

*Houston Graduate School of Theology equips women and men to be ministers and messengers of  
God's mission of reconciliation through academic excellence,  
personal transformation, and leadership development*

**RE 800 Doctoral Level Research and Writing (1 credit hour)  
Spring 2020**

**Required Texts:**

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th ed.  
Revised by Wayne C. Booth, Gregory G. Colomb, Joseph M. Williams, and the  
University of Chicago Press Editorial Staff. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2018.

**Course Description:**

This course will provide students with practical skills for completing doctoral level research. The course will focus upon planning, researching, and organizing, in order to write a doctoral level research paper with the ultimate goal of producing better final DMin project reports.

**Student Learning Outcomes: DMin-1, 2**

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Develop an academic thesis statement for a research project (as evidenced by thesis statement and research paper);
2. Distinguish academic from popular or pseudo-academic sources (as evidenced by annotated bibliography and research paper); and
3. Produce a well-researched, designed, and written research paper (as evidenced by research paper).

**Pre-seminar Assignments: Due Monday, January 16, 2020**

Read chapters 1-14 in Turabian. Be prepared to discuss the process of thesis statement and paper development.

**Post-seminar Assignment: Due February 15, 2020**

1. Build a 30-entry bibliography, utilizing academic sources (i.e., books, journals, dissertations, theses, and reference works), for one of the research topics listed below. The student must include academic journal articles accessed from database resources. The student should choose one of the following topics for research.
  - A. The Importance of the Trinity in Missional Theology
  - B. The Role of Spiritual Direction in the History of the Church (this topic will need to be narrowed by a variety of criteria, including [but not limited to] historical period, denomination or church tradition, important historical figures, etc.)
  - C. The Role of the Bible in Pastoral Care
  - D. The Role of the Pastor in the Missional Church

2. List entries in alphabetical order by author's last name. If the student has more than one entry by the same author alphabetize first by author's last name and then by title of the entry. Each entry should be annotated and must consist of the following three parts.
  - **Citation** in complete Turabian format
  - **Contribution:** describe in one sentence the source's major contribution to the topic of research.
  - **Relevance:** In about 3 or 4 sentences, describe the source's relevance for the topic being researched. Describe its usefulness, importance, quality, and credibility.
3. Develop a demonstrable or defensible thesis statement on the chosen topic. The initial bibliographic work should enable the student to develop a thesis statement for the research project. The thesis statement should be a single sentence, or at the most two sentences. The student should create a thesis statement that can be debated, argued, and demonstrated as valid (or invalid). The thesis may be returned to the student for further refinement.

### **Post-seminar Assignment 2: Research Paper**

**Due April 15, 2020**

The student will submit a 10-page research paper in hard copy on one of the above four topics. The body of the paper should be no more than ten pages (i.e., excluding cover page and bibliography). The paper should include correct page numbering and use 12-point Times New Roman font, using footnotes when appropriate. The student will submit the assignment to Turnitin.com. The student will also submit the paper electronically to Dr. Kennard. If the submitted assignment does not meet the criteria for academic theological research, it will be returned for resubmission no later than April 25.

*Be sure to write in academic style and include appropriate introductions and conclusions with the paper.*

### **Student Workload Expectations:**

Class Time - 3 hours

Textbooks - (Turabian 400 pages @ 20 pp/hr) = 20 hours

Annotated bibliography = 9 hours

Research paper @ 1.5 hr/pg = 15 hours

***Total – 47 hours***

**Course Grading Scale:** “A” represents excellent work in all categories (fulfillment of assignment, writing and formatting, and doctoral level content); “B” represents good work in all categories; anything below a “B-” is considered below doctoral level.

A	98-100	C+	84-85
A-	94-97	C	80-83
B+	92-93	C-	78-79
B	89-91	D	70-77
B-	86-88	F	0-69

### **Classroom-related Academic Policies**

- A. Work is expected on the due date. Late papers will receive no less than a one-letter grade reduction.
- B. Turnitin.com (**Course Number is 22230936 and Password is Research**)
  - 1. Assignments may require submission to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) to check for originality and style. The assignments that are required for submission will be described in the syllabus.
  - 2. Students will create an account at [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com). After doing so, the student will join the course page with the code and password supplied by the instructor. A list of assignments and due dates will be available on the course page.
  - 3. Students will submit assignments by the due date and time and will be required to submit the assignments in a hard copy format as well.
- C. Electronic Equipment Usage in Classrooms  
It is expected that students will use technology (cell phones, laptop computers, iPads, etc.) during classes only for the purposes of class work. Therefore, students should turn off cell phones and refrain from texting and using laptop computers during classes except for the purposes of taking notes or doing research specifically authorized by the course instructor. Students who have emergency needs not covered by this policy must ask for an exception from the course instructor.
- D. Review the Academic Catalog for requirements regarding Incompletes and Plagiarism issues. For more information on Library Services, please download the Library Handbook from the HGST website.

### **Doctor of Ministry Policies:** (find the full listing of DMin Policies in the HGST Academic Catalog, pages 28ff)

#### A. Assignments

Students in the DMin program will read, research, study, experience, and evaluate applied theology and personal spiritual concepts. This degree promotes research on vital issues affecting the quality of life in faith communities as well as the development of new approaches, strategies, and styles of ministry in a wide variety of institutional and cultural settings. The resulting learning process equips the student for critical evaluation in the context and practice of ministry and fosters an integration of theory and effective pastoral practice with a view toward transforming communities.

Pre-seminar assignments are due no later than the course start date. Students are encouraged, however, to bring all written assignments the first day of the seminar week. Students, with missing pre-seminar assignments, may be dropped from those sections of the seminar, may not be permitted to attend those sections, and may receive a failing grade for those sections.

Post-seminar written assignments are to be submitted within ninety days after the session ends, at prescribed deadlines. Assignments should be emailed directly to professors on or before the due date. Competence will be demonstrated through creative projects and papers, which apply professional experience in connection with course content. These assignments will demonstrate an understanding of the writing skills required for the doctoral level and of the subject matter, bibliography, theory, and methodology covered in the seminar.

Written work will follow the prescribed HGST/Turabian style and should meet the deadlines required in each course syllabus. Grades will reflect the meeting of these criteria as well as the content.

Students are encouraged to email copies of completed assignments to the Director and to keep hard copies and external digital copies on file to protect work from being lost due to a computer malfunction. Graded papers are usually available for pick up at the following seminar unless they are returned via email.

#### B. Extensions and Incomplete Grade Policy

Seminar assignments are to be completed and mailed or emailed on or before the established due date. However, upon receiving a completed Extension Request Form and payment of \$50 per professor, a thirty-day extension (one for each professor) may be granted by the DMin Office. The extension request should be received before the original due date. The professor shall reduce the grade by at least one-half letter grade. Work postmarked after the due date or the one-time thirty-day extension due date is subject to a minimum one letter grade reduction. No class work will be accepted after the close of the semester (except for previously granted 30-day extensions), a grade of “F” will be given, and the semester will have to be repeated for credit. The student will be placed on Academic Probation at that time until a cumulative GPA of no less than a B average is earned during the next semester.

The student will be given one opportunity to make up a failed seminar section, either the next time it is offered or through make-up work, to receive an acceptable grade and raise the overall GPA to an acceptable score. In order for the GPA to move to an acceptable score, the Academic Office may replace the “F” with an “NCF” so that the make-up work will count appropriately. If the student does not make up the section during the timeframe noted above, the grade will remain an “F,” the failing grade will appear on his or her transcript, Academic Stop will go into effect, and the student’s file will be sent to the DMin Oversight Committee with recommended action.

**Notes for Writing Assignments:** All “formal, academic” writing assignments must conform to Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9th Edition. This includes matters of style and format. Certain assignments may be less formal, and students will follow the professor’s instructions for those assignments.

For formal, academic writing, footnotes are required for documentation when more than one resource is cited. The student should number pages. According to Turabian, page numbers should be in the upper right hand corner, except on pages with major headings (titles). Margins should be one inch on all four sides, except where major headings (titles) require a two-inch top margin. All students should utilize 12-point Times New Roman font throughout. Do not use presentation or report binders or folders; submit papers with staples or binder clips.

Critical, or formal, writing differs from colloquial writing or spoken English at several points. Note the following guidelines for critical writing, as students are expected to follow these guidelines strictly for academic-style assignments. Failure to do so will be penalized.

- Avoid 1st or 2nd person references (“I,” “we,” or “you”). Keep the written projects objective and professional. Remember that imperative forms are second person.
- Never use contractions.

- Avoid passive voice construction (i.e., write “God chose Joshua” rather than “Joshua was chosen by God.”). Some exceptions are necessary, but limiting the use of passive voice is a good policy.
- Be sure that number and tense always agree (i.e., Do not write in one place that “Brueggemann argues . . .” and at another place “Brueggemann argued . . .”). Subject-verb agreement is imperative.
- Spellcheck! Spellcheck! Spellcheck! Grammar check works as well!
- Pronouns should have clear antecedents. Avoiding “it is” and “there is” in the paper removes much of the ambiguity of pronoun usage.
- Sentence fragments are unacceptable. Every sentence must have a subject and a predicate.