Course Description

This course is an introduction to the skills necessary for competent graduate work. These skills include theological and professional library competency, the use of electronic research media, the execution of research design, and graduate writing development. The course also prepares students for ministry success by equipping them for family and education balance, avoiding burnout, and pursuing intentional spiritual formation.

Requisites

Prerequisites

None

Rationale

The student entering a graduate program in Bible, theology, or ministry is not automatically equipped to perform work at the graduate level. Preparation and skill development in theological research and writing are necessary to ensure subsequent academic success. Learning how to learn strategies enables the novice graduate student and the second-career adult to succeed academically not only in this course but across an entire degree program. The graduate theology student learning skill assessment will enable the student to not only survive but thrive to the glory of God.

Measurable Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to:

A. Identify specific attributes and abilities of a self-directed adult learner.
B. Create an acceptable graduate level Exegesis Research Paper following current Turabian style on a biblical text assigned by the professor.
C. Learning skills within a Christian community of adult learners.
D. Navigate his/her graduate degree program successfully so that she/he not only survives but thrives as a whole person.

Course Resources

Required Resources


Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Current ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.5

Note: Some or all of these resources will be provided digitally through LifeWay’s MyWSB platform. The cost for these digital resources...
is covered through a Course Fee. Tutorials for accessing MyWSB course materials will be included in the student's Blackboard course. If the student is required to purchase additional materials beyond what is being provided through LifeWay, they can be purchased at MBS.

Disclaimer: The above resources provide information consistent with the latest research regarding the subject area. Liberty University does not necessarily endorse specific personal, religious, philosophical, or political positions found in these resources.

Additional Materials for Learning

A. Computer with basic audio/video output equipment
B. Internet access (broadband recommended)
C. Blackboard recommended browsers (https://help.blackboard.com/Learn/Student/Getting_Started/Browser_Support)
D. Microsoft Office

Course Assignments

Textbook readings and lecture presentations

Course Requirements Checklist

After reading the Course Syllabus and Student Expectations, the student will complete the related checklist found in Module/Week 1.

Discussion Board Forums (3)

Discussion boards are collaborative learning experiences. Therefore, the student will create a thread in response to the provided prompt for each forum. Each thread must be at least 400 words and demonstrate course-related knowledge. In addition to the thread, the student will reply to the threads of at least 2 classmates. Each reply must be at least 300 words. (MLO: A, C)

My Learning Journals (4)

The student will compose journals that offer written critical reflections based upon his/her reading of assigned portions of "Orienting Adults to Learning in Graduate Theological Education." Each journal will have a prompt that the student must respond to, based upon assigned reading for that week/module. There is no word count requirement; the student must answer the prompt thoroughly, yet concisely. (MLO: A, C)

Exegesis Research Paper

Using Introduction to Biblical Hermeneutics by Kaiser and Silva as a reference guide, the student will write an Exegesis Research Paper submitted in 3 parts. The student will choose between 3 biblical passages on which to write the paper. Each part will begin the process of helping the student gain experience with submitting an Exegesis Research Paper through the following stages:


For Part 1, each student will write an Introduction containing a general overview of the forthcoming paper and a thesis/purpose statement that alerts the reader to what the student plans to achieve in the writing of the paper. Under a separate heading, the student will identify the literary, historical, and cultural context of the selected passage and discuss its relevance for interpreting the passage. Each section will have its own heading following current Turabian style. Part 1 must include the School of Divinity Standardized Title Page. (MLO: B)

Part 2: Meaning of the Passage and Bibliography

The student will rewrite Part 1 as needed, taking into consideration any feedback provided by the professor. In addition, the student will address the meaning of the passage, utilizing resources identified in the accompanying bibliography. The student must list 10 sources relevant to the paper, cited in current Turabian format as interpreted by the School of Divinity Writing Guide. The sources must be current and scholarly (written by academics with credentials that qualify them to write, not popular treatments written for laity) using those found in the ATLA database as a guide. (MLO: B)
Part 3: Significance of the Passage (Final Version)

The student will rewrite Parts 1 and 2 as needed, taking into consideration any feedback provided by the professor. In Part 3 of the paper, the student will address the significance and application of the passage to the Christian life and church ministry. Each paper must have a coherent conclusion that summarizes the content of the textual analysis. The student will submit a 2,500–3,000-word final version of the paper (double-spaced in 12-point font). The student must carefully edit the final version for spelling, grammar, and syntax. Perfection in the implementation of current Turabian format is expected. (MLO: B)

Learning Skills Inventories (4)

Using “Assessing Adult Learning in Graduate Theological Education,” the student will complete 4 sets of learning skill development inventories designed to assess learning skills. All of the inventories are self-scoring. (MLO: A, C)

Spiritual Formation Blog Post

Based upon your reading of Foundations of Spiritual Formation: A Community Approach to Becoming Like Christ and the student's own personal experience, the student will write a 1,000-word (double-spaced, 12-point font) blog post as if he/she were writing it for an online blog. In the blog, the student will (1) identify 1 or 2 spiritual formation concepts addressed in the book that he/she needs to incorporate into his/her own walk of faith; (2) outline a plan of action to address those areas; and (3) write a final paragraph to a real or imagined person planning to enter seminary and offer 1 piece of advice that the student thinks will help the person continue to grow in his/her faith while enrolled in seminary. (MLO: D)

Memo to Myself

After the completion of all 4 Learning Skills Inventories, the student will write a 300-word, double-spaced “Memo to Myself” in which he/she identifies what he/she learned about him/herself as a learner (approximately 150 words) and how he/she plans to apply the skills to present and future courses (approximately 150 words). (MLO: A, C)

Turabian Quizzes (3)

Each quiz will be open-book/open-notes, contain 30 multiple-choice and true/false questions, and have a time limit of 1 hour and 10 minutes. The student may take each quiz 2 times, if needed. (MLO: B)

Course Requirements Checklist

Discussion Board Forums (3 at 70 pts ea) 210

My Learning Journals (4 at 25 pts ea) 100

Exegesis Research Paper

Part 1 60

Part 2 100

Part 3 140

Learning Skills Inventories (4 at 25 pts ea) 100

Spiritual Formation Blog Post 175
Memo to Myself

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Policies

Late Assignment Policy

Course Assignments, including discussion boards, exams, and other graded assignments, should be submitted on time.

If the student is unable to complete an assignment on time, then he or she must contact the instructor immediately by email.

Assignments that are submitted after the due date without prior approval from the instructor will receive the following deductions:

1. Late assignments submitted within one week after the due date will receive up to a 10% deduction.
2. Assignments submitted more than one week and less than 2 weeks late will receive up to a 20% deduction.
3. Assignments submitted two weeks late or after the final date of the course will not be accepted outside of special circumstances (e.g. death in the family, significant personal health issues), which will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the instructor.
4. Group projects, including group discussion board threads and/or replies, and assignments will not be accepted after the due date outside of special circumstances (e.g. death in the family, significant personal health issues), which will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis by the instructor.

Disability Assistance

Students with a disability and those with medical conditions associated with pregnancy may contact Liberty University’s Online Office of Disability Accommodation Support (ODAS) at LUOODAS@liberty.edu for accommodations. Such accommodations require appropriate documentation of your condition. For more information about ODAS and the accommodations process, including how to request an accommodation, please visit https://www.liberty.edu/online/online-disability-accommodation-support/. Requests for accommodations not related to disabilities or pregnancy must be directed to the Registrar’s Office, which generally handles medical needs support.

If you have a complaint related to disability discrimination or an accommodation that was not provided, you may contact ODAS or the Office of Equity and Compliance by phone at (434) 592-4999 or by email at equityandcompliance@liberty.edu. Click to see a full copy of Liberty’s Discrimination, Harassment, and Sexual Misconduct Policy (https://www.liberty.edu/media/1226/Liberty_University_Discrimination_Harassment_and_Sexual_Misconduct_Policy.pdf) or the Student Disability Grievance Policy and Procedures (http://www.liberty.edu/media/8021/Disability_Grievance_Procedures.pdf).

Course Attendance

In an effort to comply with U.S. Department of Education policies, attendance is measured by physical class attendance or any submission of a required assignment within the enrollment dates of the course (such as examinations, written papers or projects, any discussion board posts, etc.) or initiating any communication with one’s professor regarding an academic subject. More information regarding the attendance policy can be found in the Academic Course Catalogs (https://www.liberty.edu/index.cfm?PID=791). Regular attendance in online courses is expected throughout the length of the term. Students who do not attend within the first week of a sub-term by submitting a required academic assignment (such as the Course Requirements Checklist, an examination, written paper or project, discussion board post, or other academic activity) will be dropped from the course.

Students who wish to re-engage in the course are encouraged to contact Academic Advising to discuss their enrollment options. Students who begin an online course, but at some point in the semester cease attending, and do not provide official notification to withdraw, will be assigned a grade of “FN” (Failure for Non-Attendance (https://wiki.os.liberty.edu/display/IE/Online+Attendance+and+Non-Attendance)). Students wishing to withdraw from courses after the official start date should familiarize themselves with the withdrawal policy.
For courses with a Pass/NP final grade, please refer to the Course Grading section of this syllabus for the assignment requirements and/or point value required to earn a Passing final grade.

Add/Drop Policy

The full policy statement and procedures are published in the [Policy Directory](https://wiki.os.liberty.edu/display/IE/Dropping+and+Adding+Online+Classes).

Honor Code

Liberty University comprises a network of students, Alumni, faculty, staff and supporters that together form a Christian community based upon the truth of the Bible. This truth defines our foundational principles, from our Doctrinal Statement to the Code of Honor. These principles irrevocably align Liberty University’s operational procedures with the long tradition of university culture, which remains distinctively Christian, designed to preserve and advance truth. Our desire is to create a safe, comfortable environment within our community of learning, and we extend our academic and spiritual resources to all of our students with the goal of fostering academic maturity, spiritual growth and character development.

Communities are predicated on shared values and goals. The Code of Honor, an expression of the values from which our Doctrinal Statement was born, defines the fundamental principles by which our community exists. At the core of this code lie two essential concepts: a belief in the significance of all individuals, and a reliance on the existence of objective truth.

While we acknowledge that some may disagree with various elements of the Code of Honor, we maintain the expectation that our students will commit to respect and uphold the Code while enrolled at Liberty University.

Adherence to the principles and concepts established within facilitates the success of our students and strengthens the Liberty community.


Schedule

RTCH 500


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<th>Week</th>
<th>Reading &amp; Writing</th>
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| 1    | Kaiser & Silva: chs. 1–3  
Pettit: Foreword, Introduction, ch. 1  
Turabian: chs. 1–2  
2 presentations  
1 article  
1 website | Course Requirements Checklist  
Class Introductions  
My Learning Journal 1 | 10  
0  
25 |
| 2    | Kaiser & Silva: chs. 4–7  
Pettit: chs. 2–3  
Turabian: chs. 3–4  
2 presentations  
2 articles  
1 website | DB Forum 1 – Thread  
My Learning Journal 2  
Turabian Quiz 1 | 35  
25  
30 |
| 3    | Kaiser & Silva: chs. 8–9  
Pettit: chs. 4–5  
Turabian: chs. 5–6  
2 presentations  
1 article | DB Forum 1 – Replies  
My Learning Journal 3  
Exegesis Research Paper – Part 1 | 35  
25  
60 |
| 4    | Kaiser & Silva: chs. 10–12  
Pettit: ch. 6  
Turabian: chs. 7–8  
2 presentations | DB Forum 2 – Thread  
My Learning Journal 4  
Turabian Quiz 2 | 35  
25  
30 |
| 5    | Pettit: ch. 7  
Turabian: chs. 9–10  
1 presentation  
1 article | DB Forum 2 – Replies  
Exegesis Research Paper – Part 2  
Learning Skills Inventory 1 | 35  
100  
25 |
| 6    | Kaiser & Silva: chs. 13–15  
Pettit: chs. 10-11  
Turabian: chs. 11–12  
1 presentation  
1 article | DB Forum 3 – Thread  
Learning Skills Inventory 2  
Turabian Quiz 3 | 35  
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DB = Discussion Board

**NOTE:** Each course module/week begins on Monday morning at 12:00 a.m. (ET) and ends on Sunday night at 11:59 p.m. (ET). The final module/week ends at 11:59 p.m. (ET) on Friday.