

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

*MCC 903: Intercultural Communication and
Missions Anthropology*

COURSE SYLLABUS

December 7-11, 2009

PROFESSOR

DeLonn L. Rance

Director of Intercultural Doctoral Studies
Chair of the Global Missions Department
Associate Professor of Intercultural Studies

B.A., Bethany University
M.A., Assemblies of God Theological Seminary
M.A., Vanguard University
Ph.D., (Intercultural Studies) Fuller Theological Seminary



Dr. Rance has 25 years of missionary experience with emphasis on missions mobilization and missionary training in El Salvador and Latin America and the sending of missionaries from the majority world to the unreached.

Email: drance@agts.edu

[\(Visit Dr. Rance's resource website\)](#)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The course examines the literature of intercultural communication, focusing on cultural contexts and barriers, with implications for Christian witness, lifestyle and relationships. Cultural anthropological issues will be examined to determine their application to a Christian view of intercultural ministry and the discipline of missiology.

OBJECTIVES

When you finish this course you should be able to:

- Critically examine the impact of your cultural presuppositions and values on the effective intercultural communication of the gospel.
- Better understand and interpret biblical truth as it is presented in and through cultural forms.

- Demonstrate an understanding of the essential concepts of cultural anthropology and intercultural communication.
- Identify and discuss the components of culture and various worldviews.
- Develop a personal theology and model for intercultural ministry.
- Articulate a personal commitment to the communication of the gospel to those yet unreached.
- Develop an integrated intercultural communication strategy for a specific missional context.
- Enable other believers and fellowships to give witness to Christ in the power of the Holy Spirit to people of other cultures.

METHODOLOGY

The course will include lectures, class discussions, case studies and a written final examination. It will also involve library and field research in the preparation of a final assessment document.

CLASS TOPICS

The Intercultural Servant, the Gospel and Culture, Communication Models
Intercultural Communication, Elements of Culture, Missionary Acculturation
Frontier Missions and Missions Mobilization

COURSE LITERATURE

Students should read all the required textbooks. (Be sure to make arrangements to acquire and read all texts prior to the beginning of class.) Those who have not read the background literature should do so to prepare for the qualifying exam later in the program. To facilitate your review of this literature throughout your program, write an electronic summary card of each book or article using *Citation Bibliographic and Research Note Software* (<http://www.citationonline.net>). (The Seminary provides *Citation* to you upon acceptance into the Doctor of Missiology program, but you are welcome to use the software of your choice.) These notes will prove to be crucial tools for you in reviewing for the qualifying exams, in which you will be required to show your mastery of missiological literature. Although you may write what you please on these cards, we recommend the following format:

- Bibliographic information
- A summary of the book (A paragraph abstract that includes a thesis statement)
- Significant quote(s) from the book which you might wish to cite in your research or on the qualifying exams

You should periodically review these cards and have them virtually memorized by the time of the qualifying exam. The cards will be graded as credit/no credit.

Background Literature. These books are standard works on missiology that are particularly relevant to this course. Ideally, you should have already read this material before beginning doctoral studies. If there are any books you have not read on this list, review them and write a

summary card for later reference. Even if you have already read these books, it would be good to review them and write a summary card as well. If you will follow this practice throughout your doctoral studies, you should be prepared for the qualifying exam at the end of the core courses.

(Books will be available for purchase at the AGTS bookstore. Be sure to buy and read the textbooks for every class before you come to the modules. Another book source is Gary Flokstra at info@4wrd.org who has both new and used books for missionaries and mission organizations. You may also purchase the books from Amazon.com by clicking on the hyperlink title.)

Hall, Edward. [*The Dance of Life: The Other Dimension of Time*](#). New York: Anchor/Doubleday, 1983. **ISBN-10:** 0385192487, **ISBN-13:** 978-0385192484 \$13.95 Print 215 pp.

Hesselgrave, David J. [*Communicating Christ Cross-Culturally*](#). 2nd ed. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991. **ISBN-10:** 0310368111, **ISBN-13:** 978-0310368113 \$25.99 Print 638 pp.

Grunlan, Stephen A. and Marvin K. Mayers. [*Cultural Anthropology: A Christian Perspective*](#), 2nd ed. Grand Rapids Print: Zondervan, 1988. **ISBN-10:** 0310363810, **ISBN-13:** 978-0310363811 \$22.99 Print 304 pp.

Lingenfelter, Sherwood and Marvin Mayers. [*Ministering Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Personal Relationships*](#). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2003. **ISBN-10:** 0801026474, **ISBN-13:** 978-0801026478 \$13.99 Print 122 pp.

Luzbetak, Louis J. [*The Church and Cultures: New Perspectives in Missiological Anthropology*](#). Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988. **ISBN-10:** 0883446251, **ISBN-13:** 978-0883446256 \$38.00 Print 398 pp.

Nida, Eugene A. [*Customs and Cultures: Anthropology for Christian Missions*](#). 2nd ed. Pasadena, CA, 1975. **ISBN-10:** 0878087230, **ISBN-13:** 978-0878087235 \$11.64 Print 306 pp.

(Total: 1955 pages)

Required Textbooks:

Elmer, Duane H. [*Cross-Cultural Servanthood*](#). Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2006. **ISBN-10:** 0830833781, **ISBN-13:** 978-0830833788 \$16.00 Print 198 pp.

Kraft, Charles H. [*Communication Theory for Christian Witness*](#), Rev. ed. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1994. **ISBN-10:** 0883447630, **ISBN-13:** 978-0883447635 \$20.00 Print 174 pp.

Hiebert, Paul, Daniel Shaw, and Tite Tienou, eds. [*Understanding Folk Religion: A Christian Response to Popular Beliefs and Practices*](#). Grand Rapids: Baker, 1999. **ISBN-10:** 0801022193, **ISBN-13:** 978-0801022197 \$32.00 Print 416 pp.

Hofstede, Geert and Gert Jan Hofstede. *Cultures and Organizations: Software of the Mind*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2005. **ISBN-10:** 0071439595, **ISBN-13:** 978-0071439596 \$29.95 Print 376 pp.

Lingenfelter, Sherwood. *Agents of Transformation: A Guide for Effective Cross-Cultural Ministry*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1996. **ISBN-10:** 0801020689, **ISBN-13:** 978-0801020681 \$26.00 Print 275 pp.

Rogers, Everett and Thomas Steinfatt. *Intercultural Communication*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press, 1999. **ISBN-10:** 1577660323, **ISBN-13:** 978-1577660323 \$31.95 Print 264 pp.

Shaw, R. Daniel and Charles Van Engen. *Communicating God's Word in a Complex World*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2003. **ISBN-10:** 0742514471, **ISBN-13:** 978-0742514478 \$29.95 Print 280 pp.

(Total: 2015 pp.)

NOTE: IF PARTICIPANT HAS READ ANY OF THE REQUIRED TEXTS FOR CREDIT IN ANOTHER CLASS, PLEASE SUBSTITUTE ANOTHER BOOK FROM THE LIST BELOW.

Recommended Substitutes:

Dodd, Carley H. *Perspectives on Cross-Cultural Communication*. New York: Kendall Hunt pub., 1977. **ISBN-10:** 0840317034, **ISBN-13:** 978-0840317032 \$23.99 Print 109 pp.

_____. *Dynamics of Intercultural Communication*. 5th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1997. **ISBN-10:** 0697327256, **ISBN-13:** 978-0697327253 \$73.56 Print 336 pp

Engel, James F. *Contemporary Christian Communications: Its Theory and Practice*. Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1979. **ISBN-10:** 0840751524, **ISBN-13:** 978-0840751522 \$29.80 344 pp.

Elmer, Duane H. *Cultural Connections: Stepping Out and Fitting in Around the World*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002. **ISBN-10:** 0830823093, **ISBN-13:** 978-0830823093 \$16.00 Print 212 pp

Harrison, Lawrence E. and Samuel P. Huntington eds. *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress*. New York: Basic Books, 2000. **ISBN-10:** 0465031765, **ISBN-13:** 978-0465031764 \$19.00 Print 329 pp.

Hiebert, Paul. *Cultural Anthropology*. 2d ed. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1990. **ISBN-10:** 0801042739, **ISBN-13:** 978-0801042737 \$36.00 Print 500 pp.

- _____. [*Anthropological Insights for Missionaries*](#). Grand Rapids: Baker, 1987. **ISBN-10:** 0801042917, **ISBN-13:** 978-0801042911 \$22.99 Print 320 pp.
- _____, ed. [*Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues*](#). Grand Rapids: Baker, 1994. **ISBN-10:** 0801043948, **ISBN-13:** 978-0801043949 \$28.00 Print 272 pp.
- Kraft, Charles H. [*Christianity in Culture: A Study in Dynamic Biblical Theologizing in Cross-Cultural Perspective*](#). Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1980. **ISBN-10:** 1570755884, **ISBN-13:** 978-1570755880 \$30.00 Print 344 pp.
- _____. [*Anthropology for Christian Witness*](#), New York: Orbis Books, 1996. **ISBN-10:** 1570750858, **ISBN-13:** 978-1570750854 \$25.00 Print 493 pp.
- Lingenfelter, Judith E. and Sherwood G. Lingenfelter. [*Teaching Cross-Culturally: An Incarnational Model for Learning and Teaching*](#). Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003. **ISBN-10:** 0801026202, **ISBN-13:** 978-0801026201 \$14.99 Print 134 pp.
- Nida, Eugene A. [*Message and Mission: The Communication of the Christian Faith*](#). revised. Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1990. **ISBN-10:** 0878087567, **ISBN-13:** 978-0878087563 \$19.99 Print 320 pp.

CALENDAR AND OUTLINE

MONDAY December 7, 2009 “The Missiologist as Cross-Cultural Servant”

Time	Topic	Professor	Reading
8:00-10:00 am	Theological Foundations for Incarnational Ministry	Rance	Elmer
10:00-10:30 am	Break		
10:30-12:00 am	Class Introduction	Rance	Syllabus
12:00-1:00 pm	LUNCH with class, catered at AGTS Cost: Approximately \$40 per student for the five meals of the week.		
1:00-3:00 pm	The Message		Shaw/Van Engen
3:00-3:30 pm	Break		
3:30-4:30 pm	Gospel and Culture		Lingenfelter
4:30-5:00 pm	Personal and corporate missiological reflection on the day’s activities.	Rance	
5:00-6:00 pm	DINNER		
6:00-9:00 pm	(Writing of qualifying exam questions and preparation for final exam, free time)		

TUESDAY December 8, 2009 “The Missiologist as an Intercultural Communicator”

Time	Topic	Professor	Reading
8:00-10:00 am	Communication Models	Rance	Rogers and Steinfatt
10:00-10:30 am	Break		
10:30-12:00 am	Intercultural Communication		Kraft
12:00-1:00 pm	LUNCH with class, catered at AGTS		
1:00-3:00 pm	Intercultural Communication	Rance	
3:00-3:30 pm	Break		
3:30-4:30 pm	Intercultural Communication	Rance	
4:30-5:00 pm	Personal and corporate missiological reflection on the day’s activities.	Rance	
5:00-6:00 pm	DINNER		
6:00-9:00 pm	(Writing of qualifying exam questions and preparation for final exam, free time)		

WEDNESDAY December 9, 2009 “The Missiologist as an Anthropologist”

Time	Topic	Professor	Reading
8:00-10:00 am	Elements of Culture	Rance	Hiebert et al.
10:00-10:30 am	Break		

10:30-12:00 am	Worldview	Rance	
12:00-1:00 pm	LUNCH with class, catered at AGTS		
1:00-3:00 pm	Elements of Culture Continued	Rance	
3:00-3:30 pm	Break		
3:30-4:30 pm	Cultures and Organizations	Rance	Hofstede
4:30-5:00 pm	Personal and corporate missiological reflection on the day's activities.	Rance	
5:00-6:00 pm	DINNER		
6:00-9:00 pm	(Writing of qualifying exam questions and preparation for final exam, free time)		

THURSDAY December 10, 2009 “The Missiologist and Missionary Acculturation”

Time	Topic	Professor	Reading
8:00-10:00 am	Elements of Culture Continued	Rance	
10:00-10:30 am	Break		
10:30-12:00 am	Elements of Culture Continued	Rance	
12:00-1:00 pm	Deadline for qualifying exam questions. LUNCH with class, catered at AGTS		
1:00-3:00 pm	Culture Shock/ Acculturation	Rance	
3:00-3:30 pm	Break		
3:30-4:30 pm	The Missionary Challenge/ Mobilization	Rance	
4:30-5:00 pm	Personal and corporate missiological reflection on the day's activities.	Rance	
5:00-6:00 pm	DINNER		
6:00-9:00 pm	(Preparation for Final Exam)		

FRIDAY December 11, 2009 “The Missiologist in Preparation for Qualifying Exams”

Time	Topic	Professor	Reading
8:00-12:00 am	Final Exam (3 hours timed)	Rance	
10:00-10:30 am	No Break- Coffee will be available		
12:00-1:00 pm	LUNCH with class, catered at AGTS		
1:00-3:00 pm	Open Forum: Intercultural Communication and Missions Anthropology Initial Assessment and Review of the Exam.	GMD Faculty	
3:00-3:30 pm	Break		
3:30-5:00 pm	Wrap-up/Assessment of Module	Rance/Mostert/ Newberry	

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Pre-Session: 1. Read the required textbooks listed in this syllabus. Write and submit brief electronic summary cards for all course readings (graded as credit or no credit).

2. Participate in an online forum. **Let's Yahoo!** In order to provide you with an opportunity to publically interact with the reading and facilitate dialog with your classmates, each student will be required to submit five posts to the forum site (you are welcome to post additional interaction to the reading or other postings as you will):

Post one: After reading the Elmer, Kraft and Lingenfelter texts post a 150-200 word paragraph that begins with: "My greatest 'aha' moment in the reading was . . ." and explain why.

Post two: After reading Hofstede and Hofstede, and Rogers and Stienfatt post a 150-200 word paragraph describing in what ways, if any, they fall into the very trap they describe as interpreting reality through one's own cultural bias.

Post three: After reading Hiebert, Shaw and Tienou, and Shaw and Van Engen, in a 150-250 word paragraph describe "split level" Christianity in your context and how hermeneutical principles and contextualization can address it.

Post four: Write a critique or interact with one of your colleague's postings.

Post five: After finishing all of the required reading, write a 150-200 word paragraph that responds to **one** of the following: a. "I wish I had read _____ when I started my missionary career because" b. Every missionary needs to read _____ because. . . ." c. The question I wish the professor had asked about the reading for this course is _____ because"

To access the Yahoo forum, email Valerie Rance at vrance@agts.edu for instructions and your login and password to the Yahoo forum site. Note: For the sake of the student it is best if all reading and posting is done pre-session. However, if additional time is needed contact me.

3. Based on the reading of the literature and your ministry context, write a 4-5 page critical reflection paper including responses to the following questions:

- What specific reading most impacted your life? Why?
- What are the most significant missiological issues raised by the reading? Which are most germane to your ministry context? Why?
- How has the reading influenced your missions thinking or future ministry?
- What missions statement or perspective in the reading did you disagree with most?
- Quote what you consider the most significant or impacting citation and describe why this citation is significant.

Session: 1. Attend class and participate in discussions. 2. Articulate three possible qualifying exam questions for this course which integrate and apply course content to your particular missional context. Electronically submit these questions along with bibliographic information for sources that will assist you in responding to these questions in context specific ways (2-3 sources per question) **by noon on Thursday, December 10.** 3. At the end of the class, you will take an exam which will be similar in format to the qualifying exams which will be taken following the completion of the core courses. You will have three hours to write an essay applying the theories

and tools of intercultural communication and missions anthropology to your specific missional context. While literature beyond that of the class requirements may be cited (and it's a wonderful idea to do so), it will not be necessary to go beyond the literature of the class and pre-session bibliography. You should cite the author of all literature which is adduced to support your answers. The point of the exam is not only to demonstrate mastery of the course material, but also to get some early practice for the qualifying exams. While laptops are preferred, the computer center of the Seminary will be reserved for students who do not own their own laptop. Submission of the paper is to be made electronically by email at the end of the allotted time period. (No other use of the Internet will be permitted during the exam period.) No points will be deducted for spelling or grammar, but students should pre-think their essay to ensure a coherent outline. Don't psyche out about it! It's really just a practice and only counts for 20% of the course grade. But no student will be allowed to postpone or opt out of the exam.

Post-Session: Conduct an interview with a person of another culture or missionary and present a written research paper. Based on the information gleaned from the interview, class notes, the assigned reading and other related references, present a paper which develops an integrated communication strategy for reaching the people group represented by the interviewee with the message of Christ include your personal reactions and recommendations. The paper should be 15-20 pages in length, double spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font and in accordance with Turabian Style or APA formatting.

ALL Post-session work must be submitted within 90 days of the last day of class (March 11, 2010).

***See Addendum One for the "AGTS (GMD) Rubric for the Evaluation of the Quality of Student Writing" (The rubric which will be used for the grading of your papers) and Addendum Two for "Tips for Writing Better Papers."**

General Guidelines for Formal Writing Assignments: Each writing assignment should be typed, double-spaced in a 12 point Times New Roman font. It should contain your name and should conform to Turabian, APA, or other formal academic style manual. The paper must be well-structured, clearly written, and grammatically correct. Make sure someone proof-reads your paper before you submit it to avoid typographical, grammatical and editorial errors. Papers which do not engage appropriate bibliographic resources will be returned for rewrites.

****All work must be submitted electronically as an attached Word Document file to DeLorraine at AGTS by e-mail (drance@agts.edu). PLEASE INCLUDE YOUR LAST NAME AS THE FIRST WORD IN THE FILE NAME.** It is recommended that you submit the work as soon as you complete it to avoid the accumulation of work (and stress) at deadline dates. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to ask.

Students with Disabilities: If you anticipate the need for reasonable accommodations to meet the requirements of this course, you must register with the Office of Student Services. Contact Student Services, 1435 N. Glenstone Ave, Springfield, MO, 65802, (417) 286-1081 or email: studentservices@agts.edu. Students are required to provide documentation of disability to Student Services prior to receiving accommodations.

Non-Discriminatory Language. All AGTS students, employees, and faculty members are urged to use non-discriminatory language in both verbal and written communication at the Seminary. While AGTS does not endorse the following websites, they provide more information on non-discriminatory language:

General Principles: http://www.randomhouse.com/words/language/avoid_guide.html

Gender: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/workshops/hypertext/apa/gender.html>

Racial and Ethnic Identity: <http://www.apastyle.org/race.html>

Disabilities: <http://www.apastyle.org/disabilities.html>

Age Discrimination: http://www.randomhouse.com/words/language/avoid_guide.html

GRADING PROCEDURE

Final grades will be assigned according to the following calculus:

General and electronic class participation	10%
Textbook electronic summary cards (credit/no credit)	10%
Textbook critical reflection paper	10%
Qualifying questions/bibliographic information	10%
Final exam (trial qualifying exam)	20%
Interview research paper	<u>40%</u>
Total	100%

***NOTE: Professor reserves the right to modify course requirements and grading percentages if deemed necessary.**

GRADING SCALE

A+ (10)	publishable	A (96)	100-94	A- (93)	93-90
B+ (89)	89-87	B (86)	86-84	B- (83)	83-80
C+ (79)	79-77	C (76)	76-74	C- (73)	73-70
D+ (69)	69-67	D (66)	66-64	D- (63)	63-60
F	59 or below				

BIBLIOGRAPHY

See the extensive biography available on the Intercultural Doctoral Studies website.

LEARNING OUTCOMES OF THE GLOBAL MISSIONS DEPARTMENT

The specific learning outcomes for the programs of the Global Missions Department at AGTS include that the student will be able to:

1. make decisions, live and serve according to revealed truth and the will of God
2. develop biblical theology of missions which addresses the contemporary missional context
3. utilize the tools of the social sciences to develop a plan to communicate the gospel in word and deed to persons of another culture
4. facilitate the ongoing process of contextualization as missional leaders and communities of faith in specific settings
5. articulate a Spirit driven missiology and praxis
6. identify, exemplify and foment biblical leadership

THE PURPOSE, PROGRAM GOALS, SPECIFIC LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR THE DOCTOR OF MISSIOLOGY DEGREE

1. The purpose of the D. Miss. is to prepare persons for denominational and interdenominational leadership roles in cross cultural ministries both in the United States of America as well as around the globe; to educate persons with specialized expertise in missiology and its cognate disciplines; and to train persons for research and teaching in those disciplines.
2. The D.Miss. program goals are to enrich the practice of missionaries serving with our denomination and other agencies through :
 - a. mastery of missiological and cognate disciplines
 - b. an advanced understanding of theological disciplines and their relationship to missiology
 - c. enhanced ability to provide leadership in cross-cultural ministries, and the capacity to engage in research and teaching
3. The specific learning outcomes for the D.Miss. program are that the upon completing the program the student will be able to:
 - a. express a deepening biblical and theological understanding of *Missio Dei* and the kingdom of God
 - b. articulate a distinctively Pentecostal theology of intercultural ministry
 - c. describe the historical development of the Christian movement and the participant's role in the contemporary world
 - d. discern the Holy Spirit's direction in the fulfillment of the mission of God in diverse cultural settings and to contextualize effective expressions of the Gospel
 - e. establish priorities of evangelism, church planting, leadership formation, and compassion ministries
 - f. model a continuing commitment to personal spiritual formation and growth as a member of God's missionary people
 - g. illustrate the close relationship between the local church and missions; and

- h. make a scholarly contribution to the understanding and practice of intercultural ministry.

SPECIFIC DATA

Prepared by DeLonn Rance, Ph.D., September 17, 2009.

ADDENDUM 1

AGTS (GMD) RUBRIC FOR THE EVALUATION OF THE QUALITY OF STUDENT WRITING

The quality of a student’s writing will be assessed using the following rubric. Each element will be assessed on a 5-point scale where 5 represents superior work, adequate for publishing. A score of 1 would signify that the work requires significant re-writing and a score of 3 reflects adequate, passable quality.

	5	4	3	2	1
A. TOPIC SELECTION/RATIONALE FOR STUDY 10%					
1. The student gives a clear, cogent rationale for the choice of the subject 2%					
2. The chosen topic is important (worthy of study), relevant, and/or serves to contribute to the knowledge in the field 2%					
3. The research and/or content goals are clearly stated (what data or information they intend to acquire) 2%					
4. There’s evidence that the student has read widely enough to identify the major issues 2%					
5. The student understands the issues and is able to critically reflect on their relevance to the chosen topic 2%					
B. RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT AND ORGANIZATION OF THE TOPIC 40%					
1. The student has chosen a research methodology that is adequate to the stated goals of the study 10%					
2. The outline and content of the paper reveals that the investigation of the topic is comprehensive and covers the topic adequately 20%					
3. The outline of the paper is coherent and provides a logical development from concept to concept 10%					
C. CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS 30%					
1. The student has engaged a broad spectrum of views related to the chosen topic 10%					
2. The student demonstrates an ability to critically assess the strengths and weaknesses of differing views or positions 10%					
3. The student shows evidence of independent thinking which evaluates objectively differing views or positions before declaring their own position 10%					
D. BASIC WRITING SKILLS 20%					
1. The paper is mechanically sound in terms of word usage and selection, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, syntax and grammar 5%					
2. The appropriate style format was used (Turabian or APA) 5%					
3. The writing style is clear, straightforward, and easily understood 5%					
4. The development of thought is aided by well-constructed paragraphs, transitional sentences and summations that facilitate the flow of thought 5%					

ADDENDUM 2

TIPS FOR WRITING BETTER PAPERS

*The principles below should be applied to the preparation of the papers.

TRUISMS

1. Reading and re-reading the instructions aid in the preparation of superior papers.
2. A good research paper requires hard work. Within five minutes or less of reading a paper, a professor can spot poor work.
3. Writing skills improve with more writing; there are no shortcuts.

WHAT PROFESSORS EXPECT IN RESEARCH PAPERS

1. Solid research in *primary sources*
2. Familiarity and interaction with *secondary sources*
3. Logical organization
4. Original analytical reflection
5. Integrity in writing
6. Consistency in following the designated style manual (e.g., APA, Turabian, etc.)

WHAT STUDENTS EXPECT OF PROFESSORS

1. Clear instructions about the nature of the paper
2. Explanation of research methodology for the particular area of study
3. A clear rationale for the grade should be provided through comments written on the paper
4. The weight of the grade based first on the content of the paper, secondly on the mechanics.

NOTE: This does not minimize the problem of mechanical errors, typos, etc., because they interfere with the logical argumentation of the paper. If the number of mechanical problems and typos on a paper exceed the number of pages, the grade will likely be reduced by one grade point. This represents a fair approach to grading. If more than one mistake on the average appears on a page, then the paper has been poorly prepared both mechanically *and analytically*.

GUIDELINES:

1. Before writing, prepare a detailed outline of what you intend to address; this will prevent rambling and guarantee logical development.
2. Somewhere on the first page, a clear statement of purpose needs to be given, one that explains the nature of the paper and what it intends to achieve. The conclusion should then link closely with the statement of purpose.
3. Write in good written, not spoken English. All sentences should be complete and coherent. Most people, especially preachers, write like they talk. (Of course, profs remain immune to such temptations!) This means that redundancies will inevitably appear in the text. While repetition and alliteration may be effective in the pulpit, such devices can be unnecessary and distracting in . Avoid constant repetitions of proper names (use pronouns), expressions, etc. Also, use adjectives, adverbs and emphasis words (such as “very”) sparingly.

4. After completing the first draft, look carefully through the paper and eliminate unnecessary sentences; continue this approach with later drafts. “What?” you ask, “more than one draft?”
5. Keep a sharp eye on paragraph development. The topic presented in the opening sentence must govern what follows. If a paragraph becomes a collection of several unrelated thoughts (e.g., the last sentence has no connection to the opening sentence), then the logical argumentation has broken down. Furthermore, make certain that the paragraph properly fits into the development of the section.
6. Following the introduction of a person’s name (e.g., Harry Jones), only use their last name and/or pronouns afterward. Do not use the person’s first name in subsequent references; this would imply that you are a personal friend of the person cited.
7. Minimize the use of verbs of being: am, is, are, were, and being. They are are are usually overworked. Regular active verbs make stronger sentences.
8. If in doubt about a long sentence construction, break into two or more sentences.
9. How should you refer to yourself in the paper? I suggest the occasional use of the pronoun “I.” Referring to yourself as “this writer” or “this author” or “he or she who scribeth this paper” appears awkward in my estimation. At the same time, avoid using the first person plural (“we,” “us,” “our”) and the second person singular and plural (“you”). Refer to others in the third person singular or plural. Consistency avoids confusion and keeps the reader on course.
10. Use direct quotations sparingly. A direct quotation should only be used when a source says something of such importance that the reader would be deprived by not being aware of it. ***The frequent use of direct quotations and especially block quotations indicates that the writer has not adequately digested the material; long or frequent quotations then serve as “stuffers” in the text.***
11. Documentation: How many references numbers should be used? How many sources listed in a bibliography? Arbitrary numbers for these questions represent an artificial methodology, irrelevant at the graduate level. Review the rationale for references. Use the best sources, the number of which will vary with any given paper.
12. The bibliography should be strongly represented in the references notes. Avoid “stuffing” the bibliography with little used resources.
12. Beware of plagiarism. A safe rule of thumb is that only three to five words from a source may be used without quotation marks and a reference number. Plagiarism is the theft of resources written by other people.
13. Use headings, as well as sub-headings (if necessary). Do not use “chapters”; those would be for theses and dissertations.
14. Proofread the paper carefully and by all means use a spell-check. Have someone else—“THE HONEST FRIEND”—or several people read the paper to look for typos, mechanical errors, and especially for clarity and logical development. Learn from their suggestions, but don’t accept them uncritically.
15. THOU SHALT NOT (1) justify the right margin; (2) use large or very small fonts.
16. Gender inclusive language should always be used except when referring to the members of the Trinity.