



Nazarene Theological Seminary

1700 E Meyer Blvd • Kansas City, MO 64131 • 816/268-5400

CED 570 RESEARCH SEMINAR IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION Spring 2011

Essential Information

Please refer to the following documents for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Links to these resources are available at http://support.nts.edu/index.php/Essential_Information. Additional technical support information can be found at <http://support.nts.edu>.

- NTS Mission Statement & Purpose, M.Div. Objectives
- Tips for online learning success
- NTS library services
- NTS textbook information
- Online technical requirements and helpdesk information
- NTS Student Handbook including statements on quality of work, plagiarism, and academic probation
- *A Handbook for Inclusive Language*

Instructor Information

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Catalog Description

Overview of basic methods of research, including action research, in relation to ministry.

Course Narrative & Rationale

This course provides a basic orientation to the skills needed for appropriate research and writing at the graduate level, particularly the basics for contextual research in local ministry settings. A preliminary assumption remains that graduate students must be able to demonstrate the ability to conduct independent research through current print and electronic sources including a critical assessment of appropriate resources for any given topic. The student must also be able to communicate their command of the research material and be able to argue effectively for their interpretation of the material gathered. In addition, since most practical theological research emerges out of ministry contexts, students should be able to engage others in research projects that result in improved ministry practices. While practical theology may embrace a number of approaches, the current emphasis on action research provides one helpful approach for contextually based research. This course, along with CED670, provides an alternative approach to contextual field education using project solving, community involvement, and ministry development. As such, the student must be able to work within a thriving ministry context, employ methods of utilizing group input in the project development, and insure supervisor oversight of the project. Supervisors may range from lead pastors for associates to district leadership or leadership among the church board. However the student must supply both a willing ministry context and a clearly identified supervisor before moving to the second phase, CED670. This process may be settled during this class or in the interim between courses.

Educational Assumptions:

1. The work of the Holy Spirit is essential to the processes of Christian education at any level. I will consistently request the Spirit's presence within and among us.
2. Christian teaching and learning is best done in the context of community. Christian community remains the gift of the Spirit, enhanced or hindered by human effort.
3. Students are valued not only as persons who have potential to learn, but also as persons who already have significant knowledge and experiences to contribute to the purposes of the course. Consequently, some of the course assignments will require cooperative efforts among students. Such cooperation is inherent in a Christian community of learning.
4. The course focuses on the community of faith expressed in a local congregation or parish. In order for the purposes of the course to be fulfilled, each student should have a local church or parish in which he/she regularly participates or is able to "call to mind" a recent congregation that provides a living context for ministry discussion..
5. This is a graduate course. The quality of thinking, writing, speech, and class participation should reflect a graduate level quality. Higher levels of thought (e.g., analysis, synthesis, and evaluation), writing style, spelling, grammar, as well as faithful attendance, consideration of fellow students and their ideas, and timely submission of assignments is expected.

Students with Disabilities:

It is my commitment to make a reasonable effort to facilitate learning for students capable of graduate level seminary work. Any student who has a condition that may prevent full demonstration of his/her abilities as the course is presently designed should contact me at the beginning of the semester to discuss alternative educational practices that have served the student well in the past, and appropriate, mutually acceptable strategies for the present to insure the student's maximum participation and appropriate evaluation in the course. Student learning limitations need to be based on sound clinical diagnosis and include referential material to help with assessment.

Course Outcomes

As a result of successfully completing this course students will have opportunity to:

1. Demonstrate a working knowledge of the resources available for research.
2. Demonstrate their ability to identify and satisfy the basic acceptable standard for writing style to be utilized in research papers, book critiques, exegetical papers, & essays submitted to graduate faculty.
3. Demonstrate an ability to identify and respond to contextually based research issues for the sake of ministry

Required Texts & Course Materials

Hacker, Diana. Research and Documentation Online website. Available online [accessed 8/27/2009]
<http://www.dianahacker.com/resdoc/>

Osmer, Richard. *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. Grand Rapids: Wm. T. Eerdmans, 2008 (246 pp) ISBN 978-0-8028-1765-5.

Stringer, Ernest T. *Action Research: Second Edition*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, 1999 (222 pp). ISBN 0-7619-1713-6.

Thorsen, Don and Vickie Becker. *Inclusive Language Handbook: A Practical Guide to Using Inclusive Language*. Grantham, Pa.: Wesleyan/Holiness Women Clergy Inc. 1998. Available on-line [accessed 8/27/2009] http://whwomenclergy.org/booklets/inclusive_language.php

Turabian, Kate. *A Manual for Writers. 7th ed.*, revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, and University of Chicago Press Editorial Staff. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1996, 2007 (482 pp). ISBN 978-0-2268-2337-9

(Recommended)

Murphy, Nancey C. *Reasoning and Rhetoric in Religion*. Valley Forge, Pa.: Wipf & Stock, 1994.

Deborah Core. *The Seminary Student Writes*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000.

Strunk, William Jr. and E. B. White, *The Elements of Style*. 3rd ed. New York: MacMillian Publishing, 1979

Vyhmeister, Nancy Jean. *Quality Research Papers: for Students of Religion and Theology*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000.

Course Assignments & Requirements

1. 50 pts- Review or attend an orientation session to the William Broadhurst Library at Nazarene Theological Seminary (date and time tba). (CO #1)
2. 300 pts- Submit a 4-5 page writing sample of current research on the MACE topic (to be assigned) including a working bibliography of both traditional print and electronic sources (website and at least article on electronic database). The sample should demonstrate appropriate form and style (*Turabian*) as well identifying (in parentheses) the appropriate elements of claims and warrants, evidence and qualifications (detailed in Part One of *Turabian's A Manual of Writers*). Due date TBA. (CO#2)
 - a. Criteria for evaluating your writing sample include your ability to clearly identify your major claims, warrants, backing and qualifications in the sample. In addition you should be able to write inclusively, acknowledging the dignity of all persons.
 - b. In addition all writing assignments should reflect appropriate levels of analysis and synthetic thought. See the research and writing assessment rubric available at the end of the syllabus
3. 250 pts- Submit a short annotation of the Inclusive Writing Handbook (50 pts) as well as a 7-10 page comparative review of Stringer's *Action Research: Second Edition* and Osmer's *Practical Theology: An Introduction*,(200 pts) due dates, tba. (CO #2)
4. 400 pts- Develop a 5-7 page Action Research project design following the three basic steps of Look, Think, Act yet also incorporating practical theological assessment. While the project does not have to be completed during the semester, the student should demonstrate the viability of the research practicum for future study. Due Semester due date. The **Final exam** includes a reflective essay on the future viability of the project. (CO #3)

Program Requirements: Currently NTS requires Chicago Manual of Style/Turabian format.

Method for Submitting Assignments

Please use the assignments section of Moodle unless otherwise directed.

Form and Style Expectations

Unless noted otherwise by the professor, all writing assignments should conform to *Turabian, Kate L. A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations, Seventh Edition: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers* (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing), Eds. Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. University of Chicago Press, 2007 ISBN 978-0226823379

Policy Regarding Late Work & Missed Exams

Late posts receive a 15% daily reduction the week of the assignment. Posting after the assigned week will not be graded. All research/project work is due midnight of the date assigned. Late work without a valid reason (illness or death in family) is reduced by 15% the first week and an additional 10% each week following. No coursework may be submitted after the last day of the regular semester.

Student Learning Hours Summary

	hours
Class Participation	5
Reading	29
Writing	17
Other Assignments and Learning Activities	0
Exams & Quizzes	0
TOTAL	51

Please use forums and the assignments section of Moodle CMS unless otherwise directed.

Policy Regarding Late Work & Missed Exams

Late posts receive a 15% daily reduction the week of the assignment. Discussion posting after the assigned week will not be graded. All research/project work is due 11:59 pm Central Time of the date assigned. Late work without a valid reason (illness or death in family) is reduced by 15% the first week and an additional 10% each week following. No coursework may be submitted after the last day of the regular semester.

Course Grading

1000-901: A 900-801: B 800-701: C 700-600:D 599 or Below: F

Grade Descriptions

“A”-EXCEPTIONAL WORK (surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives)

“B”-GOOD WORK (strong, significant achievement of course objectives)

“C”-ACCEPTABLE WORK (basic, essential achievement of course objectives)

“D”-MARGINAL WORK (inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives)

“F”-UNACCEPTABLE WORK (failure to achieve course objectives)

See rubrics for major assignments and posting for further information on assessment.

Research in CE Semester Schedule (subject to change)

As a One hour course students will address assignments independently and submit to Moodle CMS. The student will meet with faculty at the beginning of the semester and also arrange a library overview if not previous arranged. In addition the student will meet with the professor either face to face or by phone following each assignment deadline for consultation.

Session	Topic	Assignments (either in class or by designated due date)	Dates
1	Introduction to Class and task of Research	Syllabus Review	
2	Research Design & Use of Sources	<i>Manual of Style Part One</i> : (Library overview: be sure you are familiar with resources including online databases)	
3	Use of Sources & Writing	<i>Manual of Style</i> and <i>Inclusive Writing Handbook</i> reading completed. Annotated Review of <i>Inclusive Writing Handbook</i> due, Topic Selected and initial bibliography determined for writing sample	March 1
4	Launching research	Submit a 4-5 page writing sample of current research on the MACE topic (to be assigned) including a working bibliography of both traditional print and electronic sources (website and at least article on electronic database). The sample should demonstrate appropriate form and style (<i>Turabian</i>) as well identifying (in parentheses) the appropriate elements of claims and warrants, evidence and qualifications (detailed in <i>The Craft of Research</i>).	Mid-Semester
5	Action Research as Practical Theology	Submit a 7-10 page comparative review of Stringer's <i>Action Research: Second Edition</i> and Osmer's <i>Practical Theology: An Introduction</i> see book review guidelines attached	
6	Research as Ministry	Rough Draft: Develop a 5-7 page Action Research project design following the three basic steps of Look, Think, Act yet also incorporating practical theological assessment. While the project does not have to be completed during the semester, the student should demonstrate the viability of the research practicum for future study	
6	Final Submission	Final Develop a 5-7 page Action Research project design following the three basic steps of Look, Think, Act yet also incorporating practical theological assessment. While the project does not have to be completed during the semester, the student should demonstrate the viability of the research practicum for future study	
7	Final Evaluation		

Appendices: Guidelines and Grading Rubrics

WRITING AN ANNOTATION (Adapted from websites listed below)

Cite the book, article, or document using the appropriate style. Annotation summary should run 100-150 words

An annotation briefly restates the main argument of a source. An annotation of an academic source, for example, typically identifies its thesis (or research question, or hypothesis), its major methods of investigation, and its main conclusions. Keep in mind that identifying the argument of a source is a different task than describing or listing its contents. Rather than listing contents, an annotation should account for **why** the contents are there. Write a concise annotation that summarizes the central theme and scope of the book or article. Include one or more sentences that (a) evaluate the authority or background of the author, (b) comment on the intended audience, (c) compare or contrast this work with another you have cited, or (d) explain how this work illuminates the class theme or your bibliography topic.

For more information see the following web-based guidelines

<http://www.library.cornell.edu/olinuris/ref/research/skill28.htm#annot>

<http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/annotatebib.html>

WRITING A BOOK REVIEW OR COMPARATIVE REVIEW

In the classic work on reading books—*How to Read a Book* by Mortimer Adler—we learn the task of the reviewer involves two main parts: first understanding the argument of the author, and then evaluating it. Reviews can take on various formats, though in general a summary of the book will precede the evaluation component. In the case of comparative reviews Interaction and Evaluation provides the location to note points of agreement, disagreement, complementary views, contradictory perspectives, and overall applicability in ministry context.

A. UNDERSTANDING

Before evaluating a book, we first must understand it. This aspect is more descriptive and factual—perhaps up to 50% of the review but no more even with comparative works. Summarize the subject matter and contents of the book. Give the reader a sense of the scope of the whole work.

Overview: What is the main subject matter or topic of the book? Provide a brief overview (by chapter if possible) of book contents (scope). How is the book organized (sequence) (e.g., chapters grouped together within parts?) Is there a main organizing framework or model being followed, explicit or implicit? What kind of book is it (e.g., scholarly-technical? textbook? trade/popular?)

Main Thesis, Conclusion(s): What is the main problem/question being addressed? What main claim/conclusion is proposed? What argument is offered to support these proposals? What are the major sub-claims of the book? Have the author's intentions been clearly understood?

INTERACTION AND EVALUATION

This aspect involves your professional judgment regarding how well the author carried out his or her project, related to the intentions of the author and often in the “space” between two different texts. This aspect is an essential contribution that transforms a plain “book summary” into a “book review.” This task is the more difficult one, yet it can become easier with increasing breadth of knowledge of the field and depth of critical thinking.

Assessment of the Argument: How well did the author develop the argument to support the main conclusions, claims, proposals? How well does the author deliver on his or her promises to address the problem(s) posed? Any strengths of the argument to highlight? Any weak elements or limitations to note? For points of important disagreement, did you offer a reason: (a) if the author was uninformed (unaware of relevant information)? or (b) misinformed (in error)? or (c) illogical (a conclusion that does not follow)? In the case of comparative reviews did you discover specific points of agreement or disagreement between the perspectives of the two authors?

Compatibility within a Wesleyan or Evangelical Protestant Perspective: What theological or worldview perspective is/seems to be evident in the book? From what perspective is the author addressing the issue? Perhaps keep in mind a traffic light analogy for potential integration within a Wesleyan or evangelical Protestant Christian perspective? Also, what is the style, tone of the book?

Contribution: Is there a real need for this book? Why? Any distinctive or novel contributions/proposals in the book worth mentioning? conceptually? practically? (of personal interest to you?) Any quotes worth including? How does the book and its specific contents relate within the broader context of books from the same field of study? Is the treatment of concepts, issues, authors cited, subject matter similar or different? How so? What is the quantity and quality of the citations?

Reviewer's Conclusions: Do you finally agree or not with the conclusion? Based on Adler's *How to read a book* have you indicated either: (a) General agreement with major proposal(s)? (b) Agreement as far as the argument was developed? (c) Agreement in the main with only minor disagreements? (d) Or disagreement with the main conclusion(s)? In a comparison between authors, could you see each one taking a specific perspective on the other's work? Can you recommend the book? Are there any qualifications to note?

ADLER'S GUIDELINES ON AGREEING AND DISAGREEING WITH AN AUTHOR

Note: The following is taken from Mortimer J. Adler and Charles Van Doren's (1972), *How to read a book*. (revised). New York: Simon and Schuster. Ultimately a reviewer can either agree or disagree with the author's main argument. (Adler admits that in some cases it may be necessary to withhold judgment so one can study the issue more before rendering a judgment.) When a reviewer generally agrees with the main argument, Adler outlines three possible options:

1. Basic Agreement without qualifications.
2. Agreement as far as the book goes--the analysis is correct, but incomplete. The author has not solved all the problems he or she started with
3. Agreement with the overall argument, but there is disagreement on a minor issue (see below for what kind of disagreements Adler identifies).

When a reviewer generally disagrees with the main argument, Adler also outlines three possible options. Also, a reviewer may agree with the main argument, but disagree with some sub-points for which these same categories of disagreement apply. Adler notes, "When you disagree, do so reasonably, and not disputatiously or contentiously" (145):

1. Disagreement with the argument because the author is uninformed, lacking information relevant to the problem. (Yet, is this an intentional or unintentional omission?)
2. Disagreement with the argument because the author is misinformed and in error, asserting "what is not the case" (157). The facts are wrong.
3. Disagreement because the author's argument is illogical, the reasoning is fallacious. The conclusions cannot follow from the reasons offered (non sequitur), or the conclusions are inconsistent with other conclusions in the book. When possible, identify the specific logical fallacy(ies). (For help here, see Anthony Weston. 2000. *A rulebook for arguments*. 3rd ed. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett, 87pp.)

A final note: Do you have any personal reactions to the book? What are they based on specifically? Also be careful that underlying reactions do not pervade the texture and tone of your review. Be honest, yet fair and gracious. Avoid the crimes identified by John Timmerman, "Reforming the Reviewers" *Christian Scholars Review*, 30 (3), Spring 2001, 323-28:

- (a) Misunderstanding author's intention about the book or proposing how the book should have been written;
- (b) Quoting out of context;
- (c) Wrong passion—the review is mainly about reviewer's prejudices or the review "gushes" as if it was a publisher's publicity piece, and
- (d) "Ego" centered review (too many "I"s).

Please keep the focus on the book and not on the reviewer. Is the tone objective, fair and gracious? Is the writing style appropriate for the readership?

Grading Rubrics
Posting Rubric

	Poor	Below Average	Average	Great
Participation and Initiative Shown	Rarely participates in discussion; does not make an effort to participate; seems indifferent	Limited initiative, does not post minimum requirement; occasionally makes meaningful reflection on group's efforts; marginal effort to become involved with group	Posts minimum requirement; attempts to direct the discussion and to present relevant viewpoints for consideration by group	Demonstrates good self-initiative; posts frequently; attempts to direct the discussion and to present relevant viewpoints for consideration by group; interacts freely
Relevance of Posts	Posts responses which do not relate to the discussion content; makes short or irrelevant remarks	Occasionally posts off topic; most responses are short in length and offer no further insight into the topic	Frequently posts responses that are related to discussion content; prompts further discussion of topic	Consistently posts responses related to discussion topic; cites additional references related to topic to further discussion
Clarity of opinions/ideas; connection to topic	Does not express opinions or ideas clearly; evidences grammatical/spelling mistakes	Unclear connection to topic evidenced in minimal expression of opinions or ideas; occasional spelling/grammatical errors	Opinions and ideas are stated clearly; occasional lack of connection to topic; well-written and presented	Expresses opinions and ideas in a clear and concise manner with obvious connection to topic; well-planned
Totals				

Grading Rubric for Reading and Research

Student _____

Preliminary Considerations	Cognitive Levels (Reasoning)	Recognition & Recall	Comprehension	Analysis	Synthesis	Evaluation	Comments
Target Level		1	2	3	4	5	
	Reading/ Research Indicators						
Point/ percentage of writing	Overview of writing or introduction to paper	Able to identify/ state key claim(s) of reading/ paper	Able to explain claims in clear & concise manner	Able to indicate how key claim develops through reading/writing	Relates Key Claim to Class focus	Indicates importance of material to Class focus	
Point/ percentage of writing	Primary review/ development of writing	Identifies primary support claims and backing	Able to define clearly & concisely support claims, backing, and qualifications	Able to identify warrants & assumptions support claims & backing	Relates support claims to each other and to class focus	Able to show relative strengths and weaknesses of support claims	
Point/ percentage of writing	Personal Interaction	Connects specific claims to personal interaction	Demonstrates why claim elicits response	Reflection nuances range of writings support claims	Reflection indicates sources that endorse/dispute writing	Reflection references constructive alternatives or application	
	Argumentation Level	Attention	Structure	Response	Detail	Demand	
Target Level		1	2	3	4	5	
Point/ percentage of writing	Form & Style Level	Demonstrates standard form (pagination) and clear writing style	Consistent outline with headings and subheadings detailing development of argument	Forceful writing with consistent documentation at key claims and clear transitions and anticipates qualifications	Documentation addresses supporting claims & backing internally with detailed transitions and intersects with issues in class	Wide range of academic sources with strong rhetorical skills at each level. Clearly identified audience to elicit response	
	<i>Surprise Factor</i>						
Total point/ percentage							