

RS100 RESEARCH SEMINAR SYLLABUS

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is designed to prepare international students for academic success in the discussion of the research process, research strategies, thesis topic selection, formatting, academic cultural differences, computerized databases, and bibliographic resources. It will guide students in approaches to research writing, communication, documentation, and cultural adaptation. It fulfills the requirement for RS101 Orientation and Research Methods. This course is required for incoming international students. *1 hour*

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

- A. Cognitive.** Upon successful completion of this course, the student should:
- Develop skills in research and writing techniques suited to the U.S. educational system.
 - Demonstrate critical thinking and independent voice in research writing while evaluating and incorporating the work of others.
 - Apprehend appropriate research methodologies and techniques and apply to field of study.
 - Learn the research format required at Dallas Seminary and document adherence.
 - Access relevant bibliographical resources and worldwide archives.
 - Identify cultural similarities and differences between one's home culture and the U.S. culture, particularly as it relates to academic culture at Dallas Theological Seminary.
- B. Communicative.** Upon successful completion of this course, the student should:
- Articulate argumentation appropriate to subject more clearly in written and oral communication.
 - Improve competency and proficiency in presentational public speaking.
- C. Affective.** Upon successful completion of this course, the student should:
- Glorify God through efficient and effective research and writing.
 - Adopt the value of asking good questions and researching convincing answers at the boundaries of any given field of study.
- D. Rationale**
American academic culture is distinct from academic settings in other countries; Dallas Theological Seminary itself has a unique academic culture and set of requirements. RS100 is a research methods course with additional elements pertinent to international systems of education and culture. This course guides students in academic writing and the use of research databases and bibliographic resources. It provides instruction in research strategies, thesis writing, and formatting. In addition, this course provides an orientation to the educational philosophy of biblical, theological, and ministry-related studies with a foundation for the ongoing mentoring of international students at Dallas Seminary.

III. COURSE TEXTBOOKS

Required:

1. Vyhmeister, Nancy Jean. *Quality Research Papers: For Students of Religion and Theology*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 2008.
2. Graff, Gerald and Cathy Birkenstein. *They Say, I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*. 2nd ed. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2010.
3. Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers*. 8th ed. Revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. (selected chapters)

Suggested:

4. Strunk, William, Jr. and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1999.
5. Teague, Gina. *USA - Culture Smart: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette*. London: Kuperard, 2004.

To Be Downloaded:

6. Dallas Theological Seminary. "The Long Guide to Using BIBLOS." Dallas, TX: Dallas Theological Seminary, 2007. Available for download at <http://library.dts.edu/Pages/RM/DBM/BIBLOS/lg.shtml>
7. Dallas Theological Seminary Thesis Style Committee. "Supplement to Kate L. Turabian, A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations." 7th ed. Dallas, TX: Dallas Theological Seminary. Available for download at http://library.dts.edu/Pages/RM/Write/turabian_sup.pdf
8. MS Word Turabian templates for research papers and theses and associated files available at <http://library.dts.edu/Pages/RM/Write/>
9. Helpful resources at <http://library.dts.edu/Pages/RM/SS/assignments.shtml>

IV. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. Reading Assignments

Students are required to complete reading assignments prior to the first class session. Students should report their completed reading assignments in writing to the professor on the first class meeting.

B. Library Seminars

Two of the 14 hours of lecture will be completed by attending a series of Library trainings on ATLA, BIBLOS, and other databases. A schedule of eligible sessions can be obtained at the DTS Library Media Center. Attendance must be recorded by library staff and reported directly to the professor.

C. Written Assignments

Paraphrasing Assignment

Each student will complete an interactive assignment to demonstrate his or her understanding of paraphrase in writing research papers.

Formatted Research Paper

This paper will have preliminary deadlines with a submission of the thesis statement and outline due earlier than the final paper (see assignment dates below). Each student shall submit a 2500 word research paper (excluding words in footnotes and bibliography) on your choice of the following:

- What is one cultural practice that is controversial among the church in your given cultural community and relevant to your home country and future ministry? Delineate what is biblical and what is cultural about the topic. Pick a specific issue, value, or custom within your cultural context that highlights a cultural controversy within your home Christian community. Use scriptural support and other researched sources for your views.

- What is one difficult biblical concept that is hard to understand in your culture/people group, and how would you relate it to your cultural context? 1) Define the concept's meaning in a way that would culturally translate and be defined in that ethnic community. 2) Describe how a competing philosophy or religion affects the understanding of the concept. 3) Describe how the concept might be shared most clearly and biblically for that context, bearing in mind historical and cultural factors. Other examples include how Hinduism affects the understanding of our bodily resurrection, how animism affects an understanding of predestination, etc.

The student will demonstrate ability to select a specific topic of appropriate magnitude, research, and evidence proper formatting according to Turabian style. The paper will include:

- 1) A listed outline of the contents of your paper.
- 2) Use of the DTS Turabian paper template.
- 3) At least ten footnotes and bibliographic entries.
- 4) Evidence of paraphrasing competency.

V. COURSE POLICIES

A. Letter/Numerical Grade Scale

A+	99–100	B+	91–93	C+	83–85	D+	75–77	F	69-0
A	96–98	B	88–90	C	80–82	D	72–74		
A-	94–95	B-	86–87	C-	78–79	D-	70–71		

B. Weighing of Course Requirements for Grading

- Course Reading.....15%
- Paraphrasing Assignment20%, completion required for course grade
- Formatted Research Paper50%
- Class Participation.....15%

C. Assignment Submission Procedures

Each student will write his/her name, the course number and name, and professor name on all assignments. Students should submit all completed assignments accordingly:

Reading Report and Outline to the professor via email at jmcgill@dts.edu

Paraphrasing Assignment and Final Paper to the grader, Janet via email grace2ethne@gmail.com.

D. Class Participation

Graduate level education involves significant student participation in classroom interaction. All students will be expected and encouraged to participate in classroom interaction.

E. Electronics Etiquette

Students should refrain from using cell phones, laptop computers, or other devices in a manner that distracts others in the class. Playing games, browsing the Internet, using email, instant messaging, or text messaging, etc., are considered unacceptable when class is in session. Unless permitted by the professor, students should turn off all electronic devices during tests and quizzes. *DTS Student Handbook Section 1.15.1*

E. Late Assignments

Please refer to the *DTS 2009-11 Student Handbook Section 1.19* (www.dts.edu/students/studenthandbook) for policies related to late assignments.

F. Absences

Being absent for more than two class hours will lower your academic grade standing for the course. Class attendance requirements will follow seminary guidelines as found in the *2009-2011 Student Handbook, Section 1.15.3*.

G. Plagiarism

Plagiarism rules will follow seminary guidelines as found in the *2009-11 Student Handbook, Section 1.16.3*.

H. Disability Accommodation Policy

Dallas Seminary does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the operation of any of its programs and activities. To avoid discrimination the student is responsible for informing the Coordinator of Services for Students with Disabilities and the course instructor of any disabling condition that will require modifications.

VI. COURSE LECTURES AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Dates	Topic	Assignment Due
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9/1-12/15	Attendance at Eligible Library Sessions BIBLOS, ATLA	<i>Complete Library Sessions prior to 12/15</i>
8/1-8/24	Readings to Complete Vyhmeister, Chapters 1, 4-5, 7-8, 11-12, 14, 18, 20 Graff and Birkenstein, Parts 1-4 Turabian, Chs. 1, 7.4-7.6, 7.9, 13 Turabian, Chs. 4-5, 9, 14, 16-17, 24.6 (Skim text only)	<i>Complete Reading prior to 8/25</i> <i>Take Notes on Reading prior to 8/25</i>
8/24	Introduction and Syllabus From Topic to Thesis Statement Cultural Points	<i>Reading Report due in class</i>
	Bibliographic Software and Research Databases Turabian Formatting and Templates	<i>Memorize DTS Mission Statement</i>
8/25	Outlining Thesis Statement Workshop Academic Communication and Presentation Reviewing Sources	<i>Topic and Thesis Statement (for Final Paper) due</i>
	Class Exercise Academic Cultural Differences Paraphrasing and Plagiarism Cultural Stages/Continuums	
9/15		<i>Outline of Final Paper due</i>
9/30		<i>Paraphrasing Assignment due</i>
10/30		<i>Formatted Research Paper due</i>

VII. SUPPLEMENTAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Alexander, Patrick H., and Society of Biblical Literature. *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1999.
- Barber, Cyril J., and Robert M. Krauss, Jr. *An Introduction to Theological Research: A Guide for College and Seminary Students*. 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000.
- Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Holcomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *The Craft of Research*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1995.
- Kiernan, Vincent. *Writing Your Dissertation with Microsoft Word: A Step-by-Step Guide*. Alexandria, VA: Mattily Publishing, 2005.
- Lanier, Sarah A. *Foreign to Familiar: A Guide to Understanding Hot and Cold Climate Cultures*. Hagerstown, MD: McDougal Publishing Company, 2004.
- Mauch, James E., and Jack W. Birch. *Guide to the Successful Thesis and Dissertation: A Handbook for Students and Faculty*. 4th ed. New York: Marcel Dekker, 1998.
- The Chicago Manual of Style*. 15th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003. Part II and III of the Turabian manual (7th ed.) is a condensation of this manual for academic settings.