DM8990 Doctoral Project Research Methodologies

July 2024

Professor	Dr. William A. Ross (wross@rts.edu) & RTS faculty
TA	Todd Whiting (twhiting@rts.edu)
Location	Online

A. Explanation

COURSE GOALS

1. Understand the required components of the written D.Min. project
2. Develop a viable topic idea for the written D.Min. project.
3. Produce a project proposal with bibliography for consideration by the D.Min. Committees of either Charlotte or Orlando campuses.

PREREQUISITES

All preceding D.Min. coursework must be complete prior to taking this course.

CLASS FORMAT

This course is six months long and has two sections:

Section 1 (Two Months)

This portion of the course involves several video lectures, written assignments, and interaction with the D.Min. Director. Students will develop an acceptable topic idea for the written project, produce a research model, and draft a bibliography.

Section 2 (Four Months)

This portion of the course pairs students with a faculty instructor, who will help refine the bibliography. Students will also produce a first draft of their project proposal, which will be submitted to the D.Min. committee of the student's home campus (Charlotte/Orlando).

B. Requirements

REQUIRED TEXTS

Kibble, Michael. *From Topic to Thesis: A Guide to Theological Research*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2016.

Turabian, Kate. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013.

PHASE 1 ASSIGNMENTS (25% OF FINAL GRADE)

Lectures & Course Reading Report (10%)
> You must certify that you have watched all five Course Video Lectures in full and read Kibbe in full. Turabian is not strictly required, but you should familiarize yourself with it, especially the section on plagiarism.

Research Topic Worksheet (5%)
> You must download the Research Topic Worksheet and complete it in full. Be sure to read the D.Min. Project Guidelines prior to beginning this assignment.

ATLA Journal Search Worksheet (5%)
> You must produce a list of five journal articles related to your research topic, using the ATLA database. Do this using the ATLA Journal Search Worksheet in Canvas, making sure to use correct Turabian (8th ed.) formatting.

Preliminary Project Reading List (5%)
> You must produce a preliminary (i.e., non-final) list of resources related to your research topic. This list must total 2,000 pages at a minimum. You will use the corresponding worksheet, where you must provide the actual total page count for your list.

PHASE 2 ASSIGNMENTS (75% OF FINAL GRADE)

Refined Project Reading List
> Although not graded, you must revised your preliminary project reading list into a more refined form. Your assigned faculty instructor will assist you in this process.

Draft Project Outline (5%)
> You must develop and submit a preliminary outline for your research project. This outline must include chapter summaries. It should be between three and five pages long.

D.Min. Project Proposal (35%)
> You must develop and submit a proposal for your written D.Min. project. This proposal must be 15–20 pages long.

Project Reading Report (35%)
> You must submit the percentage of the total pages in your Refined Project Reading List that you have completed.

C. Other Information

COURSE SCHEDULE

All information about assignment due dates is available in the course module on Canvas.

GRADING SCALE

Lectures & Course Reading Report	10%	A	100–97	C	82–80
Research Topic Worksheet	5%	A-	96–94	C-	79–78
ATLA Journal Search Worksheet	5%	B+	93–91	D+	77–75
Preliminary Project Reading List	5%	B	90–88	D	74–72
Draft Project Outline	5%	B-	87–86	D-	71–70
D.Min. Project Proposal	35%	C+	85–83	F	69–0
Project Reading Report	35%				

LATENESS POLICY

Assignments are due by midnight on the dates indicated in the schedule. Late assignments will result in reduction by half a letter grade for each calendar day beyond the original due date. In general, extensions are not granted. Exceptions will be made solely at my discretion and must be requested in writing by email.

PLAGIARISM

The RTS Doctor of Ministry program has a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism. Any infraction immediately results in a failing grade for the course at minimum. That includes any form of assistance from Artificial Intelligence platforms. Please carefully review RTS policy on this matter and consult with campus library staff for further clarification or assistance.

RECOMMENDED TEXTS

a. Style

Clark, Roy Peter. *Writing Tools: 55 Essential Strategies for Every Writer*. New York, NY: Little, Brown Spark, 2006.

Le Peau, Andrew T. *Write Better: A Lifelong Editor on Craft, Art, and Spirituality*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2019.

Sword, Helen. *Stylish Academic Writing*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012.

Williams, Joseph M. *Style: Lessons in Clarity and Grace*. 9th ed. New York, NY: Pearson Longman, 2007.

Zinsser, William. *On Writing Well: The Classic Guide to Writing Nonfiction*. 6th ed. New York, NY: Quill, 2001.

b. Other

Adler, Mortimer J. *How to Read a Book: The Classic Guide to Intelligent Reading*. New York, NY: Touchstone Simon & Schuster, 1972.

Badke, William B. *Research Strategies: Finding Your Way Through the Information Fog*. 2nd ed. New York, NY: iUniverse, Inc., 2004.

Crider, Scott F. *The Office of Assertion: An Art of Rhetoric for the Academic Essay*. Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2005.

Newport, Cal. *Deep Work: Rules for Focused Success in a Distracted World*. London: Piatkus, 2016.

REFORMED ✝ THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
SYSTEM

Course: DM8990
Professor: Ross
Campus: Charlotte
Date: Summer 2024

In order to measure the success of the D.Min. curriculum, RTS has defined the following as the intended outcomes of the student learning process. Each course contributes to these overall outcomes. This rubric shows the contribution of this course to the D.Min. outcomes.
 	
NOTE: D.Min. Emphases are:
 	
    1. Reformed Expository Preaching (REP)
    2. Reformed Theology and Ministry (RTM)
	Rubric
	
	➢ Strong
	➢ Moderate
	➢ Minimal
	➢ None
		Mini-Justification

Biblical/Theological Foundations:	Significant knowledge of biblical and theological foundations for pastoral ministry. (This includes interaction with Biblical texts, as well as awareness of Reformed Theology.)	Strong	Requires detailed knowledge of biblical and theological areas of study for project idea development.
Historical/Contemporary Practices:	Significant knowledge of historical and contemporary practices of pastoral ministry.		Requires detailed knowledge of historical and contemporary practices as a means of developing applications of the writing project to the local church.
Integration:	Ability to reflect upon and integrate theology and practice, as well as implementation in a contemporary pastoral setting.	Strong	Emphasis upon drawing from all previous coursework to apply learning to writing project.
Sanctification:	Demonstrates a love for the Triune God that aids in the student's sanctification.	None	
Hermeneutical/ Homiletical Analysis	Demonstrates ability to interpret a text and apply homiletical principles to the text.	Strong	Emphasizes the role of Scripture in all projects with a view to influencing the life and ministry of the local church.