



# Birmingham Theological Seminary

*Introduction to Theological Studies*

PT 5521

Time: Thursday, 7:30-9:00 p.m.  
Instructor: Dr. Edward Waldron, III

Room: A-209, Briarwood Presbyterian Church  
[waldronbts@gmail.com](mailto:waldronbts@gmail.com)

## Course Description:

This course will be comprised of two distinct modules. First, we will address the writings of papers for graduate level education. As graduate students, your work will be expected to be advanced beyond undergraduate work. You will learn in this module:

- 1.) The basics of research
- 2.) The different types of research papers, books, etc., and what each will entail.
- 3.) How to appropriately structure a research paper (your ideas)
- 4.) How to cite sources and format papers according to the BTS handbook.

Second, we will address the actual work of research itself. Many times, you will be called upon to deliver a synopsis or analysis of a book, a work, a journal article, or other academic resource in your ministry. During this module, you will learn the following:

- 1.) Sources for beginning a research paper (such principles can also apply to the sermon development, and or bible study leadership development – especially appropriate if you are in the *διάκονος* or *πρεσβύτερος*.)
- 2.) How to identify an appropriate resource for a paper, as well as poor resources
- 3.) Viable sources for beginning research paper

Throughout this course, the emphasis will always be development of Christian doctrinal understanding in academy, and what this means for your future as a constant student, for Christ's church, and the glory of God.

## Textbooks

- 1.) Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*. (University of Chicago Press). (Preferably 4th edition)
- 2.) Kate L. Turabian. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers, 9th Edition*. University of Chicago Press.
- 3.) John Swales and Christine Feak. *Academic Writing for Graduate Students: Essential Tasks and Skills, 3rd Edition*. University of Michigan Press.
- 4.) Christine Feak and John Swales. *Telling a Research Story: Writing a Literature Review. Michigan Series in English for Academic and Professional Purposes*. University of Michigan Press.
- 5.) Michael Kibbe. *From Topic to Thesis: A Guide to Theological Research*. InterVarsity Press.

## Course Objectives & Expectations

The student who completes this course will be able to:

- ❖ Be familiar with principles which are generally brought to the practice of theological research
- ❖ To communicate that research through papers as assigned in class to BTS paper formatting and standards.
- ❖ Be able to engage those principles which are not couched in the Christian worldview through sound reasoning, sound theology and sound doctrine
- ❖ Be familiar with the more important theological research locations, journals, terms, and concepts and thus better equipped to understand and engage intelligently in theological discussion.
- ❖ Be spiritually enriched through an encounter with the works of Christian theologians.

## Course Goals:

These objectives bring us to three overarching goals.

1. To become more faithful interpreters of God's Word
2. To become better servants of the Lord in His churches, for the immediate benefit of your parishioners, your fellow members, and ultimately for the glory of God
3. To apply — fully, and faithfully — the history, principles, and theology which couch Christian research for the purpose of bringing the unsaved to the saving work of the Cross.

## Class Calendar

*Please note: Due to the importance of this course and the depth needed on particular subjects, from time to time course schedule changes may be needed to cover a subject matter to its full and necessary extent.*

**September 10-** Introduction to the Course & Expectations

**September 17** - The Approach to Academic Writing. *Academic Writing for Graduate Students*, Unit I; *The Craft of Research*, pp. 1—12.

**September 24** - General-Specific Texts, using language to strengthen papers. *Academic Writing for Graduate Students*, Unit II.

**October 1** - Problem, Process & Solution, the Critique - *Academic Writing for Graduate Students*, Unit 3; Begin reading *Telling a Research Story* at your pace to be completed by April 2.

**October 8** - Citations - 15.1—15.6 in *A Manual for Writers* — look over sections 16, 17, 18, and 19 Before class., Also read pgs. 36—47 on sources.  
BOOK ANALYSIS DUE.

**October 15** - Reading — *Academic Writing for Graduate Students*, Unit 4 **FALL BREAK**

**October 22** — Finding Useful Sources; *Manual for Writers*; pgs. 24-47; Kibbe, Chapter 1 & 2

**October 29** — Connecting with your Reader - *Craft of Research* pp. 12-28; Structuring your research papers - *Craft of Research*, pp. 29-63, *Manual for Writers*, pgs. 48-70. Kibbe Chs. 3&4

**November 5** - Revision. *Manual for Writers*, pgs. 102-119. *Craft of Research*, pp. 149—174; 201—232. Kibbe Chapter 5.

SECOND BOOK ANALYSIS DUE.

**November 12** - Viable Theological Sources - the basics every theological student should know

**December 3** - The library and librarian. Your new best friends.

**December 10** - A Theology of Research - yes, there actually can be one - Final Class. Engage.

**December 12** – Journal Article Due

## Grades:

- 1.) Class Discussion - 25% You will be assigned to lead a class discussion. Your grade will be based off of your ability to ask questions of your peers, elicit responses, usage in practical ministry
- 2.) Book Analysis -- 25% -
  - a. 7 pages minimum for master's students, for certificate students – 3.5 pages minimum.
  - b. You will choose an academically rigorous book or academic journal article. Part of this course is to guide your understanding of what constitutes an academically acceptable resource. This will require significant time in the Library. *The use of Logos software WILL NOT be allowed for this particular assignment.*
  - c. This paper will be graded according to the following: 25% for each
    - i. 1.) Following the format as contained in the BTS Standards guide.
    - ii. 2.) Selection of resources
    - iii. 3.) Analysis of Topic
    - iv. 4.) The clarity of the paper's presentation. Can it be outlined?
- 3.) Book Analysis -- 25% — 7 pages minimum for master's students, for certificate students – 3.5 pages minimum. This paper will be graded according to a rubric will be given in class, which will include citation and format in Chicago/Turabian style.
  - a. *This one will be done on one you disagree with, or from a differing theological point of view, within Evangelical Christendom.* Why do this? Because you will come across research throughout your career – which is from your brothers and sisters in Christ, but

you may disagree with them on a point, or exegesis, etc., and you are called to be thoroughly equipped for every good work -- to explain your point to others.

- You will clearly layout their point.
- Where you disagree with it
- Proofs. (Notice that is plural)
- Closing – how your reading should be applied to your ministry situation.

- b. This paper will be graded according to the following: 25% for each
- i. 1.) Following the format as contained in the BTS Standards guide.
  - ii. 2.) Selection of resources
  - iii. 3.) Analysis of Topic
  - iv. 4.) The clarity of the paper's presentation. Can it be outlined?
- c. *The use of Logos software **WILL** be allowed for use in this assignment.*

- 4.) Journal Article Analysis – choice of article made in consultation with the professor. 25% — 10 pages. To include other journal articles and books used in the analysis as has been discussed in class. Due on December 12th. NO EXCEPTIONS.