

**Academic Writing Online  
Ministry 6105-11  
Spring 2017  
North Park Theological Seminary  
1 credit hour**

**Course Instructor:**

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At North Park Seminary I teach Academic Writing, provide academic counseling and support, lead workshops, and serve as the thesis format reader. Questions can be sent to me via Canvas or e-mail, and I will respond as promptly as I am able. In an (academic) emergency, you may reach me on my cell phone between 9 a.m. and 9 p.m., M-F.

**Introduction:**

This course is designed to develop your academic “tools,” so that you can communicate more efficiently and effectively through the various forms of seminary writing. The course will also address issues closely related to academic writing, such as proactive reading, research, test preparation, and time management. Many of the assignments are meant to align with your other courses during the semester.

**Course Description and Participant Learning Objectives for Course:**

This course will shape students’ capacity to succeed in seminary writing by strengthening theological and biblical reasoning, critical thinking, and reading. Focus will be given to effective and proper use of outside sources in research papers. It especially will serve those who are new to theological categories, studying in a second language, or second career students. The course will also benefit those who wish to improve their ability to read with focus and write with clarity. By the completion of this course, participants will:

- Improve their overall academic competence
- Incorporate effective methods of reading and writing into their seminary coursework
- Utilize available resources to accomplish their academic goals

**Required Texts:**

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 8<sup>th</sup> edition.  
Vyhmeister, Nancy *Quality Research Papers for Students of Religion and Theology*. 3rd Edition. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2014.  
*North Park Theological Seminary Writing Handbook 2017-2018*

**Additional Readings:**

As assigned and posted on Canvas

**Participant Responsibilities:**

1. Engaged, timely participation is required. **Thorough and prompt completion of assignments is a critical component of your grade.** Each weekly assignment and discussion posts are worth 10 points.
2. Participants should plan on spending 45 total hours on course responsibilities (e.g. reading, responding, assignments, and conferencing with professor).

## **Course Calendar:**

### **Week 1 Begins January 15**

#### **METACOGNITIVE WRITING: SYLLABUS ANALYSIS**

Learning Objective: To create a master plan for completing all semester assignments by analyzing syllabi

Readings: Your current syllabi, readings on Canvas; <http://theorange.blogspot.com/2014/08/>

<http://theorange.blogspot.com/2009/02/read-before-reading-syllabus.html>

<http://theorange.blogspot.com/2010/08/metacognitive-skills-mnst-5102.html>

Discussion Board Posts and Assignments to Complete:

- Complete the survey as an introduction, and post on the Canvas discussion board. (10 points)
- Syllabi analysis assignment (10 points)

### **WEEK OF 1/22 EVANGELICAL COVENANT MIDWINTER CONFERENCE NO ASSIGNMENTS**

### **Week 2 Begins January 29**

#### **TIME MANAGEMENT/MOTIVATION/LEARNING STYLES**

Learning Objective: Identify issues impeding optimal completion of assignments; prepare action plan for semester, focusing on large or long-term writing projects and presentations.

Reading: Documents on Canvas; <http://theorange.blogspot.com/2009/04/initium-est-dimidium-facti.html>

Discussion Board Posts and Assignment to Complete:

- Discussion on Time Management and Motivation (10 points)
- Phone conference with professor during the week (10 points)

### **Week 3 Begins February 5**

#### **BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE AND MEMORY**

Learning Objective: Enhance memory/engagement with course material by researching related topics

Readings: Documents on Canvas; <http://theorange.blogspot.com/2013/09/>

<http://theorange.blogspot.com/2010/03/mapping-faith.html>

<http://theorange.blogspot.com/2010/02/need-to-know.html>

<http://theorange.blogspot.com/2009/02/insider-jargon.html>

Discussion and Assignment to Complete:

- Discussion Board Post on Making Connections (10 points)
- Assignment: Create a Glossary (10 points)

### **Week 4 Begins February 12**

#### **READING FOR WRITING: PRE-READING**

Learning Objective: Improve understanding of texts by analyzing their context and structure

Readings: Documents on Canvas; <http://theorange.blogspot.com/2010/10/detective-work-first.html>

Discussion and Assignment to Complete:

- Discussion on Speed and Power (10 points)
- Assignment on Inspecting, X-Raying and Pigeonholing your texts (10 points)

### **Week 5 Begins February 19**

#### **WRITING AN ESSAY TEST**

Learning Objective: Improve effectiveness of test-taking by creating a study guide for upcoming exam

Readings: Documents on Canvas; <http://theorange.blogspot.com/2009/03/deconstructing-mid-term-exams.html>

<http://theorange.blogspot.com/2012/02/>

Discussion and Assignment to Complete:

- Discussion on Test-taking anxiety (10 points)
- Assignment on Preparing for a Test (10 points)

**Week 6 Begins February 26****RESEARCH METHODS: CHOOSING A TOPIC**

Learning Objective: Choose paper topics and sources based on the criteria of effectiveness, interest, and efficiency

Readings: Documents on Canvas; Vyhmeister 99-117 (Chapters 11-12); Turabian 5-23;

<http://theorange.blogspot.com/2009/04/goldilocks-and-three-topics-dialectical.html>

Discussion and Assignment to Complete:

- Discussion on Choosing a Topic Tendencies (10 points)
- Assignment on Choosing a Topic (10 points)

**Week 7 Begins March 5****FINDING AND EVALUATING SOURCES**

Learning Objective: Distinguish between genres of seminary writing; evaluate/engage sources for research paper

Required Readings: Turabian 24-48; Vyhmeister 128-152

<http://theorange.blogspot.com/2010/09/vet-vet-vet-web.html>

Discussion and Assignment to Complete:

- Discussion on the Research Process (10 points)
- Assignment Bibliography of Sources (10 points)

**Week 8 Begins March 12****TYPES OF SEMINARY WRITING**

Learning Objective: Distinguish between genres of seminary writing

Readings: Documents on Canvas; Vyhmeister 1-65

<http://theorange.blogspot.com/2009/03/summery-no-summary.html>

Discussion and Assignment to Complete:

- Discussion on Types of Writing (10 points)
- Assignment Post a Paper (10 points)

**Week 9 Begins March 19****PRE-WRITING – STRUCTURES AND OUTLINES**

Learning Objective: Organize paper by creating a structure or outline for the argument.

Readings: Documents on Canvas; Vyhmeister pp. 118-127; 179-187; Turabian 63-74

<http://theorange.blogspot.com/2009/03/building-paper.html>

Discussion and Assignment to Complete:

- Discussion on Paper Outline (10 points)
- Assignment Conference with Professor (10 points)

**Week 10 Begins March 26****INCORPORATING OUTSIDE SOURCES**

Learning Objective: Incorporate sources smoothly and correctly through paraphrase, summary and direct quotations

Readings: Document on Canvas; Turabian, 75-83, 135-163, scan 164-278; Vyhmeister pp. 153-167, 188-195

Discussion and Assignment to Complete:

- Discussion Thoughts on Plagiarism (10 points)
- Assignment on Incorporating an Outside Source (10 points)

**Week 11 Begins April 2****MAKING AN ARGUMENT**

Learning Objective: Student will practice elements of argumentation including flexibility and critical detachment in shaping claims

Readings: Document on Canvas; Turabian 49-62;

<http://theorange.blogspot.com/2009/03/detachment-can-be-good-thing.html>

Discussion and Assignment to Complete:

- Discussion Detached Argument (10 points)
- Assignment Reasons Why (10 points)

**Week 12 Begins April 9****WRITING AS THINKING- CLEAR, CRITICAL THINKING**

Objective: Clarify arguments in writing by identifying logical and fallacious arguments

Readings: Documents on Canvas; <http://theorange.blogspot.com/2009/04/clear-thinking.html>

<http://theorange.blogspot.com/2009/05/logical-fallacies-top-ten-list.html>

Discussion and Assignment to Complete:

- Discussion on Clear Writing (10 points)
- Assignment on Logical Fallacies (10 points)

**Week 13 Begins April 16****STYLE IN WRITING – GRAMMAR AND FORMAT**

Learning Objective: Student will improve fluidity and clarity, and use strong, clean sentences and paragraphs

Readings: Documents on Canvas; Vyhmeister 219-251, see samples in appendix pages for correct format;

Turabian 281-357 (scan) <http://theorange.blogspot.com/2009/03/wordy.html>

Discussion and Assignment to Complete:

- Discussion Style in Writing (10 points)
- Assignment Draft of a Paper (10 points)

**Week 14 Begins April 23****REVISION AND EDITING - PEER REVIEW OF PAPER**

Learning Objective: Practice global and local revision. Develop competency in peer and self-editing.

Readings: Documents on Canvas; Turabian 100-121

Discussion and Assignment to Complete:

- Discussion on Making Changes (10 points)
- Assignment Editing and Peer Review (10 points)

**Week 15 Begins April 30****FINAL CONFERENCE REVIEW OF POLISHED DRAFT**

Learning Objective: Student will demonstrate mastery of class to produce a polished final draft. Evaluation of course.

Readings: No additional readings this week.

Discussion and Assignment to Complete:

- Discussion (Peer Review from last week is due 12/6) (10 points)
- Assignment Final conference with professor (10 points)

**Evaluation of Assignments and Discussion Board Participation:**

Your work in this course will be evaluated according to your successful completion of the following:

**1. Assignments**

***Criteria for Assignments (10 possible points for each assignment; Late assignments will lose 1 points/week)***

| POINT VALUE | CHARACTERIZATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT  |
|-------------|---|
| 0           | No response.  |
| 6-7         | Assignment is incomplete, does not follow the directions given, or contains numerous careless errors.   |
| 8<br>9-10   | Assignment is thorough, follows directions, but contains a few obvious errors.<br>Excellent work, above what is required, careful attention to details. |

**2. Discussion Board participation (Post and responses for each class session)**

***Criteria for participation in discussion board (posting and responses) (10 possible for each week)***

| POINT VALUE | CHARACTERIZATION                                   |
|-------------|--|
| 0           | No posting or response                             |
| 5-9         | Partial or inappropriate participation             |
| 10          | Engaged, full and appropriate posting and response |

Additional Useful Links for Seminary Studies:

<http://www.enterthebible.org/>

<http://www.workingpreacher.org/>

<https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/>

<http://www.library.georgetown.edu/tutorials/research-guides/turabian-footnote-guide>

<https://www.library.georgetown.edu/tutorials/research-guides/turabian-paren-guide>

<http://www.eslcafe.com/>

<http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/>

<http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/student-pdfs/>

<https://www.northpark.edu/wp-content/uploads/Writing-Handbook-2017-2018.pdf>

<https://www.northpark.edu/wp-content/uploads/New-Testament-Bibliography.pdf>