

Academic Writing Online
Ministry 6105-11
Fall 2017
North Park Theological Seminary
1 CREDIT HOUR
DRAFT

Course Instructor:

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At NPTS, I teach Academic Writing, provide academic counseling, lead workshops, and serve as the thesis format reader. My M.Div. is from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota. 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.

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*. 8th edition.
Vyhmeister, Nancy *Quality Research Papers for Students of Religion and Theology*. 2014 edition.
NPTS Writing Handbook; 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.**
2. Participants should plan on spending 28 total hours on course responsibilities (e.g. reading, responding, assignments, and conferencing with professor). Many assignments will be tied to your other current academic courses.

Course Calendar:

Week 1 INTRODUCTION; METACOGNITIVE WRITING: SYLLABUS ANALYSIS

Objective: Organize assignments for the semester by close scrutiny of syllabi

Week 2 ELIMINATING WRITING BLOCKS: TIME MANAGEMENT/MOTIVATION/ANXIETY

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

Week 3 READING FOR WRITING: CREATING A GRID FOR KNOWLEDGE

Objective: Enhance memory/engagement with course material by researching its context

Week 4 READING FOR WRITING: PRE-READING/NOTE-TAKING

Objective: Improve understanding of texts/lectures by analyzing their perspective, purpose, structure and main ideas

Week 5 WRITING AN ESSAY TEST

Objective: Improve effectiveness of test-taking by creating study guides tailored to forthcoming exams

Week 6 WRITING AS THINKING/CRITICAL THINKING

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

Week 7 NO ASSIGNMENTS DURING FALL BREAK

Week 8 TYPES OF WRITING/MAKING AN ARGUMENT

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

Week 9 PRE-WRITING – STRUCTURES AND OUTLINES

Objective: Organize paper by creating a structure or outline for the argument as per assignment.

Week 10 INCORPORATING OUTSIDE SOURCES

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

Week 11 WRITING AS THINKING/RHETORIC

Objective: Student will develop flexibility, lucidity and speed in formulating ideas. Students will identify issues of speaker, content and audience.

Week 12 REVISION/EDITING/PEER REVIEW OF PAPER

Objective: Distinguish between global and local revision; develop art of positive critique.

Assignments/Evaluation:

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

1. Assignments

Criteria for Assignments (40 possible points for each assignment)

POINT VALUE	CHARACTERIZATION OF THE ASSIGNMENT
0	No response.
1-27 28-31	Assignment is late, incomplete or does not follow the directions given. Assignment is on time, but contains numerous careless errors.
32-35 36-40	Assignment is thorough, follows directions, but contains a few obvious errors. Excellent work, above what is required, careful attention to details.

2. Class participation (for each class session) 10 points per week for discussion board posts and responses.