

ASSEMBLIES OF GOD THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BNT/BOT/MHT/PCS 646 Theological Studies Seminar
Thursdays, 7:30-10:15 a.m.

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Spring 2008

COURSE SYLLABUS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

As the capstone academic experience for the degree of Master of Arts in Theological Studies, this course is designed to teach, guide, and assist the student in preparing a major seminar paper. The required research, interpretation, and writing provide the opportunity for demonstration of competencies within chosen concentrations of study.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

At the successful completion of this course, each student should be able:

1. To engage independently in research and writing in their area of theological studies.
2. To demonstrate appropriate levels of competence in the selected area of research.
3. To reflect critically on the available scholarship in a particular area of study, assessing strengths and weaknesses, and identify operating presuppositions in both theological and hermeneutical method.
4. To write at requisite skill levels with regard to vocabulary, punctuation, spelling, grammar, composition, style, and so forth.
5. To utilize effectively the basic style manuals requisite to academic writing.
6. To participate constructively in critical analysis of peer research and writing.
7. To receive and fairly evaluate judgments of peers with regard to personal research and writing.
8. To serve the church more effectively through theological research and written reflection.

TEXTBOOK

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed.
Revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. Chicago, IL:
University of Chicago Press, 2007. (All papers are to follow the “notes-bibliography”
method of documentation described in chapters 16 and 17, employing footnotes).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Attendance and participation in all class sessions is required of each student. In that the

number of class sessions will be abbreviated to allow maximum time for the preparation of the major paper for the course, the student should not be absent from the meetings of the class. Those meetings are announced in this syllabus.

2. The consistent meeting of established due dates in the preparation and presentation of the paper is expected of each student. Those dates are included in this syllabus, along with an explanation of the penalty for failing to meet them.
3. Each student will prepare and successfully complete a seminar paper in a chosen area of study based on the examination and interpretation of primary and secondary sources. The paper must be 30-35 double-spaced pages in length, exclusive of bibliography and appendices (if any). The due date for the paper is included in this syllabus.
4. Each student will provide a copy of the first draft of his/her seminar paper for the professor and every student in the class. These first drafts are **due one week before the class session at which his/her paper is to be reviewed by the class** (the assignment of these dates, which will fall between March 6 and April 10, will be made by the end of the second week of the class). The provision of the copies of the paper for every student will allow for the entire class to profit from working through each other's work. The expense of copying will be borne by the student.
5. Each student will participate in the evaluation of the first draft of the papers of his/her peers as a literary critic (to consider the conformity to the Turabian manual, grammatical and compositional concerns, etc.) and as a content critic (to consider the presentation of the material, the logic of the arguments, the usage of resource material, the cogency of presentation, etc.). The assignment of these responsibilities will be made after the class has begun and enrollment is set (by the end of the second week of the course).

COURSE METHODOLOGY

There will be a limited number of lectures, dialog relative to the research and writing of seminar papers, individual research and writing, private consultations with the professor, and classroom critique and review of papers.

COURSE SCHEDULE

January 10-17

Class meetings at which the following items will be covered: Explanation of the syllabus and course expectations; topic selection; proposal preparation; research methodology; and consideration of sections from the Turabian manual.

January 17

Each student will submit at the beginning of the class, on a form to be provided, the topic for the seminar paper. The individual topics will be discussed in class on that day. The professor will respond to each student, giving the okay to begin further work on the paper. The assignment of due dates for the first drafts and for literary and content critiques will be made. **There will be a chapel service this morning, 9:00-10:15 am.**

January 24 at 1:00 pm.

Each student must submit his/her Proposal to the professor or to the faculty secretary. The Proposals will be reviewed by the professor and returned to the student via campus mail ASAP.

January 17 – March 6

No formal class meetings. Each student is expected to work independently on his/her paper. The professor will be available in his office for student appointments during this time. Please see the appointment schedule beside his office door for specific times. Each student is expected to meet with the professor at least once during this time.

March 1

The first draft of the papers is due to the professor or the faculty secretary for the students who are to present them at the March 6 meeting of the class. The papers will be placed in each student's mailbox to allow for preparation for the critiques on March 6.

March 6

Class meetings resume. Assignments for literary and content critics for each of the papers and the schedule of presentations will be reviewed.

March 6 – April 10

Class meetings at which four first drafts per session will be critiqued by the literary and content critics and the professor. During these sessions questions will be asked and suggestions given by peers and the professor. This is not a formal defense of the paper by the author; rather, it is a dialog about the work with the intent to improve the final product. Immediately after the review of the first draft, work on the revisions for the final draft should commence. Formal class meetings will end when each first draft has been critiqued.

April 17 - Final draft of the paper due at 1:00 pm. to the professor or faculty secretary.

The professor will begin to work through the papers immediately and graded papers will be returned via campus mail.

COURSE GRADING

The grade for the course will be the grade assigned for the seminar paper. PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING: (1) Failure to meet the due dates for the presentation of the topic, the proposal, and the first draft will reduce the grade for the course by one movement within a letter grade for each calendar day late. (2) Failure to be prepared on the assigned day to participate in the class as literary critic and/or content critic will reduce the grade for the course by two movements within a letter grade. (3) Failure to submit the final draft of the seminar paper on the due date will reduce the grade for the course by one letter grade.

The grade of I (Incomplete) will be granted only for extenuating circumstance upon the written request of the student. Except in the case of severe extenuating circumstances the granting of the grade of I will mean that the course grade, assigned when the work is completed, will be reduced by one letter.

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SPECIFIC DATA

Syllabus prepared by James H. Railey, Jr., October 2007.