

Introduction to Graduate Study, BIBD 672
September 7-9; October 5-7, 2006
Thur 1:00-9:30; Fri. 8:00-5:00; Sat. 8:00-12:00
Stone-Campbell Room, #249 CBS

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Course Catalogue Description:

BIBD 672 Introduction to Graduate Study (3-0-3), Fall, January.

Designed to introduce the basic tools of theological research and to promote the basic writing skills necessary for the presentation of scholarly research.

Objectives in the Course:

1. To encourage graduate students to continue the life-long task of integrating scholarship and Christian ministry.
2. To familiarize students with the basic tools needed to study the discipline of theology at the graduate level.
3. To introduce students to the significant literature and language of theology.
4. To orient students to the ACU Library and provide a foundation for effective research skills.
5. To enhance the writing skills needed for presenting scholarly research and facilitating quality Christian journalism in all literary endeavors.
6. To promote an awareness of style appropriate for the written presentation of formal papers, and to promote uniformity of style in papers presented to the Graduate School of Theology (GST).

Required Texts:

Stewart, David, and John Bollier. *The Literature of Theology: a Guide for Students and Pastors*. Revised edition. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 2003.

Strunk, William and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, 2000.

Turabian, Kate L. *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. 6th ed. Chicago: University of Chicago, 1996.

Vyhmeister, Nancy Jean. *Quality Research Papers*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2001.

You will also purchase a course packet at the bookstore, and I will assign other readings in connection with your assignments. The following text is not required but is highly recommended for those seeking in-depth guidance in building their personal libraries: David R. Bauer, *An Annotated Guide to Biblical Resources for Ministry*. Peabody, MA: Hendrickson, 2003.

Activities and Assignments:

1. Class readings—The following portions should be completed by the dates indicated:

The Literature of Theology: prior to first class, students should read pp. 1-7; 31-37; and 129-131. Other readings will be assigned during the week;

The Elements of Style (complete prior to 10/30/06);

A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Carefully examine the material in chas. 5, 9, 11 in preparing select lab assignments and papers;

2. Laboratory exercises in the library, during class, which facilitate the efficient use of basic research tools (such as periodical indexes, religious dictionaries and encyclopedias, and bibliographies in biblical studies);
3. Test over material covered in lecture and readings (10/7);
4. Book review on *Quality Research Papers* (5-6 page review over the following pages is due 10/30: ix-125; 143-159; 201; 214ff.);
5. One paper on the theme of “Scholarship and Ministry” (7-9 pp., postmarked/turned in by 10/30) and a bibliographic essay (10-15 pp., postmarked or turned in by 12/12).

Grading:

Grades will be determined by performance in these areas:

Class attendance, participation, and successful completion of labs - 15%

Test - 25%

Book Review of *Quality Research Papers* - 15%

Paper on Scholarship and Ministry - 20%

Bibliographic essay - 25%

The grading scale is as follows:

A: 92 - 100

B: 82 - 91

C: 72 - 81

D: 62 - 71

F: Below 62

Attendance:

Attendance for lectures and labs is required. Students should contact the professor as soon as possible if an absence is unavoidable.

Paper on “Scholarship and Ministry”

(Due October 30, 2006)

Write a seven to nine page paper describing the relationship between scholarship and ministry with particular emphasis on how the former will enrich your own ministry. For this assignment, you should incorporate insights gleaned from class lectures and selected readings while avoiding extensive notation (limit to yourself to no more than 7-9 footnotes on this paper). You are not limited to class readings, but you should demonstrate a familiarity with this material. Your paper is due on 10/30; late work will be penalized one letter grade for each day overdue. Readings for this assignment are on reserve in the ACU Library and include the following items):

Bicksler, Harriet Sider. “Minding the Scholars: a View From the Pew.” Pages 222-234 in *Minding the Church: Scholarship in the Anabaptist Tradition*. Edited by David L. Weaver-Zercher. Telford, PA: Pandora, 2002; Scottdale, PA: Herald, 2002.

Craddock, Fred. “The Life of Study.” Chap. Four in *Preaching*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon, 1985.

Peterson, Eugene. “The Seminary as a Place of Spiritual Formation.” Pages 54-60 in *Subversive Spirituality*. Edited by Eugene Peterson et al. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997.

Weed, Michael. “The Layman, the Theologian, and the Church.” *Restoration Quarterly* 23 (1980): 17-26.

Williams, Joel Stephen. “The Ministry and Scholarship.” *Restoration Quarterly* 36 (1994): 173-181.

You should use standard 8 ½" X 11" white paper with pages stapled in the upper left-hand corner (no plastic covers, folders, etc.) and should include the following components:

- (1) a cover page;
- (2) the body of the paper;
- (3) footnotes;
- (4) a bibliography of works cited.

The body of the paper should include a clear introduction, a well-organized body (with thoughtful sentence design reflecting a smooth flow of thought), and a solid conclusion. Take special care to use correct grammar and style and avoid spelling errors. Use Turabian (6th ed.) for bibliographic form.

Bibliographic Essay

(Due December 12)

Write a ten to fifteen page bibliographic essay on a pericope of scripture. Select a passage on which there are differing interpretations. The pericope may be from the OT or the NT, but do not choose a passage from a gospel that has an exact parallel in another gospel. If an interpretation hinges on a linguistic argument and you do not know the language, choose another passage.

Your primary objective is not to ascertain the meaning of the passage, but to find as many materials written on that passage as possible and categorize the various positions held. Give the positions, the proponents, and their reasons or evidence for holding a particular position. Be sure you grasp the intent of the author and what his or her argument is. Conclude with your reflection on your findings.

Your search strategy should include the online card catalog (ALCON), commentaries, bibliographies, Festschriften indexes, periodical indexes, and *Biblica Elenchus* with the bulk of material coming from journal articles.

Your bibliography will include only those sources used in your essay. On the page following your bibliography, list all of the following sources you consulted: periodical indexes and dates covered, biblical bibliographies, indexes to Festschriften and other multi-author works, and *Biblica Elenchus* with volumes covered.

Do not use materials published by members of the Church of Christ unless published in a scholarly journal, e. g., *Restoration Quarterly*.

1. One of the purposes of the paper is to acquaint you with a body of material you usually do not encounter.
2. "Brotherhood" materials are not indexed in the major periodical indexes nor included in the biblical bibliographies and are usually brief, without documentation, and aimed at a popular audience.

Use Turabian (6th ed.) along with the Turabian supplement provided in your packet for bibliographic form for citations. Use footnotes and bibliography rather than parenthetical reference lists. Late papers will be penalized. The following are criteria on which grades will be based:

1. Turabian form
2. Grammar, punctuation, spelling, and style
3. Clarity and completeness of positions presented
4. Comprehensiveness of search for material as reflected in your list of sources consulted
5. Are the major positions treated?
6. Are all significant articles dealt with?

NOTE: Late papers will be penalized one letter grade per day

Items to be Considered for Inclusion in a Book Review

(Adapted from guidelines provided by the
Austin Graduate School of Theology)

- I. Details of Publication
 - A. Who wrote the book? Does it contain contributions from more than one author? Has it been edited? Where does/did the author work or teach and what is known of his or her training? Did the book grow out of some other project?
 - B. When and by whom was the book published? Is it a part of a series? Is it a translation? How many pages does it have? If it is a multi-volume work, how many volumes does it include? Does it have maps, charts, photographs, drawings, indices, notes, or bibliography?

- II. Contents and Argument
 - A. What is the author's central thesis?
 - B. What are the author's assumptions? What is his or her methodology? How has he or she organized the book?
 - C. What are the topics and major points of each of the book's chapters?

- III. Evaluation
 - A. Do you agree with the thesis and the other major points of the book? Why?
 - B. Do the book's conclusions agree with scholarly opinion as a whole on the topic? If not, does the book represent one particular segment or school of scholarly opinion? Does the book take advantage of the most recent developments in scholarship on the topic?
 - C. What are the book's major weaknesses? What are its primary strengths and contributions? Are the author's presuppositions, method, and approach valid and appropriate? Does the author fail to discuss important aspects of the topic? Does the book fill a gap in the literature on the topic? What issues does it raise?
 - D. For whom was the book written and what was its purpose? Has it accomplished this purpose, and does it adequately communicate to its intended audience.
 - E. Aesthetics
 - 1. Is the book well-written, easy to read, and interesting?
 - 2. How do you rate the quality of the book's binding and printing? Are there many typographical errors or other obvious mistakes?
 - F. General Evaluation
 - What is your overall opinion of the book? Is it better or worse than others on the topic. Can you recommend it to others?

- Several of these items may not be relevant for every review assignment. Include only those items that are most appropriate for your work.

Classroom Virtues

The GST invites students to participate in a process of theological and spiritual formation. Knowing how to think theologically comes by habit and by imitation, not simply by acquiring isolated facts. The assumption here is that books alone are insufficient for addressing difficulties of life and forming people into the image and likeness of God. Ultimately, we strive to form communities of inquiry, inviting you to inhabit a shared world of learning. Within such an environment, the goal is to cultivate critical skills of reflection, spiritual disciplines, interact authentically with one another, and learn to function as a community of inquiry. A large part of this involves connecting areas of life rather than pitting them against one another. Prayer, study, and other dimensions of life are all integral to the process of formation. Consequently, we invite you to participate in a set of practices; nurtured within this context, you pursue “intellectual, moral, spiritual excellence” the result of which is the formation of the whole person.

- I. Desire for truth in the context of love**—the aptitude to discern whether belief-forming processes, practices, and people yield true beliefs over false ones. People motivated by this desire will be more likely to conduct thorough inquiries, scrutinize evidence carefully, investigate numerous fields of study, consider alternative explanations, while respecting and caring for others.
- II. Humility**—the capacity to recognize reliable sources of informed judgment while recognizing the limits of our knowledge and the fallibility of our judgments. This is not created in isolation but takes into account feedback and correction from other sources of informed judgment.
- III. Honesty**—the capacity to tackle difficult questions without seeking simple answers. Ignoring complex and difficult questions only solidifies vices such as intellectual dishonesty, close-mindedness, and rash judgments. These vices preclude the possibility of refining our thinking and of participating in conversations with others.
- IV. Openness**—the desire to engage in an open-ended search for knowledge of God, including receptivity to different ideas, experiences, and people. Listening becomes a discipline that acknowledges the other and respects diversity. The art of being a student and a teacher is an ongoing process that necessitates hospitality, patience, and love.
- V. Courage**—the ability to articulate one’s position while considering other perspectives. The aptitude to express convictions involves risk yet fosters opportunities for meaningful dialog. Responding to objections entails tenacity but should not be confused with close-mindedness.
- VI. Wisdom**—the capacity to offer a synthetic discernment of knowledge on behalf of the community. The aim is not merely the dissemination of information but a pastoral implementation of faith for the building up of the community. It solidifies various pieces of data, practices, and experiences and aptly applies knowledge and faith to particular situations.
- VII. Stewardship**—the commitment to one’s accountability to the gifts and responsibilities that one brings to the classroom. Classroom engagement includes proactively participating in the course goals, seeking mastery of course competencies, and collaborating with faculty and fellow students in the developing of a learning environment. Committing oneself to spiritual and intellectual well-being and growth is a faithful response to the opportunities graduate education affords.
- VIII. Hopefulness**—the receptivity to the future possibilities of God. The cultivation of thankfulness for our heritages and expectation for our future ministries engenders a guard against cynicism and a spirit of perseverance during times of stress and disorientation.
- IX. Prayerfulness**—the making of space to commune with God. The task of learning and teaching so that we are formed into the image of Christ through the Spirit involves our consistent reliance on God’s sanctifying work.

