be able to properly cite information and sources and apply the Turabian style to papers and theses.

Course Texts

Required texts (Only ** texts required for certificate students)

**Adler, Mortimer J. and Charles Van Doren. *How to Read a Book; The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading*. Rev. ed. New York: Simon and Schuster, Inc., 1972.

Kibbe, Michael. *From Topic to Thesis: A Guide to Theological Research*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2016.

Logos Bible Study Software (see #3 under course requirements)

Smith, Kevin Gary. *Writing and Research: A Guide for Theological Students*. Carlisle, UK: Langham Global Library, 2016.

**Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 8th ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2013.

**Vyhmeister, Nancy Jean. *Quality Research Papers, for Students of Religion and Theology*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014.

Course Requirements and Grading

1. Class Attendance – 5%
2. Completion of all assigned reading – 10%
3. All masters and doctoral degree-seeking students are required to purchase any one of the Logos Bible Study libraries and are entitled to a substantial discount Logos affords BTS students. Students must purchase during regularly scheduled semester enrollment periods. Also, Logos will divide payments into six equal installments if requested. For this class the student may use the free Logos trial version.
4. Completion of weekly research and writing assignments – 35%
Logos Bible Software is a required source for research, bibliography, footnotes, and biblical exegesis assignments. (Research exercise =5%, Others = 10% each)
5. The mid-term will be a paper of at least six pages but no more than eight pages, exclusive of footnotes, bibliography, table of contents, and title page, chosen from the list below. (As many references as possible must come from Logos Bible Software.) – 20%
 - The Pulpit and the Politics of Free Speech
 - Eugenics, Nazi Germany, and Legalized Abortion in the U.S.
 - The Unity and Diversity of the Divine Covenants
 - The Rise of the Covenant in Scottish Theology
 - Charles Hodge and Old School Presbyterians in the Conflict Leading to the Civil War
6. The final exam will be a paper of at least ten pages but no more than fifteen pages, exclusive of footnotes, bibliography, table of contents, and title page, chosen from an approved list to be distributed. Such a paper would have 10 – 12 references (at a minimum). – 30%

BTS FORMAT AND STYLE STANDARDS

BTS uses the Turabian style of formatting as a standard for papers. However, students should regard individual professor preferences if they communicate any variance in outlining their requirements for papers. Professors retain discretion in determining how “formal” a paper must be. In this technological age, information is readily available; make sure that you understand about giving reference sources the proper recognition.

The final exam (paper) of up to fifteen pages should incorporate, on average, at least two footnotes per page and a bibliography of ten to twelve references and the required scholarly research to support such a paper.

Further Reading

- Adler, Mortimer J. *How to Speak How to Listen*. New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1997.
- Badke, William B. *The Survivor's Guide to Library Research: A Simple, Systematic Approach to Using the Library and Writing Research Papers*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990.
- Graves, Richard L., ed. *Rhetoric and Composition: A Sourcebook for Teachers*. Rochelle Park, NJ: Hayden Book Company, 1976.
- Hudson, Bob and Shelley Townsend. *A Christian Writer's Manual of Style*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1988.
- Isaac, Stephen, and William Michael. *Handbook in Research and Evaluation*. San Diego: EDITS, 1971.
- Laque, Carol and Phyllis Sherwood. *A Laboratory Approach to Writing*. Urbana, Illinois: NCTE, 1977.
- Langan, John. *College Writing Skills*. 6th ed. New York: McGraw Hill, 2005.
- Lederer, Richard, and Richard Dowis. *The Write Way: The S.P.E.L.L. Guide to Real-life Writing*. New York: Pocket Books, 1995.
- Lester, James D. *Writing Research Papers: A Complete Guide*. 9th ed. New York: Longman, 1999.
- Lindsell, Sherry L. *Proofreading and Editing for Word Processors*. New York: Arco Publishing Company, 1985.
- Murray, Donald A. *A Writer Teaches Writing*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968.
- Price, Jonathan. *Put That In Writing*. New York: Penguin Books, 1984.
- Rico, Gabriele. *Writing the Natural Way*. Los Angeles: J. P. Tarcher, Inc., 1983.
- Sabin, William A. *The Gregg Reference Manual*. New York: Gregg Division/McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1977.
- Williams, Joseph M. *Style: Toward Clarity and Grace*. Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1990.
- Yaghjian, Lucretia B. *Writing Theology Well, A Rhetoric for Theological and Biblical Writers*. New York: The Continuum International Publishing Group, Inc., 2006.