



Nazarene Theological Seminary

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

MTS810 — Seminar: Theological Method and Research Fall 2011

Essential Information

Please refer to the following resources for information essential for the successful completion of courses and degree programs at Nazarene Theological Seminary. Links to these resources are available in the Essential Information section at <http://support.nts.edu>.

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

Instructor Information

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Office Hours: 8-5 M-Th or by appointment

Catalog Description

An introduction to the importance and varieties of theological research methods, and to the nature and conduct of theological research. The seminar helps students learn how to employ theological method and research in their theological studies. This course is required for all Master of Arts (Theological Studies) students. Other students may enroll by permission.

Course Narrative & Rationale

This course provides a basic orientation to the skills needed for research and writing at the graduate level. 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.

MA(TS)Degree Objectives

The overall goal of the MA(TS) curriculum is the personal and educational development of students through participation in the worshipping and learning community of the seminary in such a way as to deepen their understanding of the God of Christian faith and the life and mission of the Church, and further prepare them for Christian service.

GENERAL ACADEMIC TRACK

1. Students will develop a comprehensive knowledge of the major theological disciplines and their interrelationships.
2. Students will demonstrate the ability to use the theological disciplines to reflect on and engage the world as informed, thinking, Christian persons.

RESEARCH TRACK

1. Students will gain specialized knowledge in designated theological disciplines as a basis for further graduate studies.
2. Students will develop skill in academic research and writing as a basis for further graduate studies.
3. Students will demonstrate the ability to do theological research, critical theological reflection, and graduate-level academic writing by producing and successfully defending a written thesis.

This class provides underlying principles for doing research in various theological disciplines. It also fulfills the Research track: Objective #2.

Course Outcomes

By the end of this course, the student will be able to:

1. Demonstrate research capabilities in the field of religion, which will facilitate future learning and ministry development. (Assignments 1,3,7,8)
2. Have familiarity with theological research tools and their use within ministry. (Assignments 1,3,6-8)
3. Evaluate theological resources, both in print and online for theological integrity and usefulness in the process of lifelong learning. (Assignments 2,6-8)
4. Understand the process of research and writing involved in the thesis process. (Assignments 1-5,7,8)

Required Texts & Course Materials

Booth, Wayne C., et. al. *The Craft of Research*. 3rd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008.
ISBN: 9780226065663 \$17.00

Core, Deborah. *The Seminary Student Writes*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000. ISBN: 9780827234475 \$16.99

Pazmino, Robert W. *Doing Theological Research: An Introductory Guide for Survival in Theological Education*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2009. ISBN: 9781606089392 \$13.00

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. ISBN: 9780226823379 \$17.00

General Course Outline

Research Intro

Library and databases

Book Reviews

Evaluating sources

Research Arguments

MA Theological Studies Handbook

Turabian Review

Publishing

Course Assignments & Requirements

Reading: texts and articles as assigned.

Writing:

1. *Research paper* 3,000-5,000 words

This is the major project for the course. It should be well organized and encompass the techniques and methods of research presented in is course. The topic should be approved by the professor before Reading and Research week (by Oct.14.) (Outcomes: 1,4)

2. *Book review* 1,000-1500 words

This book review will be written about the book: *Doing Theological Research: An Introductory Guide for Survival in Theological Education* by Robert Pazmino. You will need to have familiarity with the book and the author, in order to write an objective and critical analysis of the work. (Outcomes: 3,4)

3. *Annotated bibliography* 10 entries in Turabian format

This is a 2-3 line summary of each book, plus the citation in Turabian format. These materials should all be items the student hopes to use in their final research project. At least one citation needs to be from a periodical source, and at least one citation will be for an internet source (Outcomes: 1,2,4)

4. *Thesis proposal* 500-750 words

This is a short procedural outline of the plan of action for the upcoming thesis or research paper. See example in the MA Theological Studies Handbook. (Outcomes: 1-4)

5.Thesis evaluation discussion leader

Each student will help lead the discussion about a particular NTS thesis. The leader will become familiar with the contents of the thesis, and will summarize these contents for the class. Discussion will center on the author’s ability to fulfill the goals set out in the introduction and conclusion of their respective thesis. (Outcome 4)

6.Worksheets as assigned

These will be one page summaries, comparisons, or short answer research questions. They will be due by the next class period. (Outcomes: 2,3)

7.Final

This will be a 5-10 minute oral presentation of your research paper. This will serve as a wrap-up for our class. (Outcomes: 1,4)

8.Participation

Each student is expected to attend class and participate in discussions. (Outcomes: 1,4)

Distribution of Student Learning Hours

	hours
Face-to-face Class Sessions	24
Online Participation in forums, groups, etc.	0
Reading	15
Writing	45
Other Assignments and Learning Activities	3

Exams & Quizzes	2
TOTAL	89

Method for Submitting Assignments

Assignments should be submitted through Moodle or by hardcopy at the beginning of class.

Form and Style Expectations

Turabian 7th ed. with footnotes is the format that should be used with all papers for this class.

Inclusive Language

NTS is committed to the equality of women and men. Recognizing that people have often used the English language in ways that imply the exclusion or inferiority of women, NTS urges students, faculty, and staff to avoid sexist language in public discourse, in classroom discussions, and in their writings. All written work presented to meet course requirements must use gender inclusive language.

Policy Regarding Late Work & Missed Exams

. Unless I have noted above that I will not accept a written assignment late, I will assign a letter grade penalty to all written assignments turned in after the time they are due. When an assignment is more than one week late, I will assign a two letter grade penalty to it. **I will not accept an assignment that is more than two weeks late.**

Course Grading

Book Review	15%	Due 10/10
Thesis proposal	15%	Due 11/7
Worksheets	10%	As assigned
Annotated bibliography	10%	Due 11/21
Thesis discussion	10%	TBD
Research paper	30%	Due 12/5
Final—oral presentation	10%	Due 12/12

In accordance with the provisions of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, NTS is committed to providing students with disabilities the opportunity to participate and benefit from its programs and activities. Accordingly NTS will make reasonable modifications to its programs and activities to accommodate otherwise qualified students with disabilities, unless such modifications would impose an undue burden on the operation of the particular program or activity or would fundamentally alter the nature or purpose of the program or activity. Students needing accommodations should contact the Office of the Registrar. They also should contact the instructor no later than the end of the first class session to discuss learning needs and adaptive strategies that have been beneficial for the student in the past.

Class Attendance

You are expected to attend class regularly and participate in the daily discussions. Attendance will be taken daily. An absence will only be excused in accordance with the guidelines established in the NTS catalogue.

If you must be absent because of extenuating circumstances, contact the professor as soon as possible to discuss the situation. If a student is absent four or more weeks of the semester, the professor may automatically fail the student.

Daily attendance records must be reported for those obtaining V.A. and Department of Education benefits. Students must make the professor aware if their attendance must be recorded.

Course Calendar

Date	Week	Assignment
10/10		Book Review
11/7		Thesis/Research Paper Proposal
11/21		Annotated Bibliography
12/5		Research Paper
12/12		Final

Bibliography

- Badke, William. *Research Strategies: Finding your way through the Information fog*. San Jose, CA: Writers Club Press, 2000.
- Barzun, Jacques and Henry F. Graff. *The Modern Researcher*. 3rd ed. New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich Inc., 1977.
- Bauer, David R. *An Annotated Guide to Biblical Resources for Ministry*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Pub., 2003.
- Booth, Wayne C., et. al. *The Craft of Research*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003.
ISBN: 978-0226065687
- Core, Deborah. *The Seminary Student Writes*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000.
- Dulles, Avery. *The Craft of Theology: from Symbol to System*. New York: Crossroad, 1992.
- Kelsey, David H. *Proving Doctrine: The uses of Scripture in Modern Theology*. Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1999.
- Mann, Thomas. *The Oxford Guide to Library research*. Oxford: Oxford Univ. Press, 1998.
- Oliver, Paul. *Writing your thesis*. London: Sage Pub., 2004
- Stewart, David E. *The Literature of Theology: a guide for students and pastors*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2003.
- Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 7th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007.
- Vyhmeister, Nancy Jean. *Quality Research Papers: for students of Religion and Theology*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008.
- Yaghjian, Lucretia B. *Writing Theology Well: A Rhetoric for Theological and Biblical Writers*. New York: Continuum, 2006.