MTS810 — Seminar: Theological Method and Research
Module - Fall 2012

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
Professor: Prof. Debra Bradshaw
Email: dlbradshaw@nts.edu
Office: (816)268-5472
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.

**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: 8,9,10)
2. Have familiarity with theological research tools and their use within ministry. (Assignments: 2,3,4,8,9)
3. Evaluate theological resources, both in print and online for theological integrity and usefulness in the process of lifelong learning. (Assignments: 3,4,5)
4. Understand the process of research and writing involved in the thesis process. (Assignments: 1,6,7,9,10)

**Required Texts & Course Materials**


Course Outline
Research Intro
Library and databases
Book Reviews
Evaluating sources
Research Arguments
MA Theological Studies Handbook
Turabian Review
Publishing
Thesis Writing

Course Assignments & Requirements

Pre-Module:
Readings:
• Core, Deborah. *The Seminary Student Writes*. St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2000

1. Writing Worksheet  Due 7/20
   Found on Moodle. Writing and grammar problems in a paper found in Core, *The Seminary Student Writes*. (Outcome 4)

2. Reflective paper  1,000 words. Due 8/9
   Write a reflective paper over Booth, over Booth, *Craft of Research*. The paper should include a summary of the book, the importance of work, and some new insight you gleaned from reading the book. (Outcome 2)

Module:
3. Library Worksheet (Objective 2,3)
4. Book Review Comparison Worksheet (Objective 2,3)
5. Book review  1,000-1500 words  Due 8/29
   This book review will be written about the book: *How to Think Theologically* by Howard W. Stone and James O Duke. 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)

6. Thesis evaluation discussion group project  Due 8/31
   Each group will review and lead the discussion about a particular NTS thesis. The group 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. (Outcomes 4)
Post-Module:

7. **Thesis/Research proposal** 500-750 words 9/14
   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. (Outcome: 4)

8. **Discussion of Research topic** Due 9/21
   Post your topic and a synopsis of how your research is going. Is your topic getting too big? Is there a different direction your topic is going than you initially thought? Post a 2-3 paragraph summary. Comment on 2 other people’s posts. Give ideas for narrowing or authors or topics to consider. (Outcome: 2)

9. **Annotated bibliography** 10 entries in Turabian format 9/27
   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)

10. **Research paper** 3,000-5,000 words Due 10/9
    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 the end of Face to face classes (Aug.31) (Outcomes: 1,4)

**Participation**
Each student is expected to attend class and participate in both class and Moodle discussions.

**Distribution of Student Learning Hours**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>pre-module hours</th>
<th>module hours</th>
<th>post-module hours</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Face-to-face Class Sessions</td>
<td></td>
<td>29.5</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Online Participation in forums, groups, etc.</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Assignments and Learning Activities</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exams &amp; Quizzes</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>40.5</td>
<td>32</td>
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**Method for Submitting Assignments**
Assignments should be submitted through Moodle.

**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
Work is due by 11:55pm on the day it is assigned. All written work turned in after the due date will be penalized. 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
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Booth Reflective paper</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>8/9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stone Book Review</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>8/27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thesis proposal</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>9/14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Worksheets</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>As assigned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Thesis discussion</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8/31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annotated bibliography</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>8/27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research paper</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>10/9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class/Moodle participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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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
Attendance at classes is essential for realizing the maximum benefit of your education. Since the professor in each course is best acquainted with the importance of consistent attendance, he or she will determine the rules for attendance.

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 for 9 hrs of a two week module or is absent four or more weeks of the pre/post module, 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week of</th>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7/9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Pre-Module Begins</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/16</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Read Core Writing Worksheet Due by 7/20</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Read <em>Craft of Research</em> Pts 1 &amp; 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>7/30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Read <em>Craft of Research</em> Pts 3 &amp; 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Read rest of <em>Craft of Research</em> Post Reflective Paper Due by 8/9</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Read <em>How to think Theologically</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>8/20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Library Worksheet Book Review Comp. Worksheet</td>
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<tr>
<td>8/27</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Book Review Due by 8/27 Group Thesis Eval. Due by 8/31 Research Topic Approved by Professor Due by 8/31</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/3</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Post-Module Begins R &amp; R</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/10</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Thesis Proposal Due by 9/14</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Research Topic Discussion Due by 9/21</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/24</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Annotated Bibliography Due 9/27</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/1</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Course Evaluations (approximate release time by the Dean’s Office)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Research paper due 10/9</td>
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**Bibliography**


Stone, Howard W.

