

**OT/NT/TH 675 - THEOLOGICAL RESEARCH PRACTICUM**  
**Canadian Theological Seminary**  
**Winter Semester 2005**  
**January 7, 2005 – April 8, 2005**

**Time:** Fridays at 8:15 a.m. to 11:00 a.m..  
All course work due: April 8, 2005

**Professor:** Joseph C. Hassey, PhD  
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**I. COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

***OT/NT/TH 675 - Theological Research Practicum (3 hours)***

An introduction to research tools and the efficient use of theological resources. Practical application is emphasized with attention to information access, information literacy, basic research (concepts, planning, and resources), retrieval, and critical analysis and thinking.

**II. EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES:**

The following are the expected learning outcomes of this course:

1. When undertaking research in a new area, the student will give evidence of an eagerness to and awareness of how to investigate carefully and responsibly in the search for truth.
2. When seeking to develop an effective and efficient research strategy, the student will be able to accurately assess the strengths and weaknesses of using various research methodologies and select those appropriate to the task.
3. When reviewing existing research, the student will be able to identify potential problems in the research methods and/or research results and will be able to identify ways these problems can be avoided in doing biblical and theological research.
4. When dealing with a new research problem, the student will be able to utilize multiple approaches in accessing available and useful research resources.
5. When faced with a specific problem of biblical or theological understanding, the student will be able to identify appropriate research questions and narrow the topic so that it becomes a manageable area of research.
6. When seeking approval for a research topic, the student will be able to describe an appropriate research strategy in the form of a research proposal.

7. The student will be able to compile useful bibliographies in the appropriate format to facilitate further research and for inclusion in writing the final research report.
8. The student will demonstrate the ability to document sources properly and accurately in the writing of research papers.
9. The student will demonstrate an improvement in their writing and editing skills needed for the production of biblical and theological research in various forms.

### III. PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL RELEVANCE:

Our ability to think independently and critically as well as our ability to interact responsibly with biblical and theological sources enhances our teaching, preaching, decision-making, personal character, and interaction with others. This course seeks to develop our minds and skills in a manner that encourages critical thinking skills, reflective judgment, and produces a Christ-like thoughtfulness and integrity in how we contribute to biblical and theological inquiry.

### IV. TEXTBOOKS:

#### *Reference List of Required Texts*

1. Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb and Joseph M. Williams. 2003. *The Craft of Research*. 2d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
2. Mann, Thomas. 1993. *Library Research Models: A Guide to Classification, Cataloging, and Computers*. New York: Oxford University Press.
3. Turabian, Kate L. 1996. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 6<sup>th</sup> ed. rev. by John Grossman and Alice Bennett. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

#### *Reference List of Recommended Books*

1. Alexander, Patrick H., John F. Kutsko, James D. Ernest, Shirley A. Decker-Lucke, and David L. Petersen, eds. 1999. *The SBL Handbook of Style: For Ancient Near Eastern, Biblical, and Early Christian Studies*. Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers.
2. Bates, Jefferson D. 2000. *Writing with Precision: How to Write So That You Cannot Possibly Be Misunderstood*. New York: Penguin Books.
3. Gibaldi, Joseph. 1999. *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: The Modern Language Association of America.
4. Strunk, William, Jr. 1999. *The Elements of Style*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. with revisions and introduction, and a chapter on writing by E. B. White. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

5. Zerubavel, Eviatar. 1999. *The Clockwork Muse: A Practical Guide to Writing Theses, Dissertations, and Books*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

#### IV. COURSE EXPECTATIONS:

- A. Classroom activity will involve a lecture/discussion format with frequent hands-on opportunities to develop research skills. The classroom discussion will be based on interaction with assigned readings, assigned projects, and classroom presentations. Each student is expected to participate. The active participation of each student requires that students be present for every scheduled class and is a factor in course grading.
- B. Class assignments are outlined in the class schedule. These assignments are tentative and can be adjusted to meet the specific needs of the students. The assignments include readings from the textbooks and books on reserve in the library and writing assignments. All written assignments are to be turned in on time. Any assignments turned in late (after class on the due date indicated in the schedule) will receive a reduced grade. Those assignments turned in on time may be resubmitted with corrections or improvements for an improved grade. Note that some of these assignments will require time in the library doing research and require that you plan ahead.
- C. Individual reference works and searching methods will be mentioned and described in class or the readings. Students are expected to become familiar with these and will need to spend appropriate time in the library doing research.
- D. There is no final examination for this course. However, a final paper is due on *Friday, April 8, no later than 4:00 p.m.* This paper may be a whole or a part of a major research paper written for another course (current or past). This paper must be a *self-contained* research paper prepared in a proper style and in accordance with the format outlined in class. The final paper will be graded based on the way it demonstrates your ability to do research by writing clearly, identifying, stating, and understanding the research problem, properly documenting all sources used, and the development of your evidence in a logical manner.

#### V. COURSE GRADING:

Students are graded on their ability to demonstrate improvement in the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to do quality research as outlined in the course learning outcomes. As outlined above, grades for individual assignments turned in on time are “tentative” and subject to revision if resubmitted with corrections or improvements. The final grade for the course is not “tentative” and will be assigned based on classroom attendance and participation, the skill evidenced in the assignments, and the skills evidenced in the final paper all of which are intended to evaluate the course learning outcomes.

#### VI. RESERVE READINGS:

Barzun, Jacques and Henry E. Graff. 1985. *The Modern Researcher: A Manual on All Aspects of Research and Writing*. 4<sup>th</sup> ed. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.

Zinsser, William. 1998. *On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction*. 6th ed. New York: Harper Collins Publishers.

## **VII. IN REFERENCE SECTION OF THE LIBRARY:**

Barber, Cyril J. 2000. *Introduction to Theological Research: A Guide for College and Seminary Students*. 2d ed. Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Gibaldi, Joseph. 1998. *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing*. 2d ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America.

Kennedy, James R. 1984. *Library Research Guide to Religion and Theology: Illustrated Research Strategy and Sources*. 2d ed. rev. Ann Arbor: Pierian Press.

**VIII. TENTATIVE CLASS SCHEDULE**

	<u>Date</u>	<u>Topics</u>
Week 1	January 7	Course Introduction and The Nature of Inquiry
Week 2	January 14	Ethics, Methods and Models of Inquiry Assignment #1 “Research Problems” Due
Week 3	January 21	The Distinctives of Biblical and Theological Inquiry Assignment #2 “LCSH” Due
<i>No Class</i>	<i>January 28</i>	<i>Faculty/Student Retreat</i>
Week 4	February 4	Narrowing the Field: Developing Appropriate Topics Assignment #3 “Research Proposal (Initial Draft)” Due
Week 5	February 11	Tools and Approaches 1 Assignment #4 “Using Reference Works” Due
<i>No Class</i>	<i>February 18</i>	<i>Mid-Term Break &amp; Winter Modular Classes</i>
Week 6	February 25	Tools and Approaches 2 Assignment #5 “Using Monographs” Due
Week 7	March 4	Tools and Approaches 3 Assignment #6 “Using Indexes” Due
Week 8	March 11	Tools and Approaches 4 Assignment #7 “Using the Internet” Due
Week 9	March 18	Moving from information to presentation Assignment #8 “Reading & Reflection” Due
<i>No Class</i>	<i>March 25</i>	<i>Holiday: Good Friday</i>
Week 10	April 1	Clarity in our Writing Assignment #9 “Clarity in Writing” Due
<i>No Class</i>	<i>April 8</i>	<i>Assignment #10 “Research Proposal (Final Draft)” Due</i>
<i>No Class</i>	<i>April 15</i>	<i>Final Paper Due</i>

## IX. CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

### *Assignment #1 – Research Questions and Problems*

1. Read chapters 1- 4 of *The Craft of Research*, by Booth, Colomb, and Williams.
2. Using the framework outlined in chapters 3 & 4 of *The Craft of Research*, formulate two significant research problems that you are working on or that you would like to work on. The two research problem statements should fit on one page of paper and include a clear statement of *the topic, the question, and the significance*.

### *Assignment #2 - Library of Congress Subject Headings*

1. Choose one of the two research problem statements you worked on for assignment #1.
2. Identify any additional research questions (sub problems/questions) associated with your research problem
3. Read Thomas Mann, *Library Research Models*, Chapters 1-4
4. Using the *Library of Congress Subject Headings* (4 vols., 18<sup>th</sup> ed., 1995), make a comprehensive list of *all* the major subject headings and sub-headings which are possible access points in the subject catalog for your research topic. The list should be alphabetical and in proper LC subject heading form as listed in the *LCSH*. Be sure to include all subdivisions or cross-listed subject headings relating to your topic. See the sample handout from class as an example of this.

### *Assignment #3 – Research Proposal (First Draft)*

Prepare a draft copy of a "Thesis Topic Proposal" to be turned in using the correct Turabian format. The proposal is to be a maximum of 350 words (not including bibliography) and must include all of the following:

- Your name
- Date of submission
- A tentative title
- A clear and concise statement of the research problem (see assignment #1)
- A tentative outline of the major points of the thesis
- A description of the research approach you will take in answering the question
- A basic bibliography (not to exceed 10 citations for first draft)

#### *Notes:*

- A. This assignment will be graded equally on your proper use of Turabian for the formatting of this assignment and on your ability to write well. If English is not your first language you must find an editor whose first language is English and have them review your work before you submit the assignment.

- B. When writing a research proposal you must remember that faculty members (1) teach a full load of courses, (2) are revising the courses they are currently teaching, (3) may be teaching new courses, (4) have committee and administrative assignments, (5) are preparing for outside speaking engagements, (6) are writing books and articles that have specific deadlines, and (7) are preparing courses for the coming semester. In addition, faculty members have church and family responsibilities. *Their time is limited* and they must make many decisions about what they can and cannot do. A "proposal" gives you the opportunity to *convince* faculty members that they should give their time, attention, and assistance to your research.
- C. As a faculty member, I would be willing to invest the extra time and energy needed to supervise your work if you can *convince* me of the following:
1. Your research topic is interesting to me and appears significant
  2. You are serious about doing research carefully
  3. You are prepared, have studied the issue, and know what you wish to do and why
  4. You are able to explain this clearly and concisely in writing
  5. You are able to write well and pay attention to detail
  6. I will not need to spend valuable time correcting or editing your work
  7. Any conclusions you have on the matter are tentative indicating that you are open and willing to receive guidance and assistance

#### ***Assignment #4 – Using Reference Works***

1. Read Booth, Colomb, & Williams, Chapters 5-6
2. Read Barzun and Graff (on reserve) – Scan chapters 1-3, Read Chapter 4
3. Read Gibaldi (handout in class) on “Evaluating Sources”
4. Locate articles or entries in the reference works found in library that provide useful information on your research topic and provide additional bibliographic sources. Sources that apply to this assignment include but are not limited to the following:
  - Almanacs
  - Atlases
  - Bibliographies (Subject)
  - Directories
  - Dictionaries
  - Encyclopedias (General)
  - Encyclopedias (Subject)
  - Grammars
  - Guidebooks
  - Handbooks
  - Lexicons
  - Wordbooks
  - Yearbooks

5. Develop a 1-2 page (10-12 entries maximum) bibliography of these sources following carefully the form requirements as set forth in Turabian for a bibliography.

### ***Assignment #5 – Using Monographs***

1. Read Booth, Colomb, & Williams, Chapters 7-8
2. Read Thomas Mann, *Library Research Models*, Chapters 5-6
3. Using the subject headings you found in assignment #2, search for monographs on your research topic that are found in the library. Select books using the following criteria:
  - a. *Date of Publication*: Is the book current or has it been published recently?
  - b. *Author's Authority*: Is the author a recognized authority in the field?
  - c. *Publisher's Reputation*: Is the book published by a recognized publisher in the field of study?
  - d. *Bibliography and Index Notes*: Does the book have a bibliography in addition to standard references? Does it have a useful index?
  - e. *Edition Number*: If the book is older, has it been updated, revised, or enlarged?
  - f. *Reviews*: Has the book received positive reviews by recognized scholars?

*Note*: These criteria vary in importance depending on the topic. They are intended to assist in developing a strong bibliography for doing quality research.

4. Develop a 1-2 page (10-15 entries maximum) bibliography following carefully the form requirements as set forth in Turabian for a bibliography.

### ***Assignment #6 – Using Indexes***

1. Read Thomas Mann, *Library Research Models*, Chapters 7-8
2. Locate *reviews* (see Turabian 11:46-47) for any two of the *monographs* identified for assignment #3. Provide a bibliography of these using the proper format and style of Turabian.
3. Using the indexes, locate the total number of *journal articles*, *dissertations* and, and *essays* on your topic. Indicate the total number you could find for each. Then, limit your search criteria to identify, in a useful fashion, a maximum of 10 entries for each category. Provide a bibliography of these using the proper format and style of Turabian. For *journal articles* see Turabian 11.39-40, for *dissertations* see Turabian 11.55, for *essays* see Turabian 11.26)

### ***Assignment #7 – Using the Internet***

1. Read Thomas Mann, *Library Research Models*, Chapters 9-10
2. Develop an *annotated bibliography* for at least six internet sites that you consider to be



excellent sources for doing biblical and theological research relevant to your topic of research. See Turabian 9.36 for an example of an annotated bibliography for a monograph. Your annotated bibliography should both *describe and evaluate* the site to enable the reader to determine whether the site may be useful for their own research..

3. Note that bibliographic format of electronic sources is only briefly covered in the 6<sup>th</sup> edition of Turabian (8.141). Until the next edition of Turabian is available, you can use Joseph Gibaldi, *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Modern Language Association, 1999), Section 4.9, pp.178-190. Gibaldi covers most types of electronic sources and gives many good examples. Until this topic is addressed adequately in Turabian, I recommend the use of the following:

Crouse, Maurice. 4 November 2002. *Citing electronic information in history papers*.  
<http://cas.memphis.edu/~mcrouse/elcite.html> [14 January 2003].

### ***Assignment #8 – Reading & Reflection***

1. Read Thomas Mann, *Library Research Models*, Chapters 11-12
2. Based on the eight “methods-of-searching” models presented in Mann, reflect on the strengths and weakness of the library at Canadian Theological Seminary for doing your research. What specific recommendations can you make that will improve your ability to utilize each of the eight methods in our library? Prepare a 2-3 page reflection paper on this and be prepared to discuss this in class.

### ***Assignment #9 – Clarity in Writing***

1. Read Booth, Colomb, & Williams, Part Four, Chapters 12-16, pp. 183 – 281.
2. Review Strunk and White, 4<sup>th</sup> ed., Chapter 2, “Elementary Principles of Composition”

### ***Assignment #10 – Research Proposal (Final Draft)***

Prepare a final draft of your "Thesis Topic Proposal" (assignment #3) using the correct Turabian format. Review and update the work you did for assignment #3. Be sure to read the notes for that assignment as well. The proposal is to be a *maximum* of 1000 words (not including bibliography or outline) and *must* include all of the following:

- Your full name
- A tentative title
- A clear and concise statement of the research problem (see assignment #1)
- A tentative outline of the major points of the thesis
- A description of the research approach you will take in handling this problem
- A working bibliography (not to exceed 40 citations for this assignment)